

FBI Combats Cybercrime in Triangle

By **CHERI MELFI**
Staff Writer

RALEIGH — N.C. FBI agents and representatives from a national security program launched a new system this week aimed at protecting Triangle businesses against cyberterrorism.

The National Infragrad Program began on Monday in Raleigh.

The program, which has been in effect in Charlotte for about a year, is an Internet-based effort to provide companies with protection from computer intrusion and to keep data secure.

"We hope to get well over 100 members in the Research Triangle Park area," Chris Swecker, FBI special agent for N.C. operations, said at a press conference last week. "Eventually, we want to involve membership throughout the state."

Swecker said Infragrad members will receive security software and will have access to cyberterrorism information from intelligence agencies worldwide.

There program will include a secure Web site where members can report cyber-attacks, find information about previous and recent intrusions, and look for ways to prevent them, Swecker said.

Swecker said tight security is necessary to prevent hackers from gaining

access to secure information.

He also said it was important that companies are aware of the program's potential benefits. For example, Swecker said the program could prevent a hostile foreign intelligence service from wreaking havoc on local banking or telecommunications companies.

"If these types of businesses shut down all at the same time, it would be a national threat," Swecker said. "And what's scary is the attacker can be anyone from a 14-year-old in his basement working from a laptop to a hostile foreigner."

Doris Gardner, supervisory special agent for the N.C. computer crime squad, said there have been many attacks on companies already.

She said that when one business suffers an attack or intrusion, it has a negative impact on entire industries.

"Infragrad is not just the Web site," Gardner said. "It's also the networking. Many businesses rely on each other and are affected by one another, so when one shuts down, they all suffer."

Cyber-attacks are becoming increasingly common, but only about 70 percent of intrusions are being reported, Swecker said.

He said businesses could save themselves a great deal of trouble if more

attacks were reported.

"There are many common elements to a lot of attacks, and they don't just affect one business," Swecker said. "If we get early warning signals, we can help design some things to combat the virus and get information about it."

He added that according to a recent survey, three out of 700 businesses reported about \$200 million in losses because of cybercrime.

Since the program's installment in Charlotte about a year ago, Swecker said the number of incidents reported in North Carolina has increased.

"Our goal is to create a national and international network to get all information in and get it back out and educate businesses," Swecker said.

But the program's success is dependent on individual companies, not the FBI, said Don McArthur, N.C. FBI special agent and head of Infragrad in Raleigh. "The private industry makes this work, not (the FBI)," McArthur said. "We'll sponsor the program and help out with it, but there will be a board of directors to regulate it."

But Swecker said businesses that want to join must first go through an extensive background check. Infragrad membership is not open to individuals.

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Advocacy Groups File Suit Against Hog Corporations

By **ALLISON MITCHENER**
Staff Writer

Frustrations with the government's efforts to control the corporate hog industry have prompted advocacy groups like the Sierra Club to file suit against several hog companies — starting with those in North Carolina.

Fifteen of the nation's most prominent law firms will represent the groups in class action, civil action and nuisance lawsuits.

The first state targeted by the suits is North Carolina, which is one of the nation's largest hog-producing states.

N.C. farmers are allowed to deposit hog waste in large open-air lagoons, which some say are unsanitary and damage the environment.

But hog company officials said they are not intimidated by the environmentalists' efforts and believe the case will fail.

At a Wednesday press conference in Washington D.C., Water Keeper Alliance president Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said the federal Environmental Protection Agency and state government's failure to regulate the hog industry has provoked the recent legal action.

Kennedy said the agency has had problems enforcing the standards set by the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts ever since the EPA's budget was cut in half by Congress in 1995.

"The only hope of civilizing this industry is to confront them directly," he said in a telephone press conference.

"The private bar is the only place that citizens can go for redress."

Kennedy added that each law firm suing the hog industry has donated \$50,000 to aid in the legal actions.

He said the lawsuits will attempt to make hog manure lagoons illegal, require the industry to pay fines and penalties and force the industry to remedy any environmental damage.

North Carolina recently entered into contracts with Smithfield Foods and Premium Standard, the country's top two pork producers. Together the companies control 75 percent of the hog industry in the state.

The contracts require the companies to donate millions of dollars to a trust funding N.C. State University technological research for environmental improvement and development.

Sierra Club representative Scott Dye harshly criticized the corporate hog industry at the conference.


"They are renegades and outlaws," Dye said. "They have ignored the laws and will continue to do so, until we civilize this industry and return a little bit of sanity to rural America."

But Smithfield Foods spokesman Jerry Hotstetter said the comments are similar to ones Kennedy made in North Carolina earlier this year. "It was nothing new from our perspective," he said.

But Hotstetter said the company was not scared by the advocacy groups' team of legal talent. "We've already said that their lawsuits were without merit."

Hotstetter cited a Thursday New York Times article that quoted Phil Carlton to support his comments. Carlton is a former N.C. associate justice currently representing Smithfield Foods in the lawsuits. In the article, Carlton criticized the legitimacy of the lawsuits claiming that they were improperly filed and stretched state law.

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Duke Chapel Approves Same-Sex Union Rites

By **SALLY FRANCIS**
Staff Writer

Duke University recently opened the doors of its chapel for same-sex couples, a decision deemed necessary by some and immoral by others in the university community.

The new policy, allowing same-sex couples to celebrate their union, will take effect immediately and might strain relationships with some of the religious groups that worship at Duke Chapel.

Ordained clergy permitted to do so by their religions can perform the same-sex ceremonies, allowing rituals that before were permitted only in the Duke Gardens to now take place in the chapel. Duke Chapel's policy has never before permitted same-sex unions.

A campus committee, composed of faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, administrators and students concluded that Duke Chapel was a university facility not associated with any particular faith.

But 20 different religions worship at Duke Chapel — including the United Methodist Church, which has a 162-year relationship with the chapel.

The United Methodist "Book of Discipline" prohibits its clergy from conducting same-sex unions and maintains that marriage is only valid when it is between one man and one woman, Bishop Marion Edwards wrote in a response to the announcement.

But the Methodist community is partially divided on the issue of same-sex unions. "Some Methodists support same-sex unions, but the Methodist Church does not," said Meredith Barnes, student pastor of Duke's Methodist Wesley Foundation.

The Same-Sex Unions at Duke Chapel Committee, which began meeting in October, was aware of the Methodist Church's beliefs and long-standing relationship with the university community, said Episcopal chaplain, Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple, chairwoman of the committee. "The Chapel is not an institution of the Methodist Church," Hodges-Copple said. "There is a history of a relationship, but the (Methodist) Church is not affiliated with the school in a governing way."

Karen Krahulik, director of Duke University's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center said the overall response from the university community has been positive. Krahulik said the LGBT community feels that allowing same-sex unions in the chapel is a fitting step toward a more inclusive campus.

Although the unions will be recognized by some religious groups, they will still be prohibited by N.C. law, which bans marriages between individuals of the same gender.

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

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