

# Terrorism and security

By Tim Govenor



Review and share the security measures in your work environment. Review any past thefts or security incidences in your workplace. Identify materials, equipment and vehicles that terrorists could use.

Share with the group that terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property. These actions intimidate or coerce a government or civilian population in the furtherance of political or social objectives. Terrorists will use radioactive, chemical, biological and explosive materials in the most effective way to induce fear and insecurity in civilian and military personnel. They use their own people as weapons. They are willing to die for their cause.

The Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center was the most significant act of terrorism in modern history. However, it is not an isolated event.

Ask what other terrorist acts they can recall in the past decade.

Examples include:

- World Trade Center parking garage bombing;
- Suicide bombers in the Middle East;
- Sarin attack in Japanese subway;
- Oklahoma City federal building bombing;
- U.S. embassies bombed in Africa;
- Military barracks bombed in Lebanon;

- Anthrax letters;
- Unabomber mail bombs;
- Irish Republican Army bombings.

These events should shake us out of our complacency, as attacks are taking place in our homeland, even as close as our mailbox. While some events are out of our control, each of us can contribute to security in small but sometimes significant ways.

Ask how we can increase our security. Let us begin with what comes to mind when you think of security.

Examples include:

- Safety, protected, defended, guarded;
- Freedom from fear;
- Proactive;
- Physical barriers, locks;
- Surveillance, observation and cameras;
- Human oversight, guards;
- Metal detectors, radiation meters and explosives detectors.

Think about your workplace. Ask are there chemical, biological, radioactive or explosive materials in storage or in use that a terrorist could use as a weapon.

Example: Toxic gases in cylinders, vials of biological agents, explosives or materials such as fertilizer for use in explosives, could be stolen.

Ask what machinery or equipment could be used or sabotaged to produce a catastrophe.

Example: Large chemical or gas storage facilities may pose a significant risk to surrounding communities if bombed or mechanically breached.

Ask what vehicles could be used as weapons if hijacked or stolen.

Example: Terrorists have used rental trucks and airplanes. Bulldozers, tanker trucks and trains might also be used. You could be forced to use company or personal vehicles.

Looking at these possibilities, discuss how they can be made less accessible and/or more secure. Ask in our workplace, what would pose the greatest risk.

Examples: Security may be increased by physical barriers and surveillance. Fencing, locked access gates or doors, motion detectors and alarms, lighting, walls, smart keys on equipment are a few ideas. Security may also be increased through personnel processing. Background checks, photo identification cards, keypunch combination door locks.

Ask as an individual, what can you do to help increase security from terrorists. Open for discussion, summarize with the following.

Share the action items below.

- Be aware and observant of unusual activities or personnel.
- Maintain and use security systems in your workplace.
- If you recognize a weakness in security, pass it on to administrators or risk managers.
- Take responsibility to report unusual activities or personnel to managers or authorities.
- Be aware of activities in your neighborhoods.
- Report unusual activities to police.
- Have the courage to act.

As with the truck driver who alertly identified the vehicle used by the snipers in the Washington, D.C. area, your information may uncover terrorist activities or cells.

Conclude by saying keep these thoughts in mind:

“Honest, reliable, and conscientious workers represent the foundation of an effective security program” — Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Vol. 51, No. RR-19

“Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom!” — Thomas Jefferson

## References

### Books

- Quinley, Kevin and Donald Schmidt, *Business At Risk: How to Assess, Mitigate and Respond to Terrorist Threats*, National Underwriter Co., Cincinnati.

### Web sites

- Emergency Preparedness and Response (Occupational Safety and Health Administration): [www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html)
- Emergency Preparedness for Business, Management Planning Guides (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health): [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/business.html)
- Terrorism (Eduseek): [www.eduseek.com/Search.aspx?Keywords=terrorism](http://www.eduseek.com/Search.aspx?Keywords=terrorism)
- Transportation Security Administration: [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)
- Department of Homeland Security: [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

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