United States Attorney's Anti-terrorism Advisory Council (ATAC)

Building a Culture of Individual Responsibility

ATAC Security Tips

Maintain SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- Know your surroundings. Every environment (neighborhood/business) has unique, routine patterns of activity and generally consistent patterns of behavior associated with the residents/occupants.
- The best Intelligence comes from observant citizens. Establish a mental baseline of routine activity and report unusual/anomalous behavior to law enforcement.
- You are in the best position to evaluate your environment, don't rely strictly on "security" or law enforcement for your personal protection.
- Report loitering, unattended vehicles, suspicious packages, unusual photography or videotaping taking note of the time and description of suspicious person(s) or vehicle(s).
- Report attempts to solicit personal information about you or your business.

Establish a SECURITY MINDSET

- You do not need to be a law enforcement officer or trained security professional to assess threatening situations and report suspicious activity. At your place of business and in your community promote a culture of responsibility.
- Accept that YOU are part of the security equation.
- You are part of a layered approach to security. Law enforcement is only one layer in that system of security.
- Maintain a state of "relaxed awareness", that is, a state where you are cognizant of dangers but not so alert that you are in a constant state of fear or readiness for something bad to happen. The latter state is known as hyper vigilance and can actually reduce your ability to respond appropriately.
- Promote security as everyone's business.

Avoid COMPLACENCY *or* FATALISM *or* HYPERVIGILANCE

ALL three can be deadly.

- COMPLACENCY-"It can't happen to me", "Why would they attack us?", "It won't happen here."
- FATALISM-"If it's going to happen there is nothing I can do about it."

- HYPERVIGILANCE-“The danger is everywhere-they’re going to kill all of us.”

Take care of yourself. Take care of your family. Take care of your community

Recognize the Attack Cycle

- An attack is almost always preceded by **surveillance** or “casing”.
- The intelligence operative actively **probes for vulnerabilities** in security while **noting routines**, possible attack/breaching points and **establishing possible cover stories to gain access** based on observations of routine activity.
- The intelligence operative may **rent in a more transient neighborhood** where people don’t ask questions.
- Intelligence Operatives and or Attack Operatives **may dress as public utility workers, road workers, vendors, package couriers** (UPS, FEDEX). Attack operatives overseas have **dressed as police or military**.
- The intelligence operative may ask **unusual questions** relative to the number of employees, hours of operation, safety or security plans etc.
- Intelligence operatives **may videotape**; appear to be ‘walking off’ or measuring distances, attempt to acquire blueprints etc.
- Operatives may **use “cloned” or stolen official vehicles** such as ambulances and official uniforms to attempt intrusion/penetration with little to no resistance under some guise of legitimacy/authority.
- Be aware of the **insider threat**-attackers may attempt to gain employment or place someone on the inside to learn your security practices and facilitate the attack. The insider is often a low wage employee with broad facility access such as a custodian or temporary maintenance worker. The insider may not be an actual employee but a delivery person granted access to the facility. The insider may pose as mentally challenged or feign having no knowledge of the language.

Be UNPREDICTABLE

- Vary daily routines; avoid predictable patterns of activity whenever possible.
- When driving use your rear and side view mirrors periodically to ascertain if you are being followed.
- At work; avoid marked parking spaces with the occupants name or title. Park in different spots
- Parking lots and garages should be maintained with gates locked at all times and be well lit. Do not park in public garages with inadequate security.

- If you have been the subject of threats-check around and under your vehicle
- Go with your gut-if you don't feel right subconsciously you are noting behavior and you should not dismiss these feelings.

Personal Security While Away

- Do not discuss your business or travel plans in public areas where they may be overheard. Discuss your travel plans and movements during your stay with as few people as possible.
- Be low key-Don't call attention to yourself as a Westerner in a foreign country.
- Select a hotel room on the third to fifth floor generally will keep you out of reach of criminal activity from the street but still within reach of most fire truck ladders.
- Be alert to overly friendly locals who may have criminal intentions. They may offer to take you to a "special" restaurant.
- Place airplane tickets, credit cards, passport or other documents of personal identification in a hotel safe deposit box or room safe.
- Familiarize yourself with escape routes in case of fire or other catastrophe.
- Use the door chain or bolt lock whenever you are in your room.
- Use the door viewer (peephole) before opening the door to visitors.
- Do not discuss your room number while standing in the lobby or leave your room key on restaurant or bar tables.
- Keep your room neat so you will notice disturbed or missing items quickly.

Carjacking

- When in your car, always keep the doors locked. Any time you drive through areas containing stoplights, stop signs-keep your windows up.

- Leave ample maneuvering space between your vehicle and the one in front of you. If you are approached by suspicious persons while you are stopped, do not roll down windows; drive away quickly.

- If you are being followed or harassed by another driver, try to find the nearest police station, fire station, or other public facility. Once you find a place of safety, don't worry about using a legal parking space. Enter and walk quickly to the largest group of people.

- If you are being followed, never lead the person back to your home or stop and get out.

- If you are traveling alone and a car “bumps” into you, don’t stop to exchange accident information. Go to the nearest Police Station.

Building Security

- Check all entrances, including service doors, access to service elevators and gates. Are these areas monitored/guarded? Are locks sufficient? Are locks broken or disabled?
- Keep doors locked and limit entrance points.
- Assure only known persons properly identified and issued security ids/badges are granted access.
- Card keys and cameras are only useful if you do not circumvent, override or ignore these technologies. Do not allow others through doors (to piggy back) on your card.
- Challenge all visitors. Ask questions of visitors relative to their activities.
- Periodically walk the perimeter of your building taking note of overgrown shrubs, broken windows, broken door locks, unlocked gates, holes in fencing, and signs of attempted intrusion or vandalism.
- Get to know your neighbors. Develop a rapport with them.
- Never leave keys “hidden” outside your home or workplace.
- Note and report loitering by suspicious individuals or the sighting of suspicious vehicles, particularly if observed on multiple occasions.
- Note and report any instances of suspicious photography or videotaping.

Building Security at Night

- If you do not have an alarm systems at least consider motion detector flood lights on each corner of the building.
- Flood lights should “wash” the building with light (i.e. stream across windows making it more difficult to see in).
- Keep flashlights in several areas in the building. Check the batteries often.

Suspicious Letter or Package

A letter or parcel bomb might have some of the following indicators:

- Suspicious origin--especially if the postmark or name of sender is unusual, unknown, or no forwarding address is given.
- Excessive or inadequate postage.

- Off-balance or lopsided letter or package.
- Unusual weight for the size of the letter or package. Letters also may be unusually thick.
- Stiffness or springiness of contents. (When checking, do not bend excessively.)
- Protruding wires or components
- Strange smell, particularly almond or other suspicious odors.
- Handwriting of sender is not familiar or indicates a foreign style not normally received by recipient.
- Common words or names are misspelled.
- Addressed to a title only or a name with the incorrect title
- Rub on or tapped or pasted cut out block lettering.
- Restrictive markings such as “confidential”, “personal”, “to be opened by”
- Rattling inside the envelope or package--possibly loose components of a device.
- Excessive tape, string or other material to hold the envelope together.

If encountered always employ **SIN (S**ecure**, I**solate and **N**otify the police**).** If you strongly suspect a bomb call 911 and request the bomb squad. If you suspect a chemical or biological agent isolate the package, place a trash can or other cover over the package, call 911 and specifically request HAZMAT, thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water. If a suspicious powder is encountered call to disable the air handling system.

Potential Indicators of Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs)

- Theft or purchase—particularly cash purchases from private individuals—of large delivery vehicles, vans, cargo containers, trailers or related equipment.
- Individuals seeking commercial driver training who seem to lack industry knowledge or show interest in only certain aspects of the training.
- A vehicle “ridding low” as if carrying excessive weight.
- A vehicle illegally parked or left unattended in an unusual location.
- Occupant quickly exits the vehicle, looking around when exiting.
- Vehicle has tinted windows or window shades obstructing interior view.
- Blanket or tarp covering packages in the vehicle.
- License plate is not securely affixed to the vehicle.
- Out of state license plates-only one plate from state requiring two
- Government or other official plate on an older or mismatched vehicle.
- “Cloned” vehicle-marked as a courier, utility or emergency vehicle with unusual indicators such as incorrect number placements, color variation, slight variation in markings, misspelled words, roof racks, ladders, safety cones or other “props” that appear new and never used etc.