

# Looking Back at 2021 and Looking Forward to 2022

## Overview and Mission

The Faith-Based Information and Analysis Organization (FB-ISAO) was initially developed in 2015 with support from DHS. However, FB-ISAO was formally established in June 2018 by people of various faiths who have experience working with government partners in risk assessment, preparedness, and response from both the physical and cyber perspective. The founders created FB-ISAO to serve the entire community of faith by establishing a single source of vital information allowing the community to share best practices to enhance security, preparedness, and resilience, against the growing threat from domestic threat actors and other violent extremists.

*Houses of worship — across a variety of faiths, including Jewish synagogues to Buddhist temples, Muslim mosques and Catholic churches — are experiencing high amounts of vandalism, arson and other property damage.*



The Faith-Based Information Sharing & Analysis Organization (FB-ISAO) provides members with **information, analysis, and capabilities** to help **reduce risk** while enhancing **preparedness, security, and resilience**. We are an all-faiths and all-hazards information sharing organization.

The community of faith recognizes that we must all work together for our collective preparedness, resiliency and security. There is work to be done in regards to sharing security knowledge and resources developed by one faith tradition with other faith traditions. **Members of the FB-ISAO are sharing their own resources readily.**

## Select accomplishments of 2021

The Faith-Based Information Sharing and Analysis Organization is dependent on membership dues to sustain operations. We also depend on our members to drive product development, intelligence gathering requirements, threat level assessments and program development.

Our membership held steady in 2021, however, the number of new and converting members who are now community Champions and community Heroes increased.

We hosted 319 security-focused guests at 9 events in 2021. Topics for those events included mitigating attacks on houses of worship, an overview of the homeland security threat, education on fire as a weapon, media literacy, and an explainer of the Non-Profit Security Grant Program. In addition, we hosted 142 members at our Monthly Threat Briefs. Topics for the briefs included considerations for armed and unarmed security, how people can navigate high pressure incidents / situations and the threat from drones / Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

We held 4 [Hostile Event Preparedness Workshops](#) (virtual) in partnership with the Pennsylvania Fusion Centers and the Minnesota Fusion Center. In total 160 security-focused participants attended.

2021 HEPS Workshops Locations						
Location	Type	Duration	Date(s)	Participants		
				FBO	Exercise Observers, Staff and Subject Matter Experts	Total
Western PA	Virtual	Three-day (3 hr. per)	08-10 March	44	20	64
Central PA	Virtual	Three-day (3 hr. per)	20-22 April	41	24	65
Eastern PA	Virtual	Three-day (3 hr. per)	01-03 June	42	23	65
MN	Virtual	Three-day (3 hr. per)	05-07 October	33	7	40

The 2021 Workshop Exercise Series Findings Brief highlighted the following opportunities for improvement and recommendations:

- Hostile events such as active shooter incidents, workplace violence, workplace attacks, lone actors, and low-tech terrorism may be long planned by the attacker. Attackers may have agendas fostered by perceived wrongs by society, or even harbored against a particular congregation or people within a congregation i.e., a personal grievance with a congregant. A variety of means, weapons, and tactics might be used in attacks and no single method of preparedness or response can rise to the top in the preparedness cycle.
  - **Recommendation: Continual assessment of the changing threat landscape**
- Religious institutions are in many ways a first point of contact for those with mental health issues. Such attacks may be nearly spontaneous, making it all the more difficult to predict.

- **Recommendation: Training security teams to identify and mitigate possible hostile threats needs to be an on-going effort**
- Faith Leaders can help greatly in attempting to keep religious institutions safe from attacks by actively collaborating with Law Enforcement, other Faith Based Organizations, and information sharing networks.
  - **Recommendation: Participating in trusted and organized local community groups can further information sharing**
- No single “best practice” of preparedness or response can be clearly demonstrated as each FBO is somewhat unique. It is possible that there might be many right approaches that demand attention. Sharing best practices across the wider faith-based community was noted as the best way to find commonality and determine approaches that faith leaders can use to better prepare and respond to potential hostile events.
  - **Recommendation: FB-ISAO’s collaborative workspace allows security focused personnel to learn from each other and to find those many right answers**

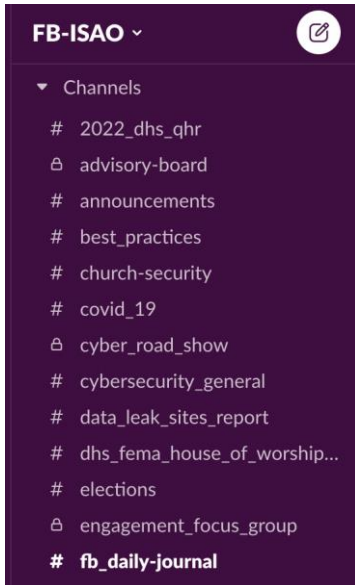
The FB-ISAO Analyst team prepared and published analytical reports on a myriad of topics that faith-based organizations are concerned with. In total, the team produced:

- 261 Faith-Based Daily Journals
- 48 weekly in-depth analytical reports
- 48 weekly advisories
- 12 monthly newsletters

Our reports addressed the 06 January siege at the U.S. Capital and associated protests, and general security concerns around extremism. Reporting also addressed the COVID-19 pandemic and protests related to vaccinations and mask mandates. 2021 products were used as guides for members considering topics such as COVID-19 self-testing, re-opening facilities and de-escalation techniques. About half of our reporting addressed cyber topics such as phishing, ransomware and business email compromise as well as security mindfulness.

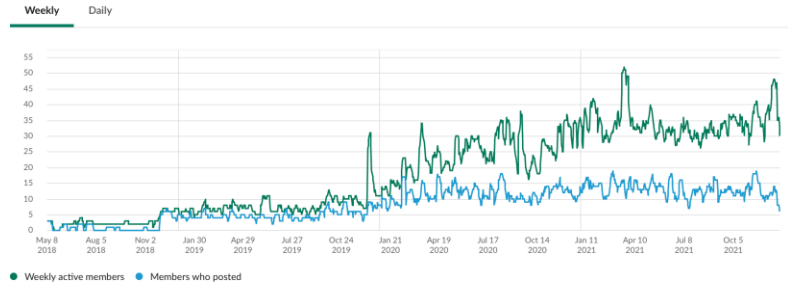
Our members collaborated in so many ways and on so many topics. The figures below show the steady growth of member adoption of the FB-ISAO collaborative workspace.

The images to the right show a continual increase in the number of messages and files (which include resources) being shared. Conversations in public channels have increased as well.



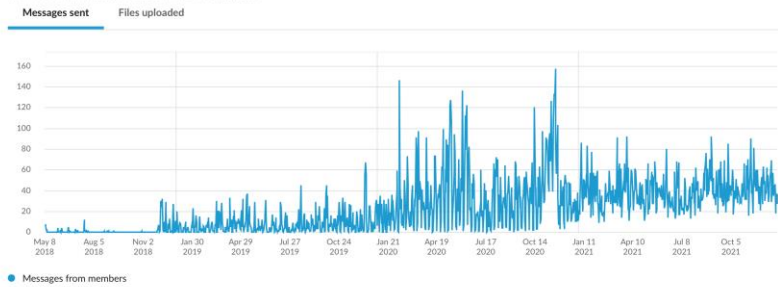
### Active members

See how many people are active – meaning they posted a message or read at least one channel or direct message.



### Messages and files

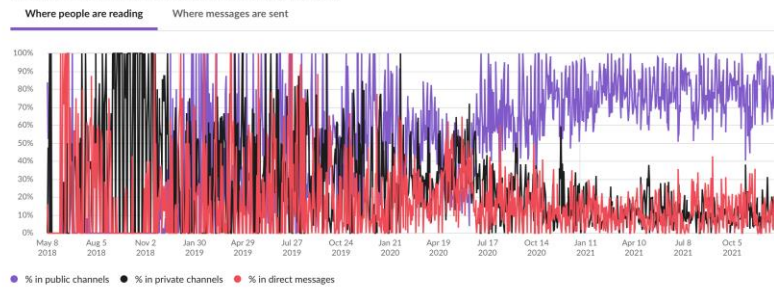
Learn how information is shared in your workspace.



All time  
Messages from members: 30,015

### Public and private

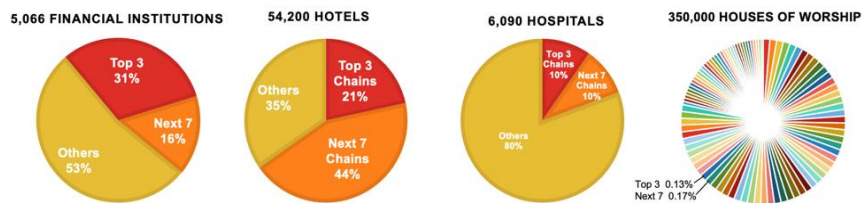
Understand where your members have conversations, and where messages are most commonly read. Most messages will have multiple readers.



All time  
Views in public channels: 60% Views in private channels: 22% Views in DMs: 18%

## Sector Snapshot

The faith-based sector is, and will always be, fragmented due to the multitude of religions and denominations within those religions, however, more and more faith-based organizations are recognizing the need to band together locally to enhance their individual and collective threat posture. Inter-faith community meetings are a common



occurrence. Law Enforcement partners are being included in these events so that there is greater cooperation between inter-faith groups and their partners.

Our partners and friends are important to our work. Without their support, we would not be able to deliver on our mission. The FB-ISAO team was invited to present at three different community events to include the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference in early 2021 and the Austin Texas Faith-Based Symposium in October of 2021. At those events, we shared information about the threat landscape, best practices and resources with the community.

Please join us for the first quarterly event on Thursday, January 27, 2022, with keynote speaker Director Shawn Brokos. Director Brokos, is a retired FBI Supervisory Special Agent and current Director of Community Security at the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. Director Brokos will be providing a case study on the Tree of Life Synagogue tragedy and lessons learned.

This presentation will review the importance of security procedures in our houses of worship, and how to best implement these procedures based on national best practices and potential funding sources. The discussion will focus on lessons learned from the deadly attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue on October 27, 2018, from both a security and a resilience perspective. David Kohanbush, Security Committee Chair, Shaare Torah Synagogue, in Pittsburgh, will also speak about building a security committee and the significance of having a security team. Guidance and further resources will be provided via handouts, and there will be time set aside at the end for Questions & Answers.

AGENDA		
1:00 - 2:30 PM	Shawn A. Brokos, Director of Community Security at the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh	How to Best Secure our Houses of Worship: A Case Study on Lessons Learned from the Deadliest Antisemitic Attack in U.S. History
2:30 - 3:00 PM		Questions & Answers
3:00 - 3:30 PM	David Kohanbush, Security Committee Chair, Shaare Torah Synagogue, Pittsburgh	Building a Security Committee
3:30 - 4:00 PM		Open Discussions: Review of Resources/Handouts Questions & Answers



We hosted members of the Illinois faith-based community, in partnership with the DHS Protective Security Advisors from Illinois, when we also shared information about the threat landscape, best practices and resources.

Our work with the Pennsylvania Department of Homeland Security and the Pennsylvania Fusion Centers includes participating in planning meetings for a 4-part learning series for houses of worship. The events will take place in 2022.

We worked with the [National Counterterrorism Center \(NCTC\)](#) to plan for four briefings that will be offered to the community as a whole. The briefings addressed the following topics:

- Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVE) Overview and Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVE) Indicators of Mobilization (October 2021)
- Active Shooter Events Lone and Actor Attack Tactics (January 2022)
- Pathways to Extremist Violence and the Radicalization Process (March 2022)
- Domestic Terrorism (DT) Overview and an Incel Overview (April 2022)

FB-ISAO's [Communications Group](#) (CG) drafted Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIR) and Intelligence Requirements (IR) for the ISAO. The PIR were developed to inform both FB-ISAO staff efforts and reports, and to inform partners who may provide intelligence and information to FB-ISAO, such as members, public sector partners at the national, state, local, tribal and territorial levels, peer information sharing and analysis entities and other partners. The items identified in the PIR



TLP:AMBER

FB-ISAO

### Priority Intelligence Requirements

The following Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIR) and Intelligence Requirements (IR) have been developed by FB-ISAO's Communications Working Group to inform both FB-ISAO staff efforts and to inform partners who may provide intelligence and information to FB-ISAO. This document will be reviewed annually and updated and redistributed as needed.

For purposes of this document, PIRs are those concerns that are most critical to FB-ISAO, and IRs are general concerns relating to the all-hazards threat environment. The items identified below – the PIRs and IRs – are not to suggest exclusion of other relevant threat awareness information, SARs or products from being shared with FB-ISAO. Such additional information helps empower the FB-ISAO recognize other potential threats to the community and members.

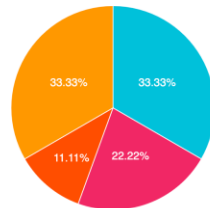


document are not to suggest exclusion of other relevant threat awareness information, Suspicious Activity Reports or products from being shared with FB-ISAO. Such additional information helps empower the FB-ISAO to recognize other potential threats to the community and members.

## Member Engagement

FB-ISAO has re-structured our membership programs. We recognize that our members are acting in the roles of Champions and Heroes in their own communities and as such are also contributing to the resiliency of the community of faith as a whole. In 2021, our Champions and Heroes heeded the call and stepped up!

Our Champions asked questions that informed our analytical reports. Such questions included how to mitigate vehicle ramming incidents and guidance on the use of COVID-19 Self-tests in considering large gatherings.



- We did not know about the NSGP program
- We found the process too difficult
- We didn't have enough time to prepare before the deadline for submission
- We couldn't get a risk assessment done in time to apply
- We do not need funding
- Security is not a high priority at our faith-based organization
- We don't have the necessary bridge funding (the money the FBO would have to devote to implementing the grant award prior to getting reimbursed by the federal grant program)
- We don't have the personnel resources necessary to manage a project like this
- Other (Please specify)

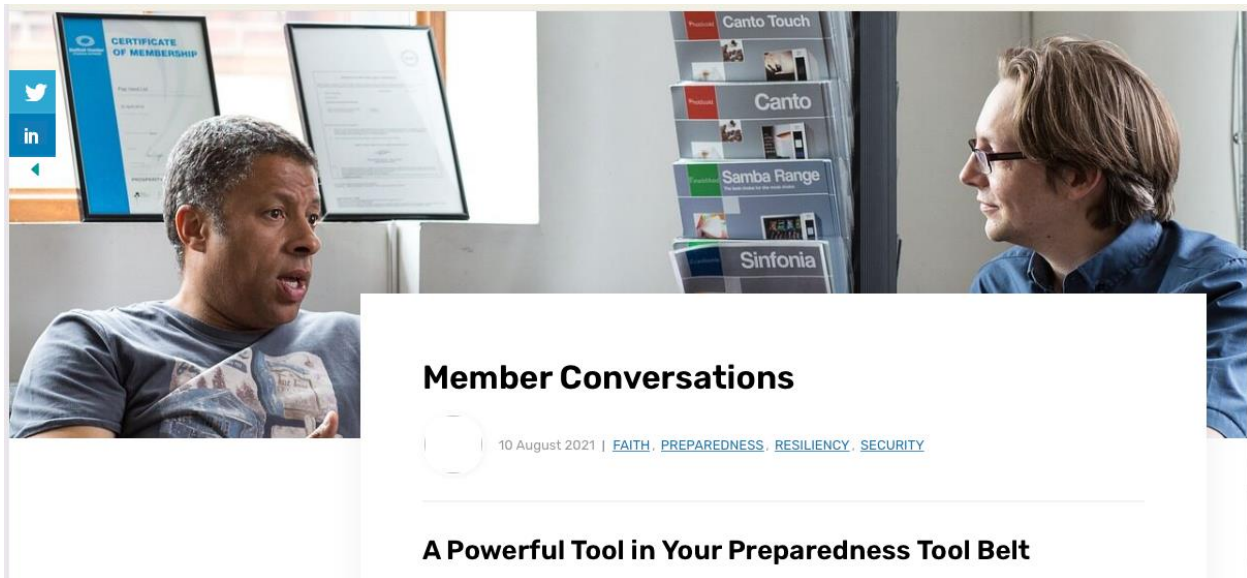
Our Heroes harnessed their own experiences and delivered programs on media literacy and mitigating threats from drones. Our Heroes led working groups, polled other members for feedback on programs, contributed to the development of the FB-ISAO Threat levels, and shared open-source intelligence on a myriad of subjects that contributed to other members threat awareness.

Members worked with each other to devise a way to contribute, as an organization, to the 2022 Quadrennial Homeland Security Review and FY 2022-26 Strategic Plan.



It seems small, but our biggest achievement is encouraging conversations. And we are so proud of that level of engagement! Member conversations are likely one of the most significant ways of force multiplication. You can learn more about members conversations by reading [this post](#)

and note “two members found such huge value in the exchange – they shared best practices, made a connection, and learned from one another.”



**Member A:** We’re thinking about engaging CSS.

**Member B:** If you’re interested in engaging CSS, I am a member and in contact with their leadership. Also have good contacts into SCN & ADL if needed. We can also engage CISA.

**Member A:** How has your experience with CSS been? We’re looking at bringing them here.

**Member B:** Very good. It’s an organizational commitment, but worthwhile. I can discuss it with you by phone if you want.

**Member A:** I may take you up on it if it appears we’re solidly heading in that direction. We have an unarmed team at the shul, but I believe CSS would help us take it to another level.

### [Looking ahead to 2022](#)

There’s more work to be done! FB-ISAO is committed to continuing to build a community of Champions and Heroes. We are exploring ways to deliver more “How-To” content to the community by way of products that address their needs for how-to prepare operations plans or how-to build a security team.



Our business operations are also maturing! We are migrating our report distribution platform to a more robust platform. Cyware’s Situational Awareness Portal (CSAP) will enable the Faith-Based Information Sharing and Analysis

Organization to disseminate its reports through both a web portal and mobile app experience, and to capture analytics. Those analytics can be aggregated to provide a clearer picture of the threat landscape across the community of faith. The CSAP platform is robust and includes many capabilities beyond report distribution. As member engagement increases so will the adoption of additional capabilities.

Our membership platform is also migrating to allow for directed communication with our member and contact base. The membership provisioning platform will allow us to learn more about our members and to engage with them more deliberately to manage engagement and events. Of course, every non-profit needs funds and our new CRM will facilitate our donation portal as well.

In 2022 we will continue to host our Monthly Threat Briefs. We will also hold Community Meetings, the [Cyber Road Show](#) and [Hostile Event Preparedness Workshops](#) and many more programs that continue to deliver on our mission.

**The community of faith can be force multipliers and they can become stronger together.**

**Onwards!**