



Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
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NEWSRelease

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Sheriff Arpaio's Cyber Crimes Unit Makes Quick Arrest

Cyberattack on 911 Critical Infrastructures

(Maricopa County) Az, The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Cyber Crimes Unit went into full force yesterday after a serious disruption into the emergency 911 system for the entire Phoenix metro area and possibly even other states.

Meetkumar Hiteshbhai Desai DOB 04/08/1998 (18) has been arrested and booked into the 4th Avenue Jail on (3) counts of Computer Tampering a class 2 felony.

The Surprise Police Department alerted the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office communications division of their agency receiving over (100) 911 hang-up calls late Tuesday night. Surprise PD had believed that the calls were coming from smart phones and tablets. A link through Twitter was believed to be the cause of people's phones dialing 911 over and over and not allowing them to hang up. Cyber Crimes Detectives found a Twitter account with about 12,000 followers which encouraged followers to click on the link to see the latest post.

This webpage domain was hosted out of San Francisco, California and ultimately sheriff's detectives were able to shut it down to stop the potential immediate threat to the 911 emergency systems which could have possibly been compromised if enough users had clicked on the link. Cyber Crimes investigators identified the web page belonging to a subject by the name of "Meet Desai".

Investigators continued monitoring Meet's public posts and found the link posted to a you tube URL at "The real hackspot" which also redirected to Meet's web page. The link indicated there were 1,849 clicks on that particular link. The Surprise Police Department received the over (100) hang up 911 phone calls within a matter of minutes due to this cyber-attack and were in immediate danger of losing service to their switches. The Peoria Police Department and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office also received a large volume of these repeated 911 hang up calls and had the potential danger of losing service throughout Maricopa County. It was also discovered that agencies in California and Texas were affected at their respective 911 systems by this bug.

Sheriff's Detectives were able to identify "Meet" as the suspect behind the 911 disruption and was taken into custody and transported him to the Major Crimes Division for questioning late last night.

Meet explained to Sheriff's detectives that he was interested in programs, bugs, and viruses which he could manipulate and change to later inform Apple about to fix their bug issues for further ios updates. He claimed that Apple would pay for information about bugs and viruses and provide that particular programmer with credit for the discovery.

Meet also told investigators he had an online friend that provided him with a bug that they thought they should look into and tweek. Meet looked at the bug and discovered that he could manipulate the function and add annoying pop ups, commands to open email, and activate the telephone dialing feature on ios cell phones by utilizing a java script code that he created. Meet claimed that his intention was to make a non-harmful, but annoying bug that he believed was "funny".

Meet stated he did manipulate the bug to include the phone number for emergency services 1+911. Meet stated that although he did add that feature to the bug he had no intention of pushing it out to the public, because he knew it was illegal and people would "freak out". Meet stated that he may have accidentally pushed the harmful version of the (911) bug out to the Twitter link instead of the lesser annoying bug that only caused pop ups, dialing to make peoples devices freeze up and reboot. Meet later claimed that he developed these malicious bugs and viruses to be recognized in the hacker and programming community as someone who was very skilled.

During the interview a search warrant was executed by additional personnel on Meet's residence and several items were seized which will also later be forensically examined by the Cyber Crimes Unit.

Meetskumar Hiteshbhai Desai DOB: 04/08/1998 (18) #T313529 was transported to the 4th Avenue Jail where he was booked on (3) counts of Computer Tampering a class 2 felony due to the critical infrastructure that was involved, which had the possibility of seriously disrupting the emergency 911 system for the entire Phoenix metro area and possibly even other states.