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FBI Office of Public Affairs

The Horizon

Wednesday, April 15, 2020

NATIONAL ISSUES

Oklahoma City Bombing Anniversary, fbi.gov: OPA – A quarter-century after the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, a retired FBI agent reflects on that tragic day and how it helped shape the Bureau. Story package includes video, podcast, multiple photos, and related resources. www.fbi.gov/okc25

Prince Andrew: OPA/NY – The UK's MailOnline asked for confirmation that the FBI had submitted a Mutual Legal Assistance request to British authorities in order to question Prince Andrew about his involvement with Jeffrey Epstein. OPA, in coordination with FBI New York, declined comment.

Patrick Byrne: OPA – The New Yorker asked whether former Overstock.com CEO Patrick Byrne ever worked for the FBI as a source. OPA declined comment.

DDoS-For-Hire Services Takedown: OPA – Cyberscoop asked if the FBI was involved in assisting the Dutch Police with the takedown of 15 DDoS-for-hire services as was being reported. OPA declined comment.

RalD and RAT: OPA - Digitalprivacy.news sought an interview with the Internet Crime Complaint Center's Recovery and Investigative Development Team and Recovery Asset Team. The reporter previously interviewed the FBI Chicago media rep about romance scams and wanted further information. OPA, in coordination with IC3, declined the interview and referred the reporter to the [2019 Internet Crime Report](#).

COVID-Related Scams: OPA – SC Merrill provided an interview to CNBC for their nightly COVID-19 special on COVID-19-related scams, including advance fee schemes, BEC, and extortion.

COVID-19 IC3 Stats: OPA – The LA Times requested updated COVID-19 complaint stats from IC3, as well as a breakdown of the types of complaints. In coordination with IC3, OPA advised the LA Times the IC3 has received thousands of COVID-19 complaints with hundreds more being filed each day. OPA further advised criminals are using COVID-19 as an excuse to perpetrate various schemes, including work-at-home opportunities, as a reason for non-delivery of items purchased, fraudulent loans, confidence/romance schemes, extortion, government impersonation, BEC, advanced fee/overpayment scams, and harassment. OPA also provided links to FBI PSAs.

Forged Coronavirus Medical Documents: OPA - Following CNN's reporting, multiple outlets reached out asking about the FBI's LIR regarding employees who forge medical documents indicating they have tested positive for COVID-19 in order to get out of work. OPA continued to decline to confirm the report, but provided on an on-

the-record statement regarding the kind of product OPS typically disseminates to private sector partners: “A *Liaison Information Report (LIR)* is a written product the FBI’s Office of Private Sector prepares for a host of private sector partners, including businesses and academia, who are cleared to receive FBI information. The LIR focuses primarily on a specific issue having a private sector nexus, where the FBI is uniquely positioned to provide insight, indicators, methodology, and either patterns or trends. The FBI regularly shares this type of information that we assess as important, and we also respond to requests from our private sector partners for information on specific topics. Our goal is to share timely, actionable and relevant information, written in a concise, professional, business-friendly format.”

LOCAL STORIES

Albany – Division was contacted by a reporter for the NYS School Board Association Newspaper looking for information on "Zoom bombing." PAS Ruane was interviewed for the piece and provided information and tips from the IC3 PSA.

Boston – Massachusetts media outlets asked about the FBI’s presence at a home in East Longmeadow, Mass. earlier this morning. PAS advised that the FBI is conducting court authorized activity in connection with an ongoing investigation and declined to provide further information. Early this evening, the Mass. U.S. Attorney’s Office issued a press release announcing the arrest of John M. Rathbun for attempted arson at a Jewish sponsored assisted living facility in Longmeadow. SAC Bonavolonta provided the following quote: “As alleged, John Rathbun placed a homemade incendiary device near the entrance of a Jewish assisted living facility, located within a short distance of three Jewish temples, a Jewish private school, and a Jewish Community Center. This case highlights the very real threat posed by racially motivated violent extremists and make no mistake, the FBI will use every investigative tool available, along with the expertise and skills of our partners on our Joint Terrorism Task Forces, to identify, assess and disrupt threats like this one to keep our communities safe.”

El Paso – PAS and Cyber SA Bustillos conducted a Skype interview in English and Spanish for five media outlets about the dark side of social media. They discussed parental controls and privacy settings on popular Apps that children are using, “Zoom-bombing,” and how to report if a child becomes a victim of online exploitation.

El Paso – Report asked for an interview about the recent trends of drug trafficking and how they have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. PAS declined interview and suggested that the reporter contact DEA-El Paso Division.

Las Vegas – SAC Rouse provided a quote for a press release from the Nevada attorney general’s office announcing that Terrell Fletcher and Stormy Robertson pleaded guilty in a child sexual exploitation case. Rouse: “We will continue working with our law enforcement partners through the FBI-led Northern Nevada Child Exploitation Task Force (NNCETF) to aggressively identify and pursue the perpetrators of the devastating crime of sex trafficking.”

Las Vegas – CBS affiliate interviewed SAC Rouse about the rise in COVID-19-related scams in Las Vegas. SAC Rouse discussed what to be aware of and explained how to report scams to IC3.gov. The interview focused on “thinking before clicking” at a time when people are trying to find information anywhere they can. The segment will air tonight.

New Orleans – The CBS affiliate interviewed ASAC Genck via Zoom about the risks of children being online during COVID-19. Genck shared safety information with caregivers explained how to report tips to FBI New

Orleans.

Salt Lake City – Utah Telemundo interviewed A/SSA Pickett about cryptocurrency-related fraud schemes during the pandemic. Pickett addressed common scams and how people can report them.

Seattle – The Fox affiliate interviewed SSA Via about common Covid-19 scams. He advised viewers what to watch for to avoid being defrauded.

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