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Public Transportation ISAC Transit & Rail Intelligence Awareness Daily Report (TRIAD)

November 18, 2024

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY AND RESILIENCE (CISR) MONTH

Shields Ready

The "Shields Ready" campaign is about making resilience during incidents a reality by taking action before incidents occur. As a companion to CISA's "Shields Up" initiative, Shields Ready drives action at the intersection of critical infrastructure resilience and national preparedness. This campaign is designed to help all critical infrastructure stakeholders take action to enhance security and resilience—from industry and businesses to government entities at all levels, and even individuals by providing recommendations, products, and resources to increase individual and collective resilience for different risk contexts and conditions. By taking steps before an incident, organizations, individuals, and communities are better positioned to quickly adjust their posture for heightened risk conditions, helping to prevent incidents, reduce impact, and get things back to normal—or better—as quickly as possible. To learn more, visit: <https://www.cisa.gov/shields-ready>

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY & INCIDENT REPORTS

Several Injured, 2 Hospitalized After L.A. Bus Collides With Other Vehicles

KTLA 5, 11/15/2024

[Los Angeles, California] A bus collided with other vehicles in Los Angeles on Sunday, leaving two people hospitalized, according to authorities. The crash was reported at 11:04 a.m. in the area of 5025 S Broadway Street in South L.A. According to the Los Angeles Fire Department, an LA Metro bus was involved in a three-vehicle collision. Images captured by KTLA at the scene showed major damage sustained to the side of an SUV. A total of eight people were assessed for injuries. Of those eight, two were transported to a local hospital. A 30-year-old woman was hospitalized in serious condition, and another, unidentified person suffered minor injuries, according to authorities. An additional person declined medical transportation. <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/several-injured-2-hospitalized-after-l-a-bus-collides-with-other-vehicles/>

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15-Year-Old Boy Shot At NYC Subway Station In Latest Burst Of Youth Violence

New York Post, 11/17/2024

[Bronx, New York] A 15-year-old boy was shot at a Bronx subway station Saturday night in the latest example of spiking violence involving Big Apple youngsters. The shooting took place around 10 p.m. on the mezzanine level of the station at River Avenue and West 167th Street, an NYPD spokesman said Sunday. The teen was wounded in the leg, police said. Police officer stands by yellow tape at MTA Subway Station on East 167th Street, Bronx, New York, where a 15-year-old boy was shot in the leg. David Ayenengoye, 20, was arrested at the scene and charged with attempted murder, criminal possession of a weapon and criminal use of a firearm. No additional information was immediately available about the incident. <https://nypost.com/2024/11/17/us-news/15-year-old-boy-shot-at-nyc-subway-station-in-latest-burst-of-youth-violence/>

Man, 31, Stabbed On Brooklyn Subway Platform Overnight: Cops

New York Post, 11/16/2024

[New York] A man was stabbed in the stomach during a fight on a Brooklyn subway platform Saturday morning, police said. The victim, 31, was taken to NYU Langone Hospital in stable condition, according to police. The incident erupted on the northbound "D" train platform at Bay 50th Street and Stillwell Avenue in Gravesend shortly before 6 a.m., cops said. "It was a dispute that escalated into a fight," a department spokesman added. Cops are hunting for two suspects, one wearing a gray sweatshirt, the NYPD said. <https://nypost.com/2024/11/16/us-news/man-31-stabbed-on-brooklyn-subway-platform-overnight-cops/>

TERRORISM & EXTREMISM

Priest Stabbed In The Face During Mass As Religion-Based Hate Crime Is On The Rise Worldwide

FOX News, 11/15/2024

[Singapore] Attacks against priests appear to be on the rise around the globe following the latest assault in which a priest in Singapore was stabbed in the face during a Mass on Saturday Nov. 9., marking at least the third attack of its kind this month. Father Christopher Lee – parish priest of St. Joseph church in the west-central Singapore region of Bukit Timah – was attacked by Basnayake Keith Spencer with a knife while he was distributing Holy Communion, reported Catholic media outlet OSV News on Friday. Spencer has reportedly been charged with the "offense of voluntarily causing grievous hurt by a dangerous weapon" and remanded by a court in Singapore for three weeks. ... A report released Friday by the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) in Europe found that across 48 nations in Europe, there were over 4,480 incidents of hate crimes committed against Jews, more than 580 incidents targeting Christians and nearly 240 reported incidents against Muslims. <https://www.foxnews.com/world/priest-stabbed-face-during-mass-religion-based-hate-crime-rise-worldwide>

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ANALYST COMMENTARY: In September 2024, the Soufan Center, which is an “independent, non-profit center offering research, analysis, and strategic dialogue on global security challenges and foreign policy issues,” published a report titled “Accelerating Hate: The Impact of October 7 on Terrorism and Political Violence in the West.” The report analyzes polarizing and emotionally charged issues such as the Hamas attack on Israel and the resulting war, as well as political and religious differences in the West that can generate extreme reactions by proponents. According to the report, the radicalized activism stemming from some of these extreme viewpoints has caused a “drastic spike in antisemitism, Islamophobia, and hate crimes within the United States.” On 4 October 2024, a Catholic Priest was attacked and severely injured inside his home in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in what Police determined was a “targeted attack.” On 23 October 2024, an Episcopal Priest was attacked and stabbed while in a coffee shop in St. Augustine, Florida while wearing his clergy collar. FOX News reported in August 2024 that “Since May 2020, there have been approximately 348 attacks against U.S. Catholic churches,” according to a tracker from an organization called Catholic Vote. Priests have also been killed in Spain and Poland. FOX reports that “Hate crimes against not only Catholics, but Jews, Muslims and others, are growing across the globe, particularly in Europe and the U.S.” On 15 November 2024, the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) in Europe found that “across 48 nations in Europe, there were over 4,480 incidents of hate crimes committed against Jews, more than 580 incidents targeting Christians and nearly 240 reported incidents against Muslims.” The BBC reports that in the United Kingdom there has been a 25 percent increase in religion-based hate crimes. Due to the escalating violence against faith-based organizations or populations, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has produced a security guide titled “Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship,” which offers a holistic approach to securing faith-based organizations. The crime prevention resource can be viewed at: https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Mitigating%2520Attacks%2520on%2520Houses%2520of%2520Worship%2520Security%2520Guide_508_0.pdf.

SECURITY & SAFETY AWARENESS

Why Do People Trespass On Rail Lines? UC San Diego Study Seeks To Identify Causes

San Diego Union Tribune, 11/18/2024

[San Diego, California] Nearly every train fatality is caused by trespassing, whether intentional or the accidental result of a distracted or disoriented pedestrian. In most cases, little information is released about the circumstances or the person’s identity. Now, a team of doctors, scientists and researchers at UC San Diego are undertaking a three-year study of railroad right-of-way trespassing and ways to prevent it using a \$3.9 million grant from the Federal Railroad Administration. “This is a big issue,” said Dr. Linda Hill, a physician and professor preventative medicine at UCSD who will lead the study. “Southern California has the highest number of train strikes in the United States.” When a train hits a pedestrian, which railroad agencies call a “strike,” it’s almost always fatal. Each incident can have a

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number of disastrous and far-reaching consequences, Hill said.

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/2024/11/18/why-do-people-trespass-on-rail-lines-uc-san-diego-study-seeks-to-identify-causes/>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: The San Diego Union-Tribune reports that in 2021, “California had 310 train strikes of which 194 were fatal. In 2022, there were 343 strikes including 221 fatalities, and in 2023 there were 405 strikes with 251 people killed.” So far in 2024, there have been 23 fatal strikes on the 60-mile coastal rail corridor in San Diego County, according to North County Transit District officials, which is over twice as many as the 11 strikes reported in 2023. As a whole, the U.S. saw over 700 rail trespass fatalities in 2023. Investigators believe that many of the strikes may have been intentionally caused by the pedestrian as a means of suicide, but it is not easy to be definitive about someone’s motive and many strikes could be due to accidents, inattention, and diminished capacity due to substance abuse. The Association of American Railroads (AAR) explains that trespassing onto train tracks is the largest safety issue for freight railroads, with a person or a vehicle being hit by a train about every three hours. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) reports that 94% of all rail-related fatalities and injuries occur at rail crossings due to people and vehicles encroaching or trespassing on the rail right of way. This represents over 400 trespass fatalities a year in the U.S. The momentum of a train in motion is equal to its mass times its velocity (the speed at which it is moving). One loaded rail car can weigh up to 286,000 pounds and one locomotive weighs 432,000 pounds which means an average freight train can weigh between 100 and 250 tons, depending on its length. Once in motion, a train cannot stop immediately for people, vehicles, or obstructions. People may not realize that the width of a train body extends three feet on either side of the track rails and modern trains can be difficult to hear, especially if a pedestrian is listening to music or otherwise distracted. University of California – San Diego researchers are attempting to understand the attraction and why people trespass on rail property. UC San Diego has received a \$3.9 million federal grant to study the issue and recommend ways to improve safety and prevent fatalities. They are ideally situated to study the problem because southern California experiences almost one third of the nation’s rail trespass fatalities. Operation Life Saver is a national rail safety program that seeks to educate the public about the dangers of railroad operations and the need to stay off railroad tracks. They hold an annual rail safety week which was held most recently on 23-29 September 2024. Educational materials and training information from Operation Life Saver can be found at: <https://oli.org/>

Worthing Man Reveals How Rail Operator Is Cracking Down On Antisocial Behavior

Sussex World, 11/16/2024

[U.K] Ross Evans joined Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) as a Rail Enforcement Officer in 2020, where he worked on the frontline to help crack down on antisocial behavior for four years. Now GTR’s first-ever Safety and Security School Engagement Manager, Ross is sharing how the rail operator is marking Antisocial Behavior Awareness Week (18-24 November). ... As part of Antisocial Behavior Awareness Week, GTR’s Rail Enforcement Officers will be teaming up with the British Transport Police (BTP) to talk

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to customers about antisocial behavior and how to report incidents through the appropriate channels. The activity forms part of the train operator's new £2.5 million Antisocial Behavior Improvement Plan, which aims to reduce abuse and disorder. <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/community/worthing-man-reveals-how-rail-operator-is-cracking-down-on-antisocial-behaviour-4870972>

Crash Responder Safety Week Focused on Roadway Safety

Firehouse, 11/18/2024

"Responders Ahead! Reduce Your Speed as You Proceed." That's the theme of National Crash Responder Safety Week, which begins today and runs through Nov. 22. During a webinar by the Federal Highway Administration at 1 p.m. today, responders and others killed while working on roads will be honored while survivors will share stories. Operating on a highway or road is dangerous for not only fire and EMS personnel and police officers, but also for tow truck operators and others who respond to help motorists. The statistics collected by Emergency Responder Safety Institute (ERSI) are staggering. Thirty-five people have been killed as they worked along a highway so far this year, compared to 45 who lost their lives in 2023. They include three fire and EMS personnel; 17 law enforcement officers; 10 tow operators; three Department of Transportation (DOT) employees and one road service technician. In 2023, eight fire and EMS personnel; 14 law enforcement officers; 20 tow truck operators and three DOT employees were killed. <https://www.firehouse.com/safety-health/news/55243535/crash-responder-safety-week-focused-on-roadway-safety>

Biden Authorizes Ukraine To Use Long-Range US Weapons In Russia

CNN, 11/18/2024

President Joe Biden has authorized Ukraine to use powerful long-range American weapons inside Russia, according to two US officials familiar with the decision, as North Korean troops deploy in support of Moscow's effort. The decision comes as Moscow has deployed nearly 50,000 troops to Kursk, the southern Russian region where Kyiv launched its surprise counteroffensive in the summer, to prepare to take back territory. The weapons are intended to be used primarily in Kursk for now, a US official said. With its huge troop amassment there, Russia is trying to take Kursk off the table as a potential bargaining chip for the Ukrainians in any future peace talks, something that the US does not want to see. The idea is to help Ukraine hold on to Kursk for as long as possible, the official said. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/11/17/politics/biden-authorizes-ukraine-missiles-russian-targets/index.html>

Rain And Snow Fronts Expected Before And During Thanksgiving Week, Forecasters Say

NBC, 11/17/2024

Multiple weather fronts will push rain and snow into the Midwest, the Southeast, the mid-Atlantic and the Northeast ahead of Thanksgiving week and some of the year's busiest travel days. Late Sunday, more than 25 million people were covered by National Weather Service watches and warnings related to winter storm activity, including those covering winds, flooding and freezing conditions. Rain and gusty

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thunderstorms were forecast for parts of the central and southern Plains on Monday, and flood watches covered 4 million people from northwest Texas through central Oklahoma, federal and NBC News forecasters said. Severe weather for West Texas, including Abilene, Wichita Falls and Midland, was likely to bring 60 mph winds, thunderstorms and even a possible tornado, NBC News forecasters said.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/weather/winter-weather/rain-snow-fronts-expected-thanksgiving-week-forecasters-say-rcna180566>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: According to the most recent American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates, 79.9 million people will be traveling over 50 miles this coming Thanksgiving holiday, from 26 November to 2 December. This is an increase of approximately 1.7 million travelers over the 2023 numbers, and approximately 71.74 million will be traveling over 50 miles to their destination by car – a 1.9 percent increase in auto traffic from last year. In addition to the increase in privately owned vehicle traffic, the AAA estimates that approximately 2.28 million people will use alternative surface transportation methods to reach their destinations. This represents a 9 percent increase over 2023, during which 2.09 million people used other methods of surface transportation. AAA attributes much of this rise in alternative transportation methods to the use of cruises, though public transportation will likely see an influx of riders this year over previous holiday seasons. While it is too early to accurately forecast weather during the holiday week, the U.S. Climate Prediction Center's six- to 10-day weather outlook has estimated that "California, the Pacific Northwest, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and some Great Lakes states, such as Wisconsin and Michigan, were 'leaning' in favor of above-average rain." AAA's estimates, which include estimated peak congestion times for individual large metropolitan public transportation organizations, can be found at: <https://newsroom.aaa.com/2024/11/nearly-80-million-americans-expected-to-travel-over-thanksgiving/>

EPA Clean Ports Grants Pay for Hydrogen Equipment, Planning *Transport Topics, 11/12/2024*

Port facilities across six states will receive millions of dollars in federal funding for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles and fueling and charging infrastructure through a round of grants recently awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Ports in California, Hawaii, Michigan, Illinois, Alaska and South Carolina will receive a share of about \$2.9 billion in Clean Ports Program grants allocated through the Inflation Reduction Act. The grants were earmarked to help states lower emissions at the nation's ports through the purchase of zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure. "The proposed projects include over 1,500 units of cargo handling equipment, 1,000 drayage trucks, 10 locomotives and 20 vessels as well as shore power systems and solar power generation," EPA said when announcing the winning applicants. <https://www.ttnews.com/articles/epa-clean-ports-hydrogen>

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CYBERSECURITY

Flexible Structure of Zip Archives Exploited to Hide Malware Undetected

Dark Reading, 11/11/2024

Threat actors are exploiting the various ways that zip files combine multiple archives into one file as an anti-detection tactic in phishing attacks that deliver various Trojan malware strains, including SmokeLoader. Attackers are abusing the structural flexibility of zip files through a technique known as concatenation, a method that involves appending multiple zip archives into a single file, new research from Perception Point has found. In this method, the combined file appears as one archive that actually contains multiple central directories, each pointing to different sets of file entries. However, "this discrepancy in handling concatenated zips allows attackers to evade detection tools by hiding malicious payloads in parts of the archive that some zip readers cannot or do not access," Arthur Vaiselbuh, Windows internals engineer, and Peleg Cabra, product marketing manager from Perception Point, wrote in a recent blog post. <https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/flexible-structure-zip-archives-exploited-hide-malware-undetected>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: The recent discovery of zip file concatenation (the method of combining multiple zip archives into a single file) abuse in phishing attacks shows us how attackers leverage overlooked technical nuances to bypass security tools. By combining multiple archives into a single zip file, cybercriminals can embed malicious payloads that evade detection by many popular archive readers. This tactic is now being used to distribute Trojans like SmokeLoader, which can download additional malware such as banking Trojans or ransomware. The core of the issue lies in how zip readers handle concatenated files. For example, 7.zip shows only the first archive's contents, often missing malicious files in subsequent layers. Windows File Explorer may fail outright or expose only the malicious segment if the file extension is changed to .rar. WinRAR, however, reveals all layers, making it a rare exception. These discrepancies enable attackers to exploit specific tools users rely on, slipping past defenses. A typical phishing attack using this method involves emails that impersonate trusted entities like shipping companies, attaching files disguised as critical documents. These attachments often bypass basic checks by exploiting their mislabeled extensions and structural quirks. When users open them, they unwittingly trigger the hidden malware. Mitigation requires heightened awareness and robust tools. Users should remain cautious of unsolicited emails, especially those demanding urgent action. Enterprises should adopt advanced threat detection solutions capable of recursively analyzing deeply nested and concatenated archives. While 7.zip developers deem this behavior "intentional functionality," organizations must fill the gap by deploying solutions that comprehensively analyze and detect such evasive techniques. Proactive measures and improved scrutiny of file-handling tools are critical to countering this sophisticated evasion strategy.

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