

MAY 2020

NIGERIA SECURITY INTELLIGENCE

Report

How COVID-19 is changing security...forever

"As a result of this pandemic, the world as we know it has changed. The way we interact with each other, conduct our businesses and trade, travel, educate our children and earn our livelihoods will be different."
– President Muhammadu Buhari (Monday, 13th April, 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has become the greatest global crisis of this century, in terms of its depth and scale. This public health crisis threatens the 7.8 billion people on earth, with financial and economic fall outs.

This crisis is thus appearing to become a seismic shock that permanently changes the way and manner of security (and insecurity) as we know it.

COVID-19 and new security imperatives

- Coronavirus continues to spread, causing country-wide shutdowns, with half of the world's population currently on lockdown, thus sparking fears of the worst global recession.
- While the COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis, its implications are far-reaching and could threaten global peace and security thus potentially leading to an increase in social unrest and violence that could greatly undermine our ability to fight the disease.
- The pandemic could undermine global peace and security, beginning with a further erosion of trust in public institutions if people perceive that their authorities had mishandled response or were not transparent.
- Hackers are taking advantage of scarcity of goods by sending phishing emails disguised as promotions for hard-to-get items, while counterfeiting has surged.
- With most governments focused on the pandemic, terrorist groups could see "a window of opportunity to strike", with the situation in the Sahel of particular concern.
- COVID-19 has also hindered conflict resolution efforts, and many peace processes have stalled as countries respond to the pandemic. The pandemic also has triggered or worsened numerous human rights challenges, including hate speech.
- The pandemic's economic impacts could create "major stressors" in fragile societies or less developed countries. For example, the ensuing economic instability will have devastating consequences for women as they make up the majority in the worst-affected sectors.
- As the economic lockdown loosens up, many anemic companies will need quick access to money to re-start their businesses. At this delicate time, several small and medium-sized enterprises may be tempted to turn to unscrupulous money-lenders. Nations therefore, need appropriate levels of interventions to prevent organized crime from further encroaching upon the lives and assets of those living in regions with increasingly fragile economies.



- The pandemic is tipping the world into a dangerously volatile new phase that could quickly escalate into political unrest, violence, and conflicts. While some forms of crimes have decreased, tensions have and are still flaring up on major streets of some states in Nigeria – e.g. Lagos, Onitsha etc.
- At international arena, protests, many of them violent, have broken out from Brazil, India, Kosovo, Malawi and South Africa – to mention a few. Police repression is also on the increase as experienced in Nigeria, Kenya and Philippines. Signs of security fragility were also experienced at wealthier cities, with demonstrations and protests on the streets of France and USA, denouncing the lock-down.



- According to the Global Economic Forum, insecurity and violent conflict, at such a time as this, are driven by a combination of failing government institutions and the grievances that fester when groups feel excluded and neglected. As the pandemic and ensuing economic crisis unfold, these conditions will increasingly be found in many, if not most, countries in the world, including Nigeria
- From our research at Academy Halogen, we can conclude that, at the very least, security risks will increase at the most vulnerable localities in Nigeria. We also project that criminal groups, terrorists and organized criminals will exploit the pandemic. These groups will find further opportunities – including in cyber space - once bailout packages begin to flow. Domestic violence will definitely increase and younger people will indulge in criminal acts, as all of them are now at home - out of their schools. Therefore, many young people will become restless and angry, with some converting this anger and restlessness toward more dangerous purposes
- The risk of an upsurge in insecurity, and violence, in Nigeria is HIGH, according to our survey at Academy Halogen. We predict that the Nigerian governments will be further undermined if security is in short supply. It is worth noting that spiraling insecurity and conflict will also undermine the collective willingness to work together to tackle shared challenges. This is because, when people feel isolated and afraid, they can become defensive. While the many expressions of solidarity are to be welcomed, when in “fight or flight” mode - as experienced with the local resistances to the “1 Million Boys” upsurge in Lagos at some localities - people will most likely to support “populist responses” if their state of restlessness continues.

Therefore, a new awakening is needed to the seriousness of emerging security threats, accompanied by a willingness to take action that is as bold.

NATIONAL SECURITY RISKS

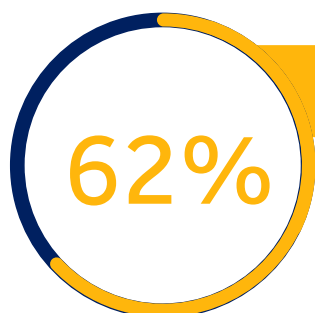
Nigerians apprehensive as lockdown persists

There appears to be limited discussion – nationally and internationally – about how criminals are likely to profit from the ongoing situation. Within the EU, for instance, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Co-operation (Europol) has identified fraud, cyber-crime, counterfeit or substandard goods and property crime as the main areas in which criminal activities have experienced an upsurge.

The fact that international agencies such as Europol have not included this issue in their latest reports is easily explained by the lack of available data. While police operations can provide some figures on crime rates, it is probably too early to measure the extent to which organized crime is making inroads into the lifeblood of national economies, via the exploitation of security weaknesses thrown up by COVID-19.

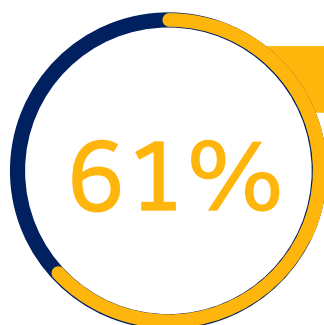
While the phenomenon of insecurity has been abundantly studied and monitored in Italy, there is reason to believe that similarly perverse dynamics are at play in other COVID-19 affected countries, particularly a nation such as Nigeria with poor socio-economic conditions. The issue of security at this period clearly deserves attention.

Following reports of unrests in several communities since a lockdown was pronounced in Lagos, Ogun and the Federal Capital Territory, Academy Halogen launched a nationwide risk assessment study. The feedback has been diverse and revealing, portraying the current security situation in the country as well as the fears of the people. In all, we received responses from 23 states and Abuja.



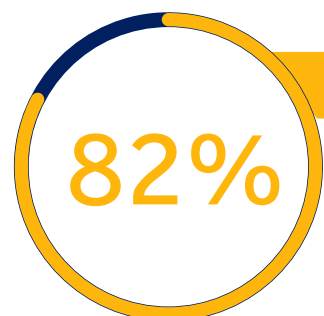
62% of Nigerians are aware of and have experienced one or more security incident(s) in the last one month.

Most of the incidents were at cities and metropolitan areas, thus suggesting that the rural areas are safer than urban settings.



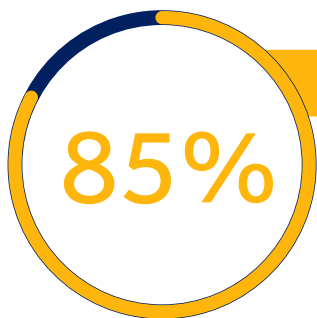
61% of security incidents occurred at urban areas.

The implication is that Nigeria has become a high-risk country since COVID-19 began, especially in the urban centres where most of the major economic activities occur.



82% of Nigerians feel less secured since the lockdown

What these data indicates is that most Nigerians do not feel safe, which is an indictment on the nation's leadership. It also sends an unsavoury signal to the international community when an overwhelming majority of the country's population do not feel safe in their own country, as this may affect the attraction of direct foreign investment (FDI) into Nigeria.



85% of Nigerians indicate that insecurity will increase

This has been confirmed with the notorious “1 million boys” saga that rocked parts of Southwest; the brutality by law agents in the South; and the unending bandit activities in the core North. These incidents have resurfaced discussion about extra judicial killings by the security operatives and this trend is predicted to continue with further elongation of the lockdown.

Responses from several Nigerians on our social media handles, **@AcademyHalogen** further demonstrate the hopelessness and helplessness that many feel about the current security situation in the country. Even as the lockdown is being gradually relaxed, many believe that the government is not doing enough to help them during the lockdown causing them to violate the lockdown rule and in turn engage in faceoff with security operatives.



Government therefore has a huge responsibility in restoring the citizens' confidence, as the country would be better governed if the people have some trust in the leadership.




Ensuring Security at the time of COVID-19


- a. An urgent and clear signal is needed from the Nigerian government – state and federal - that security and safety are key priorities. The statutory security agencies must do everything they can to de-escalate tensions at our localities.
- b. There must be demonstratable levels of inter agencies' solidarity and coordination, among all security agencies – statutory and private.
- c. The COVID-19 crisis underlines the importance of ensuring redistribution and especially supports for the most vulnerable - not least the unemployed, underemployed and working poor. At the very least, this is about enlightened self-interest. These are often the citizens that deliver essential health services, maintain food supplies, and keep utilities operating. A social fund for social protection that supports the poorest and most vulnerable alongside concerted focus on tackling inequality in Nigeria is essential. This is not just a matter of need. Millions of people that are facing joblessness are not going to sit idly by while elites live as if the society is normal.
- d. The Nigerian security architecture needs a national security monitoring system to track security incidents and signals/profiles of unrest before they escalate into violence. A shared platform for analyzing and profiling security risks is required – Halogen just launched such a platform. [See section 5 of this report for some details]. This system provides real-time mapping, remote sensing and digital data that explicate a comprehensive security assessment. The platform can then feed other early-warning systems.
- e. Community and faith leaders must step up their role as purveyors of social harmony, peace and security, whilst local government must be at the front and last line of preventive security.
- f. The role and place of private security organizations must be amplified as a vital element of national security architecture.

The COVID-19 pandemic is revealing the fault lines in every country's security architecture, Nigeria inclusive. Therefore, we now all have shared responsibilities regarding security.

Some Security Tips

	Security Risks' Exposure	Proposed Mitigants
<p>1. Online Shopping</p> 	<p>There is an estimated over 44% increase in e-commerce, as social distancing became widespread, lock down commenced and the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to know which company you are giving your information to. • For smartphone takeout apps, always access them through a trusted source, either Google Play or Apple's App Store. • Do not to click on links that offer promos and cheap offers that are unsolicited. • If you are interested in an item, go to the specific company's website and check to see whether the promotion is real • Always order from a corporate web site • Try to do business with companies you normally do business with. If a company you never heard of sends you an email, question why it has your email address in the first place.
<p>2. Video Conferencing</p> 	<p>Since the start of the stay-at-home orders, video conferencing platforms have become very popular. In a short period, Zoom's user base went from 10m to 200m, as at the end of March. People are using Zoom for everything, from their corporate meetings to online classrooms to get-togethers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make your Zoom meetings open • For both the free and premium editions, it is possible to issue a meeting ID along with a password. For most meetings, it's better to send people the meeting ID and password rather than a meeting link • Organizations should refrain from posting meeting links on their websites. If you have to use a link for meetings with 25 or more people, email each person a link. When organizations post public links, hackers can gain instant access.

	Security Risks' Exposure	Proposed Mitigants
<p>3. Telehealth</p> 	<p>Many hospitals are at near or full capacity, so telehealth has become a very viable option for patients who need a doctor for a non-emergency reason.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't take a call regarding your health unless you have set up an appointment in advance. • Don't give out any private health information unless you are the person who initiated the call • Be aware that fraudsters are impersonating medical companies looking for personal medical and other sensitive information. Don't give out any information unless you are really sure it's your doctor's office or the company that administers the telemedicine application.
<p>4. Alliatives</p> 	<p>There are now scams focused around the proposed cash transfer palliative, as well as general financial scams. Another scam to be aware of are offers coming in through email asking you to sign up for credit cards or credit lines. In many cases, they are neither government agencies nor genuine private establishments. Rather, they are scammers looking to steal your personal information and sell it for profit on the Dark Web.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not click on any email that offers money in exchange for personal information • While there have been issues with the various disbursing agencies getting overloaded by the millions of claims • Always seek your information and guidance from official government web sites and/or information sources.
<p>5. Virtual Learning</p> 	<p>Schools and colleges are now relying on online classrooms -- and this presents some real challenges for parents, especially those who are juggling working from home and keeping track of the online habits of their kids.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents can start by enabling the parental controls on all devices in the house -- TVs, laptops, tablets, gaming devices, etc. • Most routers issued by carriers also have a content filter option, which can be used to develop whitelists and blacklists • Network providers also have plans that limit mobile phone time, which can help control a child's screen times during this stay-at-home period • Always show interest on the sites that your child/children visit

	Security Risks' Exposure	Proposed Mitigants
<p>6. Social Media</p> 	<p>During this stay-at-home period, many of us are upping our social media games and interactions.</p> <p>People are also sending many more messages via Facebook Messenger than they have in the past. Most people have hundreds of "friends" but are not in close touch with all of them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't trust any message unless you are sure it's really the right person • Even if it's a good friend or business acquaintance, better to call or email them to be sure they sent you the message. These messages are breeding grounds for phishing scams and malware injections • People should take this time to review all of their friends and delete the ones on the periphery • Set up groups so you can better control the people making comments on your posts • When making comments in smaller, subject-matter-oriented groups, don't give away any personal information • Don't let people on Facebook or other social media know your home address • If you get sick, don't share your personal health status online • Be smart and more cautious than normal. Fraudsters are just waiting to take advantage

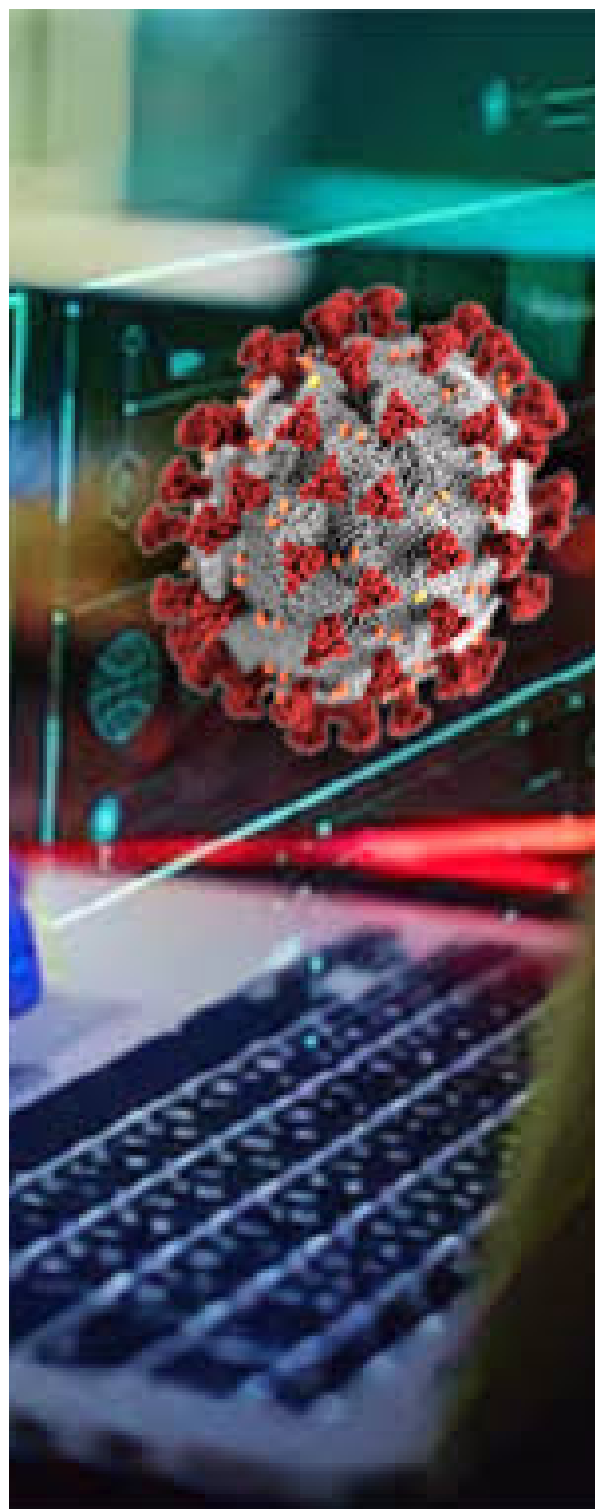
CYBER SECURITY

Cyber threats in a time of uncertainty...some of the latest cyber risks

- Israeli cybersecurity firm, Check Point warns about a spike in online scams attempting to take advantage of people seeking financial relief amid the pandemic. New websites are up, many of which are disguised to look like those of government agencies providing financial relief.
- There has been a significant rise in cyber-attacks – as seen in phishing emails and setting up websites with COVID-19 virus subjects, aiming to lure users to click on links that will expose their computers to penetration or introduce malware.
- With people either having to work from home or placed on enforced leave, the security (or lack thereof) of their computers and devices will come under intense scrutiny with phishing attacks, fake apps/maps, trojans, backdoors, crypto miners, botnets and ransomware.
- Hackers are trying to take advantage of the kinds of networking services millions of people are using to work from home, such as VPN tools and conferencing apps like Zoom and Microsoft Teams.
- Attacks on banks and other financial institutions spiked by 38% between February and March, making the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and UK's National Cyber Security Centre to issue a report in mid-April warning all businesses to be on the alert.
- Of the 52% of attacks targeting the financial services sector in March, 70.9% of those came from the Kryptik trojan, which attempts to target victim machines via nefarious installers, and acquire admin rights to make registry changes, execute each time a Windows machine boots.

Mitigating cyber attacks

- Widespread office closures worldwide have overloaded some virtual private networks (VPN) with remote workers, reports EnterpriseTalk. The most crucial question that businesses will confront is how to scale up virtual private networks to handle the surge in traffic.
- At least three major industry groups are working to counter the latest cyber threats and scams, according to a report in KrebsOnSecurity. Among the largest in terms of contributors is the COVID-19 Cyber Threat Coalition (CTC), which comprises roughly 3,000 security professionals who are collecting, vetting and sharing new intelligence about new cyber threats.



- Using threat intelligence feeds donated by dozens of cybersecurity companies, the CTC is poring over more than 100 million pieces of data about potential threats each day, running those indicators through security products from roughly 70 different vendors.
- Another Slack-based upstart coalition called the COVID-19 CTI League spans more than 40 countries and includes professionals in senior positions at such major companies as Microsoft Corp and Amazon.com Inc.
- There is also the Cyber Threat Alliance, an industry group founded in 2017 that counts among its members more than two dozen major cybersecurity firms that are all required to regularly share threat intelligence with other members.
- According to Trend Micro research, employees need proper education when it comes to social engineering attempts and the necessity for cybersecurity policies to directly address remote working.
- Cybersecurity must always remain a corporate priority. Even though cybersecurity software can help mitigate the risk of this happening by sandboxing those emails and links, the weakest link in the corporate security chain will always remain its people.
- Individuals themselves must accept responsibility when it comes to their home environment. This includes everything from the home router to applying common sense such as not sharing files between unsecured systems and a work machine.

NIGERIA'S REGIONAL REPORTS

North West

- The North West remains a high-risk region – with 75 people killed and 45 people kidnapped in recent weeks.
- 38 persons were killed by gunmen in Fadan Karshi and Nandu villages, Sanga LGA of Kaduna State in an attack reported to have occurred simultaneously.
- Bandits killed 22 people and injured about 20 in an attack on Dangara village in Sokoto State.
- Prison officials killed at least eight inmates of the Kaduna Correctional Centre suspected to have led a protest at the facility.
- Kaduna South LGA was thrown into pandemonium as youths in Trikania community protested the death of five people allegedly killed by security operatives enforcing the lockdown directive.



North East

- The war against insurgency received a major boost as the Chadian army killed more than 1,000 Boko Haram fighters in the Lake Chad border region – the outcome of increased months of aggression against the terrorist groups.
- However, frictions amongst the Multination Joint Task force (MNJTF) could make the terrorists re-group as Chadian troops has announced plan to pull out of the captured territories in Niger and Nigeria.
- The Nigerian army also launched attacks on the hideouts of Boko haram, neutralizing approximately 186 insurgents in multiple ground and air strikes in Borno, Yobe and the Lake Chad basin.
- In Taraba, an estimated 25 people were killed and several others injured in a clash between Shomo and Jole ethnic groups in Lau LGA over claims of ownership of disputed fish ponds.



North Central

- Communal clashes, herdsman and banditry attacks competed with COVID 19 for spotlight.
- Following several failed attempts, Niger State said it would no longer dialogue with bandits terrorising the state, but would evolve new strategies to bring an end to their activities.
- Six persons were reported killed as armed bandits raided two local government areas in Niger State. It was alleged that 50 heavily armed men, who rode on motorcycle, carried out the attack.
- In Benue, one person died while several others were injured and many houses burnt in a renewed clash between two families of Mbapen clan in Taraku town of Gwer East LGA.
- The relative peace in this region appeared threatened as bandits displaced in other states are finding refuge in neighbourhood states like Plateau. For instance, unidentified gunmen attacked Hurra community of Irigwe Chiefdom in Bassa LGA, killing nine persons and burnt 33 houses.



South-South

- Samuel Naakpo, a notorious kidnapper, was shot dead by the police in River state while trying to escape from a raid on his forest hideout in Ogu-Bo lo LGA. Over 3000 rounds of ammunition and assault weapons were recovered during the operation.
- In Delta State, thousands of Sapele residents demanded an end to the lockdown extended by the state Governor. The initially peaceful protest later ignited into a form of riot that led to the shooting of 3 persons and many injured.



South East

- Following the reported killing of a community youth by the police in Ebem-Ohafia, Abia State, a police station, patrol van, customary court, and DPO's residence were burnt by the rampaging youths who also released several inmates of the burnt police station.
- In Anambra, a 20-year-old man was allegedly shot dead by policemen at New Tyre Market in Nkpor, Anambra State. The officers were said to be enforcing the state's lockdown.
- Anti-coronavirus taskforce in Atikpo South LGA of Ebonyi state allegedly killed one Chidi Agwa Arua and shot two others at Nguzu Edda area of the LGA.



South West

- This has been a difficult period for residents in some areas in Lagos and Ogun states as they tried to ward off threats by the "1 Million Boys".
- Many in this region complained that they have been left facing crippling economic hardship and rising crime.
- Residents in areas like Ijoko, Ifo, Sango, Alagbado, Iyana Ipaja, Agege, Ogba, Ejigbo, Surulere, etc., have resorted to carrying out vigilante duties themselves, staying awake through the night and burning tyres on the streets.
- The police arrested 191 suspects in connection with the recent attacks in parts of Lagos and Ogun States. Amid the lockdown order, some youths were said to have invaded some homes and shops in parts of Lagos and Ogun, dispossessing residents of their belongings.



NATIONAL SECURITY PROFILE

Halogen has launched a website that provides security risks' profile of each state across Nigeria, alongside travel advisory.

This site provides;

- A comprehensive update on the "lock down" status of Nigeria and Nigerian states as far as COVID-19 is concerned.
- A security profile of Nigerian states in an easily accessible, up to date and comprehensive manner.

To address [a] above, the home page provides such map. When you drill down on each state, it provides the "lock down" status and contexts [dates, state policy informing it etc.] AND a security risk profile of the state.

To address [b] above, we rate the states' security profiles based on info and intelligence.

To frequently populate the security risks' rating, we use 3 sources:

- Open source
- Secondary data, and
- Primary sources - Halogen security operatives across LGAs, Zonal leads, commanders, and drivers.

We have also developed a risks' profiling metrics that informs the ratings.

With this new initiative, Halogen becomes the 'go to' source for this form of information and security intelligence.

Visit <http://halogenintel.com.ng/>

HALOGENINTEL
NIGERIA SECURITY RISK PROFILE

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Lockdown Status

● Lockdown (35) ● No Lockdown (2)

CLICK HERE TO GET THE LATEST SECURITY REPORT IN NIGERIA

COVID-19 UPDATE

COVID-19 CASE UPDATE
220 NEW CASES CONFIRMED
11:50pm 2nd May, 2020

TOTAL CONFIRMED	2388
DISCHARGED	385
DEATHS	85

NCDC Toll-free Number: 080097000010

SECURITY RISK PROFILE

NATIONAL SECURITY RISK PROFILE

CLICK HERE

TRAVEL ADVISORY

BREAKING NEWS

COVID-19: NASARAWA
REPATRIATES 788 ALMAJIRAI TO

ABOUT US

Halogen Group is a premium, digital-enabled and integrated security group that provides end to end security risk solutions to enterprises as well as individual consumers.

Our single minded purpose is to enable SAFETY in today's open and continuously volatile world, for you, your family, your assets, both physical and virtual, and your business.

At Halogen Group, we are committed to enabling you safely pursue the ACHIEVEMENT of your goals and purposes. We do this by creating security risk solutions that help you forestall and mitigate threat.

ABOUT US: ACADEMY HALOGEN:

A learning institution that demonstrably shapes enterprise security risk management in the digital space via education, policy and thought leadership

WHAT WE DO:

- School of Security
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