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**United States  
Secret Service**

# Press Release

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## **U.S. SECRET SERVICE FORMS NINE NEW TASK FORCES** *Electronic Crimes Partnerships Bring Together Law Enforcement, Academia and Private Sector*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Secret Service has announced the formation of nine new Electronic Crimes Task Forces, a successful public-private partnership aimed at fighting high-tech computer-based crimes. The new task forces will open in Baltimore, Birmingham, Buffalo, Louisville, Minneapolis, Oklahoma City, Orlando, Pittsburgh and Seattle and join an existing network of 15 other nationwide operations.

“The Electronic Crimes Task Forces are a partnership between law enforcement, private industry and academia with a primary focus on combating high-tech computer based crimes,” said Secret Service Director Ralph Basham. “Our existing task forces have experienced remarkable success in detecting and suppressing computer-based financial crimes. We are confident the new task forces will add to this record of success.”

With the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, the U.S. Secret Service was authorized to establish a nationwide network of electronic crimes task forces. The task force approach developed by the Secret Service has generated unprecedented partnerships among federal, state and local law enforcement, the private sector and academia.

While the Secret Service leads this innovative effort, the agency believes in partnerships in lieu of membership, where there is a strong emphasis on prevention and education, in addition to traditional law enforcement measures. The task forces provide a productive framework and collaborative crime-fighting environment in which the resources of its participants can be combined to effectively and efficiently make a significant impact on electronic crimes. Other law enforcement agencies bring additional criminal enforcement jurisdiction and resources to the task force while representatives from private industry bring a wealth of technical expertise.

“Due to the ever changing cyber world, reliance upon the business community and academia is paramount to the success of the task forces,” Director Basham said. “The Secret Service has taken a truly collaborative approach and applied it to fighting high-tech crimes.”

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The types of investigations handled by the task forces encompass a wide range of computer-based criminal activity. Examples include e-commerce frauds, intellectual property violations, identity crimes, telecommunications fraud and computer intrusion crimes that affect a variety of infrastructures.

In addition to the nine new task forces, the Secret Service has established Electronic Crimes Task Forces in Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Columbia, South Carolina.

Well known for protecting the nation's leaders, the U.S. Secret Service is also responsible for protecting America's financial infrastructure. The Secret Service Electronic Crimes Program is an integral part of the agency's efforts in combating high-tech electronic and computer crimes. Technology and the rapid growth of the Internet have eliminated the traditional borders of financial crimes and provided new opportunities for those who engage in fraud to threaten the nation's financial systems. These new technologies have been exploited by an expanding criminal element that conducts a host of sophisticated financial crimes.

Telecommunications and finance systems are prime targets for the hacker or cyber-terrorist intent on causing damage to the economy of the United States. With the task force approach, the Secret Service and its law enforcement partners at the federal, state and local level, work closely with members of these industries and the academic community to share information and identify weaknesses.

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: For questions concerning this release, please contact the United States Secret Service Office of Government and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708 or one of the following field offices:*

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