

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF VANUATU

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

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BUREAU DU PREMIER MINISTRE

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DEPARTMENT DE  
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TRANSFORMATION NUMERIQUE

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## Advisory 144: Adobe Acrobat and Reader Heap-Based Buffer Overflow Vulnerability.

**Release Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

**Impact:** **HIGH / CRITICAL**

**TLP:** CLEAR

The Department of Communications and Digital Transformation (DCDT) through CERT Vanuatu (CERTVU), provides the following advisory.

This alert is relevant to Organizations and System/Network administrators that utilize the above products. This alert is intended to be understood by technical users and systems administrators.

## What is it?

**CVE-2009-3459** is a **critical remote code execution (RCE) vulnerability** affecting **Adobe Reader** and **Adobe Acrobat**.

The vulnerability is caused by a buffer overflow and memory corruption flaw in the handling of specially crafted PDF files containing embedded JavaScript and malformed objects.

## What are the systems affected?

The vulnerability affects:

- Adobe Reader 9.1 and earlier
- Adobe Acrobat 9.1 and earlier

Affected platforms include:

- Microsoft Windows
- macOS
- Linux systems running vulnerable Adobe software

## What does this mean?

### 1. Malicious PDF creation

- The attacker crafts a PDF containing malformed objects or malicious JavaScript.

### 2. Delivery to victim

- The PDF is distributed through:
  - Phishing emails
  - Malicious websites
  - File-sharing platforms

### 3. Victim opens the PDF

- The file is opened using a vulnerable version of Adobe Reader or Acrobat.

### 4. Memory corruption triggered

- Improper parsing causes a buffer overflow or heap corruption condition.

### 5. Remote code execution

- The attacker executes arbitrary code with the privileges of the logged-in user.

## Mitigation process

CERTVU recommends the following:

. Apply Adobe Security Updates (Critical)

- Upgrade to patched versions of:
  - **Adobe Reader**
  - **Adobe Acrobat**
- Apply Adobe security bulletin updates released after 2009

## Reference

1. <https://www.cisa.gov/known-exploited-vulnerabilities-catalog>
2. <https://www.cve.org/CVERecord?id=CVE-2009-3459>

