



# Department of Homeland Security IAIP Directorate Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 28 August 2003

Current Nationwide  
Threat Level is



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## Daily Overview

- The Associated Press reports that thousands were left without power after severe thunderstorms hit the Midwest and Eastern U.S. on Tuesday. (See item [2](#))
- The Sun News reports that a record number of horses have been stricken by Eastern equine encephalitis in North Carolina and South Carolina. (See item [7](#))
- The Washington Post reports that officials at the Department of Justice (DOJ) said Tuesday that a worm or virus has dramatically slowed 15,000 computers at 300 U.S. attorneys' offices around the country since August 22. (See item [15](#))

### DHS/IAIP Update *Fast Jump*

**Production Industries:** [Energy](#); [Chemical](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

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

**Sustenance and Health:** [Agriculture](#); [Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health](#)

**Federal and State:** [Government](#); [Emergency Services](#)

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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://esisac.com>]

1. *August 28, Associated Press* — **Unplanned shutdowns trigger nuclear plant inspections. Nuclear regulators will conduct a special inspection of the Shearon–Harris Nuclear Plant, located near Raleigh, NC, because of several unplanned shutdowns.** Operators have shut down the 900–megawatt nuclear plant manually three times since May. Comparatively, the average number of unplanned shutdowns is about one every 18 months, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The commission conducts special inspections when a plant has more than three shutdowns during 7,000 hours of operation, which is a typical year for a plant. **The inspections are to determine whether the problems have a common cause and whether the plant operator took proper corrective steps.** Sudden stoppages, which take place in a matter of seconds, can be stressful to a nuclear plant's operating equipment, though

the plants are designed for such shutdowns. The problems occurred on the plant's non-nuclear side, which centers on the steam-powered turbines, according to Jim Scarola, vice president of the Harris plant for majority owner Progress Energy.

Source: <http://www.nbc17.com/news/2436259/detail.html>

2. *August 27, Associated Press* — **Storms leave thousands without power.** Thousands were left without power after severe thunderstorms hit the Midwest and Eastern U.S. on Tuesday, August 26. **The storms knocked down trees and power lines across sections of Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, and caused damage east of the Appalachians, causing widespread blackouts in the Washington, D.C. area.** Nearly 21,000 customers were blacked out in northern West Virginia, and more than 8,000 still had no service Wednesday, August 27, utilities said. In western Pennsylvania, lightning set fires that destroyed two buildings, including the 150-year-old Pisgah Presbyterian Church in Corsica. The weather service was checking reports of at least one possible tornado in the area. Power outages also were reported Wednesday in central and western Ohio and some school districts canceled or delayed classes. In the Washington, D.C. area, Pepco said about 140,000 customers lost power at the height of Tuesday's storms in Maryland and the District of Columbia, and Dominion Virginia Power said about 50,000 of its customers were blacked out. During the morning Tuesday, thunderstorms knocked out electrical service to nearly 40,000 customers in southern Michigan.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/national/AP-Storms-Rdp.html>

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## **Chemical Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

3. *August 27, New York Times* — **Army center to study new uses of biotechnology. The United States Army is establishing a research institute to apply biology to the development of sensors, computers and materials.** The new center, the Institute for Collaborative Biotechnologies, will be used to broaden the study and use of biotechnology to nonmedical areas. Such technology might include better materials for uniforms or armor, faster and lighter computers and batteries and more elaborate sensors. It could also help in the Pentagon's plan to make the Army more agile and able to deploy more rapidly to fight terrorism and wars.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/27/national/27BIOT.html>

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## **Banking and Finance Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## Transportation Sector

4. *August 28, Transportation Security Administration* — **TSA moves "full speed ahead" ahead with plan to arm pilots.** Adm. James M. Loy, Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), says the six-month old program to turn commercial airline pilots into federal law enforcement officers is going "full speed ahead" with **hundreds of pilots already trained or scheduled for classes.** He noted TSA graduated its first class of pilots in April and has been conducting weekly classes since mid-July. Loy said TSA is committed to working with pilots to ensure development of the best program possible for protecting travelers from terrorists, but said changes to training and security procedures should only be made with the safety of the flying public in mind "Most travelers support the arming of pilots, but they also expect that it be done right," Loy said. **"That means making certain that pilots who volunteer are capable of handling the law enforcement responsibilities and weapons given to them by the federal government."** Currently, pilots must pass a psychological and background evaluation before being scheduled for training, a process similar to that done for all other candidates seeking positions as federal law enforcement officers. Source: <http://www.tsa.gov/public/display?theme=8&content=670>
5. *August 27, Associated Press* — **Airline makeover.** The crash of a DC-9 into the Everglades in May 1996 that killed all 110 people aboard made an industry pariah of the low-fare airline ValuJet. A little more than seven years later, the airline – under a new name, AirTran Airways – has made a stunning recovery. So far **in 2003, AirTran has started offering cross-country service, announced a \$5 billion aircraft order and reported its fifth consecutive quarterly profit at a time when financial fortunes are sagging for many major airlines.** "Six years ago, you had old planes, poor service, weak management," said Ray Neidl, an airline analyst with Blaylock & Partners in New York. "Everything has completely changed." **The turnaround is unprecedented in recent commercial airline history,** said Alan Bender, a professor of airline economics at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach. Source: <http://www.madison.com/captimes/business/stories/55583.php>

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## Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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## Agriculture Sector

6. *August 28, Crop Decisions* — **USDA still undecided on downer animals.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is still undecided on whether new restrictions on downer cattle at slaughterhouses are necessary to prevent the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in case of an outbreak. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has said it is considering new restrictions because **inspectors may not be able to tell whether a sick cow is suffering from BSE.** USDA Food Safety Undersecretary Elsa Murano said new rules on downer cattle, animals too sick or injured to walk or stand, are being

considered but said she is not yet convinced there is any risk to the public. **The Canadian cow that tested positive for BSE in May was a downer animal.** USDA has released no rule changes restricting how downer cattle are slaughtered, but according to one official, FSIS has drawn up several different proposals and remains conflicted on which, if any, should be implemented. An outright ban on allowing downer cattle to be slaughtered for human consumption is not on the table, but forcing slaughterhouses to first remove animal parts considered to be a high-risk for transmitting BSE is, according to FSIS documents and officials.

Source: [http://www.cropdecisions.com/show\\_story.php?id=20992](http://www.cropdecisions.com/show_story.php?id=20992)

7. *August 27, Sun News* — **Horse illness at record levels. Wet weather, a booming mosquito population, and a number of unvaccinated horses have combined to boost the number of horses stricken by Eastern equine encephalitis by more than 100 times what it was last year in South Carolina.** The almost-always-fatal mosquito-borne disease had infected 122 horses in South Carolina by late last week, said Venaye Reece, equine programs coordinator for Clemson University's livestock and poultry health programs office. North Carolina has 80 confirmed cases. Rainy weather has left numerous areas with standing water, the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes, which become infected with the disease when they feed on infected birds. They then can transmit it to horses and humans, experts said.

Source: [http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/mld/sunnews/news/local/6628\\_262.htm](http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/mld/sunnews/news/local/6628_262.htm)

8. *August 27, USAgNet* — **NAFTA moves on BSE policies. Canada's Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lyle Vanclief, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, and Mexican Secretary of Agriculture Javier Usabiaga have jointly called on the Organisation of International Epizootics (OIE) to encourage a more current, practical, risk-based approach to bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE).** Their objective is to assure consumers worldwide of a safe food supply and to address international trade issues that arise upon discovery of the disease in a given national herd. In a joint letter addressed to Dr. Bernard Vallat, head of the OIE, they stress that the recent single BSE case in Canada has had an enormous adverse economic impact even though strong safeguards are in place in Canada. The joint letter requests that the International Animal Health Code Commission of the OIE begin the dialogue necessary to develop more current practical, science-based guidelines relevant to BSE risk management, at its upcoming meeting in September.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/news-search.cfm?Id=925>

9. *August 27, Wright State University* — **Defense by plants to disease may leave them vulnerable. Some of the defenses plants use to fight off disease leave them more susceptible to attack by insects,** according to a Don Cipollini, a chemical ecologist at Wright State University. "My research shows that induction of a particular plant response to pathogens that results in enhanced resistance to disease can nullify the induction of resistance to feeding by some insects," he explained. "This interaction can result in the unfortunate tradeoff where plants become resistant to some diseases, but more susceptible to some insects. This phenomenon represents an ecological cost of resistance," he said. His study illustrates the effects of salicylate on resistance of the plant species *Arabidopsis thaliana* to the beet armyworm larvae. Salicylate is chemically similar to the aspirin that humans take, and it functions in nature to heighten plant defenses to pathogens. When applied to plants, salicylate can interfere with the induction of resistance to some insects, however, leaving them more

susceptible to insect feeding damage. **Cipollini's research, which has funding support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has implications for crop plants in which salicylate-mediated defenses have been either genetically engineered or chemically manipulated. It also illustrates natural constraints on the evolution of plant resistance.**

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2003/08/030826065949.htm>

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## **Food Sector**

**10. *August 28, Crop Decisions* — Beef plants meet export rules.** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials said on Tuesday that they had certified 22 U.S. beef plants to export beef to Japan under a new trade agreement aimed at calming Asian fears related to mad cow disease. **An additional 79 plants are seeking certification in order to meet a September 1 deadline imposed by Tokyo for beef destined for Japan.** Approximately half of those applications should be approved by the end of this week, according to the USDA's undersecretary for marketing programs, Bill Hawks. The certification program calls for players throughout the beef packing and processing chain to verify that their meat products are derived from cattle slaughtered in the United States before they can be sent to Japan. Japan is the premier export market for the U.S. beef industry. Officials there and in other countries that buy from the United States have expressed concern about buying U.S. beef after a case of mad cow, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy, was uncovered this spring in Canada.

Source: [http://www.cropdecisions.com/show\\_story.php?id=20999](http://www.cropdecisions.com/show_story.php?id=20999)

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## **Water Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## **Public Health Sector**

**11. *August 26, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases* — Relapsing fever outbreak in Montana.** A 2002 outbreak of tick-borne relapsing fever in Montana, the first confirmation of relapsing fever in the state, has led to the discovery, by Rocky Mountain Laboratories (RML), of a bacterium and species of tick not known previously to exist in Montana. The mystery presented itself between July and August 2002, when five of 20 people became ill during or after visiting a cabin in western Montana. Blood samples from four patients were sent to RML. The infectious agent was then isolated and identified as *Borrelia hermsii*. The bacteria that cause relapsing fever are related to those bacteria that cause Lyme disease. The illnesses, however, are quite different, and the ticks that transmit relapsing fever spirochetes have a strikingly different lifestyle compared with the ticks that transmit Lyme disease spirochetes. While Lyme disease is usually acquired from ticks in an outdoor setting, most people who develop relapsing fever become infected while sleeping in rodent- and tick-infested cabins. Because the ticks feed quickly and only at night, most people are not

aware of having been bitten. **"This investigation demonstrates once again the potential for diseases to emerge unpredictably in areas where they have not been recognized previously,"** notes Marshall Bloom, associate director of RML.

Source: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2003-08/nioa-frf08260\\_3.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2003-08/nioa-frf08260_3.php)

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## **Government Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## **Emergency Services Sector**

12. *August 27, Firehouse.com* — **Hazmat spill forces evacuation at federal in Colorado. A hazardous materials spill at the Federal Center in Lakewood forced the evacuation of two buildings,** 7NEWS reported Wednesday. A semitrailer was entering the Federal Center off Kipling and 6th Ave., around 11: 30 a.m. when a leaking drum was detected, the station said. **A 55-gallon drum from the truck was leaking "a very toxic, very dangerous chemical,"** said Cindy Matthews of West Metro Fire. She did not say what the chemical was. Emergency crews set up a 100-yard perimeter around the building while they worked to contain the leak. Kipling Street was closed in the immediate vicinity during the process. The buildings that were evacuated were 1 and 1A, according to West Metro Fire. About 30 people work in the two buildings.

Source: [http://cms.firehouse.com/content/article/article.jsp?section\\_Id=46&id=17887](http://cms.firehouse.com/content/article/article.jsp?section_Id=46&id=17887)

13. *August 27, Port Clinton News Herald (Ohio)* — **Radio interference causes static. Off and on interference on countywide emergency radio channels has prompted local Emergency Management Agency officials to ask for help from the federal government.** Ottawa County EMA Director Jim Greer wants the Federal Communication Commission to pinpoint the source of the interference and "take the necessary steps to stop" it. He asked county commissioners Tuesday to sign a letter to the FCC asking for the measures. They agreed, and that letter will be forwarded to state and federal legislators, as well as Gov. Bob Taft and others. "This is a public safety system, especially since 9-11 and the attention to homeland security, it is essential this system remain clear for emergency services," Greer said. **All fire, emergency medical services, police, schools, EMA and Davis-Besse personnel in the county use the 800-megahertz radio channels to communicate amongst each other.** The recent interference likely isn't coming from the university, however, said Tom Metty, foreman of maintenance services there. The culprit for enhancing interference, he added, is likely Lake Erie. "Because on the lakeshore the frequency is shared every 75 miles across the country, there's interference from Sault Ste. Marie, or Toronto or anything that comes across the lake," Metty said. "The problem, in my opinion, is the system they're using is not immune (to those signals)."

Source: <http://www.portclintonnewsheald.com/news/stories/20030827/localnews/140864.html>

14.

*August 27, PRNewswire* — **First phase of Homeland Security Emergency Air Transportation system complete.** The first phase of a national Homeland Security Emergency Air Transportation System (HSEATS) has been successfully created and is now operational. **The system is an out-growth of the 911 tragedy and provides the disaster relief community with a pre-planned, reliable, coordinated system to transport small, priority cargo items, such as blood supplies, and key personnel over a long distance to the site of a disaster.** The HSEATS program is being created by Mercy Medical Airlift, headquartered in Virginia Beach, VA, with start-up funds provided by a federal grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The first phase involving the states of Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia, and the District of Columbia is now operational with a network of 650 planes and pilots. The full national program will be finished by 2005 and involve 5,000 planes and pilots.  
Source: [http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/030827/dcw001\\_1.html](http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/030827/dcw001_1.html)

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## **Information and Telecommunications Sector**

15. *August 27, Washington Post* — **Internet attacks hit U.S. attorneys' offices.** Officials at the Department of Justice (DOJ) said Tuesday, August 26, that **a worm or virus has dramatically slowed 15,000 computers at 300 U.S. attorneys' offices around the country since August 22.** Many of the computers remained sluggish Tuesday afternoon as DOJ's technology staff continued efforts to get the offices back online. The bugs affected 40 percent of the federal prosecutors' desk and laptop computers around the country, said DOJ spokesman Mark Corallo. **"No security was compromised, and it had no effect on evidence,"** he said. "It just slowed the network down." All of the Washington area federal prosecutors' offices were back to normal late Tuesday, while most office networks elsewhere remained slow-moving, officials said.  
Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A50967-2003Aug 26.html>
  
16. *August 26, Government Computer News* — **FBI seeks public's help to track down virus.** The FBI urged Internet users to protect themselves against the SoBig and MSBlaster viruses Monday, August 25. **"Protecting the nation's cyber infrastructure is a top priority for the FBI, and we are working with the Department of Homeland Security and with state and local law enforcement on our Cyber Task Force to track down the perpetrators of SoBig and the recent W32/Blaster worm,"** FBI director Robert S. Mueller III said. The FBI urged computer users who connect to the Internet to update their anti-virus software and install appropriate patches. "Computer users should also exercise caution in opening any e-mails or attachments from unknown persons or companies," the bureau said in a prepared statement. Users with a computer already affected by malicious code should contact their Internet service provider for assistance, the bureau said. **Anyone with information about the origins of SoBig, W32/Blaster or other malicious code should contact their local FBI office,** said Jana Monroe, assistant director of the FBI's Cyber Division.  
Source: [http://www.gcn.com/vol1\\_no1/daily-updates/23298-1.html](http://www.gcn.com/vol1_no1/daily-updates/23298-1.html)

**Internet Alert Dashboard**

Current Alert Levels	
 AlertCon: 1 out of 4 <a href="https://gtoc.iss.net">https://gtoc.iss.net</a>	 Security Focus ThreatCon: 2 out of 4 <a href="http://analyzer.securityfocus.com/">http://analyzer.securityfocus.com/</a>
Current Virus and Port Attacks	
<b>Virus:</b>	#1 Virus in the United States: <b>WORM_LOVGATE.G</b> Source: <a href="http://wtc.trendmicro.com/wtc/wmap.html">http://wtc.trendmicro.com/wtc/wmap.html</a> , Trend World Micro Virus Tracking Center [Infected Computers, North America, Past 24 hours, #1 in United States]
<b>Top 10 Target Ports</b>	[ <a href="#">fetch Target Ports (auto)</a> ] [ <a href="#">fetch Target Ports (manual)</a> ]

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## General Sector

17. *August 27, Tucson Citizen (AZ)* — **University of Arizona police look for would-be nitrogen thieves. University of Arizona (UA) police are investigating a possible attempted theft of liquid nitrogen from a campus science building.** A graduate student saw two men pouring liquid nitrogen into a Dewar, a double-walled jug used in labs to store liquid gases. When the graduate student approached the two, they left, leaving the jug behind, according to Sgt. Eugene V. Mejia, a UA police spokesperson. Nitrogen gas makes up four fifths of earth's atmosphere. Liquid nitrogen is nonflammable, but is extremely cold, liquifying at roughly minus-200 degrees Celsius. It is used in experiments at the university to cool objects, UA police said. **Criminals have been known to use it to freeze metal locks so they can be shattered with a hammer**, Mejia said.

Source: [http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/index.php?page=local&story\\_id=0 82703d5 nitrogen](http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/index.php?page=local&story_id=0 82703d5 nitrogen)

18. *August 27, New York Times* — **Three plead guilty as terror investigation in Virginia expands. Three members of a suburban Virginia group that federal prosecutors say was training to wage Islamic war abroad, notably in India, have pleaded guilty to weapons charges, and administration officials said today that they planned to expand their investigation into the group.** One man who has come under suspicion is a Muslim cleric associated with several of the 11 men charged with taking part in an effort to learn terrorist tactics. The cleric, Ali al-Timini, a well-known preacher in Northern Virginia, was not among those indicted in June. But court papers indicate he persuaded some of the defendants to train abroad with the group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is trying to drive India from Kashmir. The United States government has listed it as a terrorist organization. The men, the authorities charged, obtained AK-47's and other high-powered weapons and practiced small-unit military tactics near Fredericksburg, VA, where they used paintball weapons to simulate combat. The three who pleaded guilty agreed to cooperate with prosecutors, and they could testify against other defendants in the case. **Officials have said the case and the guilty pleas demonstrate that terrorism training is taking place in the United States.**

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/27/national/27TERR.html>

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## **DHS/IAIP Products & Contact Information**

The Department of Homeland Security's Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection (IAIP) serves as a national critical infrastructure threat assessment, warning, vulnerability entity. The IAIP provides a range of bulletins and advisories of interest to information system security and professionals and those involved in protecting public and private infrastructures. By visiting the IAIP web-site (<http://www.nipc.gov>), one can quickly access any of the following DHS/IAIP products:

[DHS/IAIP Warnings](#) – DHS/IAIP Assessments, Advisories, and Alerts: DHS/IAIP produces three levels of infrastructure warnings. Collectively, these threat warning products will be based on material that is significant, credible, timely, and that address cyber and/or infrastructure dimensions with possibly significant impact.

[DHS/IAIP Publications](#) – DHS/IAIP Daily Reports, CyberNotes, Information Bulletins, and other publications

[DHS/IAIP Daily Reports Archive](#) – Access past DHS/IAIP Daily Open Source Infrastructure Reports

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To report any incidents or to request information from DHS/IAIP, contact the DHS/IAIP Watch at [nipc.watch@fbi.gov](mailto:nipc.watch@fbi.gov) or call (202)323-3204.

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