

# Volume 3, Issue 7

July 2021

## [FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

### FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level:

**ELEVATED**

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as “SEVERE.” As per FB-ISAO’s definitions of the Physical Threat Levels, “SEVERE” means that an event is highly likely.

Please note that the Pandemic Threat Level has been lowered to **ELEVATED**.

### FB-ISAO Cyber Threat Level:

**Guarded**

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Cyber Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as “GUARDED.” As per FB-ISAO’s definitions of the Cyber Threat Levels, “GUARDED” means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but a general risk of incidents exists.

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# FB-ISAO Newsletter

## The Current Threat Level

Members of the Faith-Based ISAO Organizational Resilience Group (ORG) convened to discuss the Physical Threat Level, and whether a change was needed. This discussion occurs monthly, often over Slack or email, but in this instance, it was important enough to gather via a Zoom meeting. Like much of the past 12 - 18 months, this is a challenging time. The ORG noted an apparent increase in gun violence but shied away from assessing that it reflects a “new normal,” nor should the increase in gun violence be viewed as a continued path. With regards to COVID and reopening while portions of the U.S. and the world have turned the corner, there are still significant areas both in the U.S. and abroad that have not, and there are new concerns and restrictions due to the Delta Variant. Within the U.S., many of the remaining COVID restrictions will be lifted in July, and the COVID-related benefits and assistance given to individuals and organizations will begin to expire in the coming months. This brings unique security challenges across many fronts for organizations and, coupled with several other key considerations, can create situations that escalate quickly and could catch organizations unprepared. Though a difficult assessment to make, the ORG has made a change to the FB-ISAO threat level as denoted below.

Pandemic Threat Level: ELEVATED

**ELEVATED**

Physical Threat Level: ELEVATED

**ELEVATED**

Cyber Threat Level: GUARDED

**GUARDED**

As challenging as the current threat landscape is, there are some things that organizations can do to prepare for the unknown:

- Talk with local law enforcement
- Review your security plan
- Understand roles and responsibilities
- Consider implementing enhanced measures if conditions warrant, and develop a timetable for implementing and reducing such measures
- Regularly train employees, volunteers, or any individuals who may have a role in security, and as the threat environment and situations change, review, and assess training needs
- Make members aware of activities and encourage them to report suspicious activities to local law enforcement
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- FB-ISAO also encourages members to report incidents. Learn more about how to report an incident [here](#).
- As always, if you have any questions regarding any of the issues discussed here, do not hesitate to reach out to members of the ORG on Slack. We are a learning community and are here to help.

## Business Email Compromise

**What Is It?** BEC is a sophisticated scam targeting both businesses and individuals performing a transfer of funds. The scam is frequently carried out when a threat actor poses as someone the target should trust—typically a colleague, boss, or vendor. They then ask the target to make a wire transfer, divert payroll, or change banking details for future payments.

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## FB-ISAO Advisory Board

### Get to Know the Board of Advisors

### Contact Us

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### Not Yet a Member of FB-ISAO?

[How to join...](#)

### Not Yet on FB-ISAO Slack - You Need to Be!

[Write to membership](#)

### Upcoming FB-ISAO Events

<a href="#">Monthly Threat Brief</a>	26 July
<a href="#">Member On-Boarding and Chat with the ED</a>	20 August

**How Does It Work?** The scams are designed using [social engineering techniques and tactics](#) to create a situation in which the target individual or company provides information of value to the attacker under perceived duress or pressure and without the targets of the scams being suspicious. In order to develop the appropriate scam, threat actors generally follow a [series of steps](#).

**Why Does It Work?** The key part is creating a “stress-inducing” scenario in which the threat actor represents a person in power who demands an action from the target, such as an urgent wire transfer, or tax records, or unpaid invoice. The goal is to apply pressure to deceive the target to fulfill the request that goes against company policy, or without verifying with the proper contacts.

**What It Means to Faith-Based Organizations?** Because FBOs are moving toward more online giving platforms, as well as engaging in third-party contracts for various services (Information Technology, custodial, or maintenance / construction projects), these BEC incidents can be just as common as in other industries. Threat actors could plan on their malicious request getting lost in the shuffle of a series of transactions or in a myriad of invoices.

Members of the [Cyber Threat Intelligence Group](#) held a Concept and Objectives meeting for the upcoming Cyber Road Show. They will meet again on 09 July for the Initial Planning Meeting. The topic of the exercise is BEC. More updates to follow.

## Spotlight: Hurricane Preparedness

The 2021 hurricane season is in full swing, and every indication to date is that it will be just as active as prior years. Hurricane season in the Atlantic Ocean officially started on 01 June and ends on 30 November. Faith-based organizations (FBOs) play a pivotal role during hurricane season. Often, FBOs are a source of refuge and at times, they provide support to emergency management personnel operating locally before, during and after the storm. Below are some things that organizations and individuals can do to prepare:

- [Determine Your Risk](#)
- [Develop an Evacuation Plan](#)
- [Assemble Disaster Supplies](#)
- [Get an Insurance Checkup](#)
- [Strengthen Your Home or Business](#)
- [Help Your Neighbor](#)

The work is not done once an organization puts a plan in place. It is then necessary to educate employees on the plan and ensure they’re doing their due diligence at work and home. With weather-specific training, try to schedule the training in advance of the anticipated weather. Peak hurricane season is typically in late August / early September, or less than two months away, which gives organizations time to review their current plans now and consider the guidance for preparedness. Incorporate actions to take at home, in transit to work, or at the office, or during an office-related event, such as transporting goods and services. Keeping employees safe from weather impacts in any location will help keep the business at the highest production level during all phases.

While the above items primarily focus on organizational and individual preparedness, the National Weather Service has also listed out actions for [after a hurricane leaves your area](#). Recovering from a natural or weather disaster can be just as challenging. Taking into consideration the current COVID-19 environment, the recovery and cleanup means ensuring responders or the incident response team factors in the health-related procedures and follows guidance from national, state, and local authorities.

Above all else, if an individual or organization is in the path of a hurricane or storm that may develop into a hurricane, listen closely to instructions from local officials on TV, radio, cell phones or other devices as well as for informational alerts from local officials. Stay safe!