

Building a culture of trust



Russell Palarea, an operational psychologist in the Diplomatic Security Service office gives a presentation "Mass Shootings: What You Can Do To Manage the Threat" as part of National Insider Threat Awareness Month activities, Sept. 11. Photo by Luis A. Jimenez Jr.

By Jacqueline Atilas

September marked the inaugural National Insider Threat Awareness Month and the Department of State enthusiastically championed this effort. Throughout the month, the Department's Insider Threat Program offered employees educational information and activities to better understand that recognizing and reporting insider threats is a shared responsibility.

To kick off events, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo shared a video message emphasizing the importance of the Insider Threat Program, and he encouraged employees to look for and report suspicious behavior. With the support of Department leadership, the video raised awareness regarding

the program's mission to deter, detect and mitigate insider threats from committing espionage, unauthorized disclosure of sensitive and classified information, workplace violence or other national security crimes.

Throughout the month, the program also hosted events and activities aimed at educating personnel on the warning signs and concerning behaviors that may indicate an insider threat. Dr. Russell Palarea, an operational psychologist from the Diplomatic Security Bureau, gave a presentation called "Mass Shootings: What You Can Do to Manage the Threat" in order to help personnel understand and identify workplace violence issues. Additionally, program staff hosted educational sessions on insider threat case studies, offered specialized training to help the workforce recognize insider threat indicators and provided tips on properly reporting insider threats.

To reach employees outside of the Washington, D.C., area, the program shared Tips of the Day, an e-newsletter and a [dedicated website](#) for employees on OpenNet which features insights, posters, images and videos. Additional information provided to embassies and posts for country-team briefs greatly expanded the audience with the aim to build awareness and combat this issue worldwide. Insider threat education and outreach is a shared responsibility and should extend beyond National Insider Threat Awareness Month.

Employees interested in hosting an "Insider Threat Program to You" training event at their bureau or post can email DS_SI_ITP@state.gov for more information. Additionally, the Insider Threat Program reminds employees to report any suspicious or insider threat-related behavior to InsiderThreatReporting@state.gov.

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