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## IRS Employees face Threats of Violence

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration in its report for April to September 2010, stated that IRS employees constantly face threats of violence in carrying out their duties. Assaults, intimidations and bomb threats are some of the dangers faced. The report says that some of these threats arise due to the Internet.

According to the report, the IG's Office of Investigations "has continued to aggressively pursue those who threaten the safety and security of IRS personnel, data and facilities, or who otherwise attempt to corruptly impact the integrity of the IRS and the federal system of tax administration."

These new threats are a stark reminder of the infamous incident nine months ago when a disgruntled taxpayer, Joseph Stack flew his small Piper Cherokee airplane into the IRS building in Austin, Texas, killing one IRS employee.

In response to the growing animosity towards the IRS, the IG has combined the expertise of its investigative office with that of its criminal intelligence division among other things. These measures have been taken to gauge the

relative seriousness of threats to IRS employees and to the online infrastructure of the IRS.

More than 1,200 threats of all sorts have been received over the last 9 years by the IRS. Some of the more recent ones are:

In August 2008, Ernest Barnett of Alabama, rammed his Sports Utility Vehicle into the side window of an IRS building twice, injuring 2 employees. He was sentenced to 52 months in jail for intimidating, assaulting and interfering with federal employees while carrying out their official duties, 12 months for damaging US government property and 36 months of supervised release.

Also in August 2008, William Brown of California called the toll free IRS number and said, "There is a bomb in the Fresno Service Center." He had made similar threats before, but no bomb was found. On May 10, 2010, he received a 5 year probation sentence, was ordered to pay \$833.64 in restitution and \$25 in special assessment.

In April 2009, Logan Painter of North Carolina phoned an IRS agent with the criminal investigation section and said, "I'm gonna off you," and later told his wife, "Goodbye, you're not going to see me again, and you'll be reading about me in the papers." In May, Painter was sentenced to a 46 month jail term and 3 years of supervised release.