



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 22 March 2007

Current
Nationwide
Threat Level is
ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS
[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)
<http://www.dhs.gov/>

Daily Highlights

- The Charlotte Observer reports North Carolina has issued nearly 27,000 driver's licenses based on invalid Social Security numbers, presenting possible security threats and potentially worsening the problem of identify theft. (See item [10](#))
- The Associated Press reports millions of doses of flu vaccine will expire at midnight June 30, 2007, unsold during this year's mild flu season — still perfectly good, and possibly useful for a few more years, the vaccine will wind up being destroyed before a new supply is guaranteed. (See item [22](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation and Border Security](#); [Postal and Shipping](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 21, Aftenposten (Norway)* — **Nuclear plant threatened.** The Forsmark nuclear power plant in Sweden has been partially evacuated after receiving a bomb threat. "We take this threat seriously and are preparing now to look for a possible bomb," said Uppsala police spokesperson Christer Nordström. Police surrounded the nuclear plant which is near the city of Uppsala, north of capital Stockholm. Road blocks have been erected in a large area around the facility. Nordström said the facility was not considered to be in imminent danger. Administrative staff had been evacuated but the plant was still in operation and operative personnel were working

normally. The Forsmark plant was forced to close a month ago after the discovery of security irregularities.

Source: <http://www.aftenposten.no/english/world/article1700744.ece>

2. *March 21, United Press International* — **Fuel shortage limits U.S. nuke power plans.** U.S. scientists say dwindling supplies of nuclear power plant fuel might limit the expansion of nuclear energy in many nations. Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) report commercial and government inventories are nearly depleted and uranium production meets only about 65 percent of reactor requirements. Thomas Neff of MIT's Center for International Studies said among numerous problems is the fact China, India and Russia have plans for massive deployments of nuclear power and are trying to lock up supplies from countries on which the U.S. has traditionally relied. As a result, Neff said the U.S. could be the last one to buy and it could pay the highest prices, if it can get uranium at all. "The take-home message is that if we're going to increase use of nuclear power, we need massive new investments in capacity to mine uranium and facilities to process it," he said.
Source: http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/Science/fuel_shortage_limits_us_nuke_power_plans/20070321-074635-5559r/
3. *March 21, Associated Press* — **Study: U.S. cities unprepared for nuclear attack.** The largest U.S. cities are catastrophically unprepared for a nuclear attack and the widespread medical emergencies that would result, according to a new study from the University of Georgia. The three-year study paints a horrifying picture. Millions dead. Hundreds of thousands more wounded with burns and radiation poisoning. The most critical hospital infrastructure in downtowns destroyed and outlying medical facilities unable to cope with the mass burn injuries. "It would be hard for me to see how we'll make it more than 10 years without a nuclear weapon being detonated on American soil," said Cham Dallas, center director and study co-author. The study looks at four cities — Atlanta, New York City, Chicago, and Washington, DC — and simulates the impact a 20 kiloton and a 550 kiloton nuclear detonation would have. The study calls for states to stock thousands of mobile hospital beds in rural areas and make plans for fast transport of the equipment. It also calls for the storage of medical records away from city centers so that they could be accessed if the hospital is destroyed. Cities also should buy geographic information system devices that pinpoint where toxic chemical or radioactive agents have been released.
Source: http://www.accessnorthga.com/news/ap_newfullstory.asp?ID=895_00
4. *March 20, BBC News* — **Russia's mine safety woes.** The Russian Prime Minister, Mikhail Fradkov, has called for tougher safety measures after one of the country's worst mine accidents in a generation. It appears most of the Ulyanovskaya mine's management was underground at the time of the explosion, which left more than 100 people dead. Russia and other former Soviet republics have a particularly poor safety record. Statistically, the region comes second only to China in terms of annual fatalities. When the sector embarked upon serious reform, after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, most of the mines were already at least 40 years old. Many dated back to the 1930s, opened in the Stalinist drive for industrialization and energy, a process in which human life was expendable. Mining deaths in Russia reached their peak in the late 1990s. A lack of funds led to antiquated equipment not being repaired, and to managers failing to provide for even a minimum of safety standards. Methane detectors, for example, were simply not available in many mines.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6470949.stm>

5. *March 20, Nuclear Regulatory Commission* — **Nuclear gauge reported stolen in Philadelphia.** Authorities are seeking the return of a portable nuclear gauge that was stolen from a worksite in Philadelphia, PA, on Monday, March 19. The gauge, containing small amounts of radioactive material, is used for industrial purposes such as measuring the density of soil at construction sites. Underwood Engineering reported the gauge and its bright–yellow transportation case were stolen from a truck parked at a construction worksite at Audenreid High School Replacement Project at 3301 Tasker St., Philadelphia. The theft occurred between 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. EDT on March 19. The gauge holds small quantities of cesium–137 and americium–241. It consists of a shielding container with a plunger–type handle protruding from the top to be used to extend and then retract the radioactive source from the shielded position. When not in use, the handle is normally locked. As long as the source is in the shielded position, the gauge does not present a hazard to the public. However, any attempt to tamper with the source would subject the person doing so to potential radiation exposure.
Source: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2007/07-008i.html>

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Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials Sector

6. *March 20, Associated Press* — **Fire at Iowa plant prompts evacuations.** A factory fire spewing what authorities believed was toxic smoke prompted evacuations Tuesday, March 20, of homes and farms near Plainfield, IA. The fire erupted in the afternoon at the Environmental Lubricants Manufacturing Inc. plant, which produces soybean–based grease. Plumes of thick black smoke spread across the area and could be seen as far as 30 miles away. Authorities closed a highway as a precaution.
Source: <http://www.al.com/newsflash/national/index.ssf?/base/national-82/1174428850223100.xml&storylist=national>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

7. *March 22, Associated Press* — **Growth rate of defense contracts slows.** For the first time since the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the annual growth rate of Pentagon–awarded contracts has slowed to 8.7 percent after five straight years of double–digit increases, according to a World Policy Institute report. Released on the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, the report from the New York–based think tank says defense spending increases slowed in 2006 as the demand for personnel, operations and maintenance began to drag down spending increases on research and development and building of weapons systems. Defense contractors continue to benefit from the highest levels of defense spending since World War II, says William Hartung, a military spending analyst at the World Policy Institute.
Source: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/bal-te.pentagon-21mar21.0.7440388.story?coll=bal-nationworld-headlines>

8. *March 21, Aviation Week* — **Air Force to resolicit bids on CSAR-X.** The Air Force intends to resolicit bids from Lockheed Martin, Sikorsky Aircraft and Boeing in the recent competition to replace the current Air Force fleet of combat, search and rescue (CSAR-X) helicopters, but the service is not looking to reopen the competition to new bidders, Secretary Michael Wynne told reporters Tuesday, March 20. Wynne, speaking after testifying in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee, also said the Air Force will look to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to be its "quality agent" in the competition. GAO auditors are working on commentary to numerous bid protest concerns, which are expected by mid-June, according to Wynne. The Air Force hopes it beat that deadline, and will try to be ready to distribute new solicitation information to CSAR-X vendors soon thereafter.

Source: http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story.jsp?id=news/BID_S03217.xml&headline=Air%20Force%20To%20Resolicit%20Bids%20On%20CSAR-X.%20Wynne%20Says%20&channel=defense

9. *March 20, CongressDaily* — **Air Force expects future airlift fleet to exceed 300 planes.** Senior Air Force officials acknowledged Tuesday, March 20, that the Pentagon's current plans for strategic airlift are not adequate to meet the needs of an Army and Marine Corps that are growing by 92,000 troops. Chief of Staff Michael Moseley told the Senate Armed Services Committee that the Air Force is reviewing the matter and expects this summer to know how many long-distance aircraft it will need to support and transport the burgeoning ground forces. The military's current plans call for 300 strategic lift aircraft, which include C-17 Globemaster III and C-5 Galaxy planes. Moseley said he envisioned the future airlift fleet exceeding 300 planes. But the Air Force would like to retire 25 to 30 of the "worst actors" in the C-5 fleet, which would free up money to buy additional C-17s and continue modernization efforts on the remaining C-5s, Moseley said.

Source: [http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=36415&dcn=to daysnews](http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=36415&dcn=to%20daysnews)

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Banking and Finance Sector

10. *March 21, Charlotte Observer (NC)* — **Audit reveals license flaws.** North Carolina has issued nearly 27,000 driver's licenses based on invalid Social Security numbers, presenting possible security threats and potentially worsening the problem of identify theft, the state auditor's office reported Tuesday, March 20. In August, however, the state Division of Motor Vehicles instituted a tougher law that, along with an existing online verification program, can ensure that the state issues only valid licenses, according to the auditor's office. Commissioner George Tatum said the DMV will notify state and federal authorities in cases involving licenses with invalid numbers that were obtained fraudulently. State officials said it's difficult at this point to estimate how many might be cases of fraud. North Carolina State Auditor Les Merritt's office discovered the problem when it compared the 8.1 million N.C. driver's licenses currently in use with the Social Security Administration's database of valid numbers, as well as the federal agency's list of numbers issued to people who are now deceased.

Source: <http://www.charlotte.com/112/story/58095.html>

11. *March 21, Websense* — **Phishing Alert: National Collegiate Underwriters & Administrators, Inc.** Websense Security Labs has received reports of a phishing attack that

targets customers of National Collegiate Underwriters & Administrators. Users receive a spoofed email message which claims that if they take a survey to give feedback on the quality of services, they will get a \$50 credit to their account. The email provides a link to a phishing site that attempts to collect personal and account information. This phishing site is hosted in the Republic of Korea and was up at the time of this alert.

Source: <http://www.websense.com/securitylabs/alerts/alert.php?AlertID=756>

12. *March 21, Finextra* — **U.S. banks warned on telephone banking security.** Telephone banking is still popular in the U.S., with over 52 million Americans actively using the services, but many banks are failing to implement strong authentication methods for the channel and are leaving customers vulnerable to fraudsters, according to a study from Javelin Strategy & Research. Now that banks have helped increase awareness of phishing, new fraud variations such as 'pretexting' and 'vishing' have emerged. Pretexting involves fraudsters calling customers and conning them into disclosing personal data over the phone. This data is then used to access accounts via telephone banking services. Vishing involves fraudsters using voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology to con customers into disclosing personal data. In one version of the scam customers receive an e-mail telling them to call a bogus "customer service" number. Those who call are led through a series of voice-prompted menus that ask for personal data. In another version customers are contacted via VoIP instead of by e-mail. The call—which could either be a real person or a recorded message—tells customers action is needed to protect their account. They are then asked to disclose account numbers and passwords.

Study: http://www.javelinstrategy.com/uploads/705.RF_TelephoneBankingAuthentication_Brochure.pdf

Source: <http://www.finextra.com/fullstory.asp?id=16693>

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Transportation and Border Security Sector

13. *March 21, Associated Press* — **American wants to re-establish routes.** American Airlines said it is working to re-establish regional air service to six cities in Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri after the Federal Aviation Administration grounded all RegionsAir planes earlier this month. Tennessee-based RegionsAir had operated as American Connection or Continental Connection in seven states. Fort Worth-based American Airlines, a subsidiary of AMR Corp., said people whose RegionsAir flights were canceled will be rebooked without penalty or can have full refunds for that portion of their travel.

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/070321/american_airlines_great_lakes.html?.v=1

14. *March 21, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO-07-633T: Maritime Security: Public Safety Consequences of a Liquefied Natural Gas Spill Need Clarification (Testimony).** Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is a supercooled liquid form of natural gas. U.S. LNG imports are projected to increase to about 17 percent of natural gas supplies by 2030, from about three percent today. To meet this increase, energy companies have submitted 32 applications for new terminals. If a terrorist attack on an LNG tanker caused a spill, potential hazards, such as fire, asphyxiation, and explosions, could result. The Department of Energy (DOE) recently funded a study to conduct small- and large-scale experiments to refine and validate models that calculate how heat from large LNG fires would affect the public. This testimony is based on the

Government Accountability Office's (GAO) recently released report, *Maritime Security: Public Safety Consequences of a Terrorist Attack on a Tanker Carrying Liquefied Natural Gas Need Clarification* (GAO-07-316). To prepare this report, GAO examined the results of six recent unclassified studies on the effects of an LNG spill and convened a panel of 19 experts to identify areas of agreement on the consequences of a terrorist attack on an LNG tanker. GAO recommended that DOE incorporate the key issues GAO's expert panel identified, particularly the potential for cascading failure, into its current LNG study. DOE concurred with this recommendation.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07633thigh.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-633T>

15. *March 21, Government Accountability Office* — GAO-07-625T: Federal Aviation

Administration: Observations on Selected Changes to FAA's Funding and Budget Structure in the Administration's Reauthorization Proposal (Testimony).

Recently, the administration submitted a proposal for reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the excise taxes that fund most of its budget. FAA's current authorization expires in 6 months. The proposal calls for major changes to FAA's funding and budget structure that are intended to address concerns about the long-term revenue adequacy, equity, and efficiency of FAA's current funding structure and to provide a more stable, reliable basis for funding a new air traffic control system that FAA is developing (at an estimated cost of \$15 billion to 22 billion through 2025) to meet forecasted increases in air travel demand. The proposal would introduce cost-based charges for commercial users of air traffic control services, eliminate many current taxes, substantially raise fuel taxes for general aviation users, charge commercial and general aviation users a fuel tax to pay primarily for airport capital improvements, modify FAA's budget accounts to align with specific FAA activities, and link the portion of FAA's budget that comes from the Treasury's General Fund with public benefits FAA provides. This statement offers the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) observations on the proposed changes in FAA's (1) funding and (2) budget structure and is based on GAO's analysis of FAA's proposal and a recent GAO report on FAA funding options.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07625thigh.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-625T>

16. *March 21, Department of Homeland Security* — DHS: Coast Guard makes record maritime

cocaine seizure. The U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration announced Wednesday, March 21, the record maritime seizure of approximately 42,845 pounds of cocaine aboard the Panamanian flagged motor vessel *Gatun* on Sunday off the coast of Panama by the San Diego-based Coast Guard cutter *Hamilton* and the Alameda, CA-based Coast Guard cutter *Sherman*. A Coast Guard C-130 maritime patrol aircraft spotted the *Gatun* approximately 20 miles southwest of Isla de Coiba, Panama on Saturday. The Coast Guard obtained flag-state consent to board the vessel through a maritime agreement between the U.S. and Panama. A Coast Guard boarding team conducted a search and discovered the cocaine hidden in two containers aboard the ship. The 14 Panamanian and Mexican crewmembers of the *Gatun* were arrested and are being transferred to the U.S. and Panama for prosecution. "This operation is a prime example of interagency teamwork among the DEA, the Coast Guard, and other Homeland Security and Department of Justice components," said Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff.

Source: http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1174494402751.shtm

17. *March 20, Government Computer News* — **DHS poised to launch 10–fingerprint scanner pilots.** Federal officials expect to test the 10–fingerprint scanner technology that they have persuaded vendors to develop at 10 airports this summer, a senior Department of Homeland Security (DHS) official said at the FOSE trade show and conference. P.T. Wright, acting deputy director of the U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (U.S. VISIT) program, said Tuesday, March 20, that the tests would evaluate the performance of two scanners the department ordered last month. DHS already has fielded the new generation of 10–fingerprint scanners at six consulates and embassies overseas, Wright said. DHS has spurred companies to develop the new generation of smaller, faster 10–fingerprint scanners during the past year via a series of technical meetings, industry days and technology discussions driven by U.S. VISIT's prospective purchase of thousands of the units. For this summer's tests, U.S. Visit officials plan to deploy the scanners at airports in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, Houston, New York City, Orlando, San Francisco, and Fort Wayne, IN.
Source: http://www.gcn.com/online/vol1_no1/43352-1.html

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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Agriculture Sector

18. *March 20, University of Arizona* — **New virus attacks melons, cucumbers and squash.** A plant virus identified for the first time last fall on Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, melon and squash crops has the potential to cause severe damage on upcoming crops. Cucurbit yellow stunting disorder virus (CYSDV) can infect members of the botanical family Cucurbitaceae, including all types of melons, summer and winter squash, pumpkins, gourds and cucumbers. Severe commercial damage occurred in 2006 on melons in southern Arizona, and on melons and squash in Sonora, Mexico. "What I observed in the cucurbit crop in Mexico was astounding — one–hundred percent infection and extremely severe symptoms in watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe, spaghetti squash, acorn and kabocha squash, and zucchini," says Judith Brown, virologist in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at The University of Arizona. She isolated and identified the virus from plant samples submitted to her by growers both in Yuma, AZ, and Sonora, Mexico. CYSDV symptoms develop first on older leaves and mimic water stress. Interveinal chlorosis — a yellowing between the veins — streaks the leaves, which later turn bright yellow. As the plant's internal transport system breaks down, it tries to save itself by dropping older leaves. Without enough leaves, the plant's vigor is reduced and it can't support and nourish the fruit.
Source: <http://uanews.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/UANews.woa/26/wa/SRStoryDetails?ArticleID=13711>

19. *March 19, Government Executive* — **Senate bill would transfer agriculture inspectors out of DHS.** A bill recently introduced in the Senate would transfer agriculture inspection duties from

the Department Homeland Security (DHS) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), where they originally resided. The legislation would shift the duties for inspections at all U.S. entry points from DHS' Customs and Border Protection bureau to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Source: [http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=36398&dcn=to daysnews](http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=36398&dcn=to%20daysnews)

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Food Sector

20. *March 21, Associated Press* — **South Korea, U.S. to extend beef talks.** South Korea and the U.S. plan to hold an extra day of talks on resuming trade in American beef and other agriculture issues, an official said Wednesday, March 21. Negotiators were to finish three days of talks on Wednesday, but made no major progress and planned another session Thursday, said Yoon Young-goo, an Agriculture and Forestry Ministry official. The talks are aimed at bridging gaps in the agricultural component of ongoing free trade talks between the two countries as well as over U.S. beef, which has been absent from South Korean markets for more than three years. South Korea banned American beef after mad cow disease was discovered in the U.S. in December 2003. Efforts to restart imports were stymied by the discovery of prohibited bone fragments in three shipments last year. South Korea agreed to resume limited imports of U.S. beef last year, but stipulated that only boneless beef from cows under 30 months of age be allowed.

Source: http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/03/21/business/AS-GEN-SK_orea-US-Beef.php

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Water Sector

21. *March 20, Sacramento Bee (CA)* — **Unknown material causes facility to violate state water law.** An unknown substance or chemical was found in the city of Woodland, CA's Water Pollution Control Facility in February, leading to a violation of the state Clean Water Act. The substance, described as harmless to humans and wildlife, caused unspecified monetary damage to Woodland's sewer treatment operations. The city discovered an orange-colored substance containing pulpy material in the wastewater it treats and releases into the Tule Canal. The substance caused the treated water to have higher levels of turbidity, or cloudiness, than is allowed by the state, Chief Plant Operator Mark Hierholzer said. The city increased its treatment process since identifying the problem February 13 and is offering a \$2,000 reward to help find the source of the contamination.

Source: http://subscriber.sacbee.com/user_registration/login/?goto=http%3A//www.sacbee.com/101/story/140753.html

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Public Health Sector

22.

March 20, Associated Press — **Millions of flu shots to be destroyed.** Millions of doses of flu vaccine will expire at midnight June 30, 2007, unsold during this year's mild flu season. Still perfectly good, and possibly useful for a few more years, the vaccine will wind up being destroyed. This annual ritual is supposed to ensure that Americans get the most up-to-date vaccine, but the leftovers -- more than 10 million of a record 110 million doses produced -- will be destroyed before a new supply is guaranteed. For years, policymakers have talked about letting doctors keep unused vaccine until new doses are in hand, donating leftover supplies to poor countries, or pushing back the expiration date. Wasted vaccine means lost money for drug companies and one stopped making flu shots because of it -- setting the stage for a flu shot shortage in 2004. Having no vaccine in the summer deprives travelers of the chance to get a shot before they visit places where flu is in season. It also prevents summer vaccinations for children, who need two doses the first time around.

Source: http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/03/20/ap/health/main2590_280.shtml

23. *March 20, Reuters* — WHO trying to get bird flu vaccine agreement. World Health Organization (WHO) officials said on Tuesday, March 20, they are "scurrying" to reach an agreement that ensures developing countries most at risk from an influenza pandemic will get the vaccines they need. Indonesia has put the issue on the front burner by saying it will only share samples of the H5N1 avian influenza virus if it has guarantees they will not be used to make vaccines that will profit a company or another country. This worries scientists and health officials. "We need to be keeping tabs on this virus on a monthly basis," David Heymann, WHO's top bird flu official, said. Officials in Indonesia, a developing country that is by far the nation worst hit by avian influenza with 66 deaths, fear it will be last on the list to get a vaccine against H5N1 should the disease evolve into a pandemic. Sixteen manufacturers from 10 countries are developing prototype pandemic influenza vaccines against H5N1. WHO has called a meeting next week to sort out the best ways of making sure companies can make more vaccines against influenza, and that these vaccines will be available to all who need them.

Source: http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSHO081345200703_20

24. *March 20, Associated Press* — European Union to ask for plan to fight tuberculosis. The European Union (EU) will ask all member states to draft action plans to prevent the spread of tuberculosis, as a new drug-resistant form of the disease is becoming an increasing threat, the EU health commissioner said Tuesday, March 20. Markos Kyprianou said the EU must increase its efforts to fight tuberculosis as the emergence of a new extremely drug-resistant strain (XDR-TB) has caused increasing concern about a widespread epidemic in Europe. The high levels of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis in the Baltic countries, Eastern Europe and Central Asia have already led international health officials to create the "Stop TB Partnership in Europe" to fight the epidemic in Europe.

Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory?id=2966673>

25. *March 20, CIDRAP News* — Baby in Hong Kong infected with H9N2 avian flu. Hong Kong officials have reported that a nine-month-old girl is infected with the strain of avian influenza known as H9N2, which has caused mild human illness in the city three times before and is considered capable of evolving into a pandemic strain. The Hospital Authority in Hong Kong said the baby girl has only mild symptoms but is in isolation at Princess Margaret Hospital, according to an Agence France-Presse (AFP) report. Thomas Tsang, head of the Hong Kong Center for Health Protection, said test results today confirmed that the virus is H9N2. The same

strain infected two girls in Hong Kong in 1999 and a five-year-old boy there in 2003; all had mild illnesses and recovered. A report from Deutsche Presse-Agentur said the girl was believed to have contracted the virus from a market in a densely populated area of Hong Kong.

Source: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/mar2007h9n2.html>

- 26. *March 20, Institute for Genomic Research* — Antibiotic resistance in plague.** A small piece of DNA that helps bacteria commonly found in U.S. meat and poultry resist several antibiotics has also been found in the plague bacillus *Yersinia pestis*, gene sequence researchers report. The ability to resist many of the antibiotics used against plague has been found so far in only a single case of the disease in Madagascar. But because the same ability is present in other kinds of bacteria from a broad range of livestock, antibiotic resistance could potentially spread to other *Y. pestis* and also other bacterial pathogens. Genetic ability to disable antibiotics, including multidrug resistance (MDR) sequences, is carried on plasmids, small circles of DNA that are passed easily between bacteria. In this study, the same MDR plasmids found in the *Y. pestis* from Madagascar were also present in bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *Escherichia coli* found in retail samples of beef, pork, chicken, and turkey from several U.S. states.

Source: http://www.tigr.org/news/pr_03_20_07.shtml

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Government Sector

- 27. *March 21, Government Accountability Office* — GAO-07-630T: Homeland Security: Continuing Attention to Privacy Concerns is Needed as Programs Are Developed (Testimony).** Advances in information technology make it easier than ever for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other agencies to obtain and process information about citizens and residents in many ways and for many purposes. The demands of the war on terror also drive agencies to extract as much value as possible from the information available to them, adding to the potential for compromising privacy. Recognizing that securing the homeland and protecting the privacy rights of individuals are both important goals, the Congress has asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to perform several reviews of DHS programs and their privacy implications over the past several years. For this hearing, GAO was asked to testify on key privacy challenges facing DHS. To address this issue, GAO identified and summarized issues raised in its previous reports on privacy and assessed recent governmentwide privacy guidance. Because GAO has already made privacy-related recommendations in its earlier reports, it is making no further recommendations at this time. Officials have taken action or have said they are in the process of taking action to address the recommendations. Implementation is critical to ensuring that privacy protections are in place throughout key DHS programs and activities.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07630thigh.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-630T>

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Emergency Services Sector

28. *March 22, Lufkin Daily News (TX)* — **Twelve–county disaster drill in Texas goes smoothly.** There was a series of catastrophes in Lufkin, TX, on Tuesday, March 20, as the city took part in a simulated disaster drill involving emergency personnel and various agencies from the 12–county region surrounding Lufkin. It was hosted by the city of Lufkin, along with the National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center. The idea of the drill was to open communication lines between officials of different counties and get to know them better under simulated emergency response situations. Duane Freeman, Lufkin assistant fire chief, wrote out a message for the Ham radio operators to be transmitted to emergency officials. "You know, Ham radio is the best (in an emergency)," he said. When asked about the main obstacle in this drill, Freeman said it was the wattage difference in hand–held and car radios. Car radios operate on 100 watts, while hand–held radios operate on 5 watts. This makes the quality of car radios better than hand–held radios. And one of the encouraging things was that in spite of the heavy traffic, communication was without confusion, he said.
Source: http://www.lufkindailynews.com/news/content/news/stories/2007/03/21/when_disaster_strikes.html

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Information Technology and Telecommunications Sector

29. *March 21, Federal Computer Week* — **Survey: Customers less satisfied with agency Websites.** Despite the large effort to make government Websites more user friendly through the application of e–government, customer satisfaction rates have declined slightly in the last quarter, according to the most recent quarterly survey of agency sites. The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) found that the federal government’s aggregate score of 73.4 is 0.7 percent lower than it was last quarter and slightly lower than the 73.5 percent it was one year ago. Many factors contribute to this plateau, including heightened customer expectations based on rapid private–sector Website improvements and popular formats that do not apply to government agencies. Customer standards and expectations continue to rise, especially as many private–sector sites use Web 2.0 and rich text applications to make portals more interactive and user–centric. By default, the increased use of Web 2.0 puts e–government Websites at a disadvantage, because the applications’ high prices do not fit into federal budgets and the user–centric rich text, user–focused format often does not apply to federal portals. The Office of Management and Budget announced that it would add customer satisfaction measurement to the President’s Management Agenda score card for e–government in December.
ACSI: http://www.theacsi.org/images/stories/images/govsatscores/e-gov_Q1_2007_press_release.pdf
Source: <http://fcw.com/article97987-03-21-07-Web>
30. *March 21, SC Magazine* — **Mozilla fixes regression bugs in latest.** Seeking to correct a number of regression bugs, Mozilla has pushed out an update for its Firefox web browser just three weeks after releasing a prior update. The latest upgrades—Firefox 2.0.0.3 and Firefox 1.5.0.11—correct a low–risk file transfer protocol (FTP) port–scanning vulnerability, according to a Mozilla security advisory. But the main purpose of the release is to patch a number of web compatibility flaws inadvertently included as part of Firefox 2.0.0.2 and 1.5.0.10.
Original advisory: <http://www.mozilla.org/security/announce/2007/mfsa2007-11.html>

Source: <http://scmagazine.com/us/news/article/645274/mozilla-fixes-Regression-bugs-latest-firefox-update/>

31. *March 21, CNET News.com* — **Tool turns unsuspecting surfers into hacking help.** A security researcher has found a way hackers can make PCs of unsuspecting Web surfers do their dirty work, without having to actually commandeer the systems. A new security tool called Jikto is a Web application vulnerability scanner. It can silently crawl and audit public Web sites, and then send the results to a third party, said Jikto creator Billy Hoffman, a researcher at Web security firm SPI Dynamics. Jikto can be embedded into an attacker's Web site or injected into trusted sites by exploiting a common Web security hole known as a cross-site scripting flaw, he said. Jikto runs in a Web browser and distributes the bug-hunting task across multiple PCs. Hoffman, who developed the tool as a way to advance Web security, plans to release Jikto publicly later this week at the ShmooCon hacker event in Washington, D.C.

Source: http://news.com.com/Tool+turns+unsuspecting+surfers+into+hacking+help/2100-1002_3-6169034.html?tag=cd.top

32. *March 20, Federal Computer Week* — **DoD at work on more wireless policies.** The Department of Defense's (DoD) chief information officer is working on more policies to mitigate the risks posed by the wide use of wireless networks, a DoD official said Tuesday, March 20. One policy will address the issue of remote DoD users connecting through non-secure wireless links, said Mark Norton, an engineer with the wireless directorate of the department's CIO office. Norton spoke at the FOSE conference in Washington, DC. A possible solution could be to link DoD's public key infrastructure and common access card to wireless networks, Norton said. DoD is also concerned about wireless denial of service attacks, in which outsiders shut down a network by overwhelming it with traffic. There is no good solution to preventing those attacks except to build redundancy through backup systems, Norton said. Another problem that remains unsolved is geo-location, in which wireless links reveal where troops are located, Norton added. Unprotected data is another concern. A solution exists — DoD mandates the FIPS 140-2 standard for unclassified data and FIPS 140-1 for secret data — but the onus is on vendors to get certified, he said.

Source: <http://fcw.com/article97985-03-20-07-Web>

33. *March 20, Federal Times* — **OMB rules to standardize PC configurations across government.** What's good for the Air Force is apparently good for the whole federal government, as far as PC configurations go. Media reports and a well-placed industry source indicate that the Office of Management and Budget is about to mandate the same kind of software configuration for government PCs that the Air Force set up with Microsoft three years ago. The move is expected to be completed by Feb. 1, according to press reports. Having standard configurations cuts costs and boosts security, Lt. Gen. Michael Peterson, the Air Force's chief information officer, said in January. "The licenses were less, the security increased and it drove the touch maintenance, or manpower required to sustain the network, down by about 40 percent, and it may be more when we learn how to operate in that new environment," Peterson said. He noted that while such configurations are installed and generally maintained over networks, systems must occasionally be manually updated. "But literally, in 99 percent of the cases, any changes that have to be made are very straightforward, very simple and not costly."

Source: <http://federaltimes.com/index.php?S=2636501>

- 34. *March 19, Government Computer News* — Certification on the voting ballot.** The security features of electronic voting systems will undergo upgraded certification testing in the latest round of election technology reforms Congress mandated following the 2000 presidential election. The federal Election Assistance Commission, which Congress created as part of the Help America Vote Act of 2002, has been overseeing the development of voting–system testing as well as a \$500 million federal grant program to help states purchase voting IT. The commission is working with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to develop two key upgrades to voting system certification: an overhauled version of the federal government’s 2005 Voluntary Voting System Guidelines, and a group of standard public testing suites for use by accredited test laboratories. The new testing suites will replace existing proprietary testing methods. The software–independent technology method calls for voting systems to maintain completely separate internal audit trails to verify voting data. Donetta Davidson, commission chairwoman said NIST likely would present its overhauled version of the voting system guidelines this summer, but that the commission likely wouldn’t approve them until next year.

Source: http://www.gcn.com/print/26_06/43304-1.html

Internet Alert Dashboard

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Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Commercial Facilities/Real Estate, Monument & Icons Sector

- 35. *March 20, Green Bay Press–Gazette (WI)* — Elite ATF team joins Sheboygan fire probe.** Tuesday, March 20, the day after a monstrous fire destroyed the unfinished Landmark Square senior living center in Sheboygan, WI, a team of two dozen federal fire investigators is on its way to lead the investigation into the fire’s origin. The 73–unit, \$13.25 million complex, which covered most of a city block downtown at North Sixth Street and Niagara Avenue, was almost completed and due to open in May. The blaze that destroyed it was one of the largest in the city’s history, fire officials said. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, which had several officials on the scene on Monday, now is sending one of four National Response Teams to Sheboygan, said Bernard Zapor, special agent in charge of ATF’s St. Paul division, which includes Wisconsin. The team — which includes fire investigators, a dog trained to detect accelerants and explosives, a chemist, an electrical engineer, and special agents trained in arson and explosives — totals about 24 people, Zapor said. Police interviewed one witness who lives several blocks from Landmark and reported seeing someone dressed in black running away from the building moments after explosions that sparked the blaze.

Source: <http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AI=D=/20070320/GPG0101/70320034/1207/GPGnews>

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General Sector

36. *March 21, Los Angeles Times* — Venezuela worries U.S. counter-narcotics officials. The airliner leaving Caracas for Mexico City carried a seemingly conspicuous cargo: one ton of Colombian cocaine stuffed into 25 bulky, nearly identical suitcases. But the smugglers' baggage went untouched by the Venezuelan National Guard and airport police that day in early February. And it may not have been an oversight. Drug traffickers routinely pay a "tax" of nearly \$1,400 a pound to security forces to move cocaine through the terminals at the busy Maiquetia airport and on to global markets, foreign and Venezuelan investigators and experts say. Thanks to a tip from U.S. agents, Mexican customs officials seized the load when it arrived that night aboard Mexicana Flight 374. U.S. and Latin American investigators allege that Venezuela has become a sieve through which a soaring amount of Colombian cocaine moves annually by air and sea. They cite widespread corruption and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's decision to sever anti-drug ties with Washington. Venezuela has always been a conduit for Colombian drugs because it shares a porous 1,300-mile border with the country where most of the world's cocaine is manufactured. But a U.S.-funded crackdown in Colombia has forced traffickers to seek new routes and international alliances.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-vzdrugs21mar21.0.2217127.story?coll=la-home-headlines>

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