

FBI Targets Encrypted Platforms Used by Criminal Groups

June 8, 2021

CRIMINAL organizations that rely on hardened, stripped-down devices to send encrypted messages may learn this week they have been using a platform operated by the very investigators they are trying to thwart, the FBI announced on Tuesday.

In an innovative effort, the FBI, with the help of the Australian Federal Police, launched their own encrypted communications platform and supplied more than 12,000 devices to hundreds of criminal organizations that operate around the globe.

The FBI, along with the Drug Enforcement Administration, Australian Federal Police, Europol, and law enforcement partners in more than a dozen countries, are announcing the results of that covert effort, known as Operation Trojan Shield. In recent days and weeks, authorities have carried out hundreds of arrests in Australia and across Europe as a result of intelligence gathered during the operation.

To read the full article: <https://voiceonline.com/fbi-targets-encrypted-platforms-used-by-criminal-groups/>

Department of Justice Seizes \$2.3 Million in Cryptocurrency Paid to the Ransomware Extortionists Darkside

By the Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs

June 7, 2021

WASHINGTON - The Department of Justice today announced that it has seized 63.7 bitcoins currently valued at approximately \$2.3 million. These funds allegedly represent the proceeds of a May 8, ransom payment to individuals in a group known as DarkSide, which had targeted Colonial Pipeline, resulting in critical infrastructure being taken out of operation. The seizure warrant was authorized earlier today by the Honorable Laurel Beeler, U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of California.

“Following the money remains one of the most basic, yet powerful tools we have,” said Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco for the U.S. Department of Justice. “Ransom payments are the fuel that propels the digital extortion engine, and today’s announcement demonstrates that the United States will use all available tools to make these attacks more costly and less profitable for criminal enterprises. We will continue to target the entire ransomware ecosystem to disrupt and deter these attacks. Today’s announcements also demonstrate the value of early notification to law enforcement; we thank Colonial Pipeline for quickly notifying the FBI when they learned that they were targeted by DarkSide.”

To read the full article: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/department-justice-seizes-23-million-cryptocurrency-paid-ransomware-extortionists-darkside>

Biden's New Science Adviser Shares Views on Foreign Influence, Research Budgets, and More

By Jeffrey Mervis

June 3, 2021

President Joe Biden's newly installed science adviser says he understands why scientists are baffled by rules intended to prevent other nations from unfairly benefiting from U.S. science. In recent years, the U.S. government has cracked down on **requiring federally funded scientists to report any sources of foreign funding**—and has even **prosecuted some who failed to follow the rules**. But the effort has forced them to navigate a mélange of requirements, and Eric Lander thinks the government can do better.

To read the full article: <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/06/biden-s-new-science-adviser-shares-views-foreign-influence-research-budgets-and-more>



Due to an increase in COVID-19 numbers and in an effort to stop the spread, ORS feels it's best at this time to **POSTPONE** the "Welcome Back" pizza party that was scheduled for August 11, 2021. Stay safe and mask up!

OFFICE OF RESEARCH SECURITY STAFF

DENISE SPILLER
Security Administrator
824-6444, denise.spiller@uah.edu

JANINE WILSON
Associate Security Administrator
824-3025, janine.wilson@uah.edu

APRIL MCMEANS
Assistant Security Administrator
824-6048, april.mcmeans@uah.edu

CAITLYN SCHOENIG
Program Coordinator
824-4717, caitlyn.schoenig@uah.edu

RYAN WILKINSON
Student Specialist II
824-4818, ryan.wilkinson@uah.edu

MADILYN GOLEMBECK
Student Specialist II
824-4818, meg0025@uah.edu