



Office of Intelligence and Analysis

**Homeland
Security**

**Federal Bureau
of Investigation**



Joint Homeland Security Assessment

(U) 2007 Holiday Season Security Awareness

21 November 2007

(U) Prepared by the DHS/Critical Infrastructure Threat Analysis Division and the FBI/Threat Analysis Unit.

(U) Key Findings

(U//FOUO) DHS and the FBI currently have no credible intelligence that terrorist organizations are planning attacks against the Homeland during the 2007 holiday season. Attacks and disrupted plots overseas continue to suggest a terrorist focus on lightly defended targets or facilities with lower security profiles. DHS and the FBI recommend continued vigilance during the 2007 holiday season and stress the importance of promptly reporting suspicious activity to appropriate authorities.

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(U) Threats from Al-Qa'ida, Its Affiliates, and Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Groups

(U//FOUO) High-profile plots in Denmark, Germany, Scotland, and the United Kingdom indicate that al-Qa'ida and other foreign terrorists are focusing on striking lightly defended and publicly accessible infrastructure to inflict casualties. Airports, nightclubs, and tourist sites all have been targets of terrorist attacks over the past year.

(U//FOUO) The large number of increased travel, mass gatherings, and special events associated with the holidays—which extend through the New Year—will require heightened attention and vigilance. During this period large crowds will frequent holiday celebrations, sporting events, parades, religious activities, retail centers, shopping malls, airports, and public transportation systems.

- (U//FOUO) On 6 December 2006, a U.S. Person was arrested on charges of attempting to detonate hand grenades in an Illinois shopping mall during the 2006 holiday season. The U.S. Person was not part of an organized terrorist group; however, he did conduct pre-operational surveillance of his intended target, an activity that could provide local law enforcement an opportunity to disrupt future plots.

(U//FOUO) On 8 November 2007, U.S. media organizations reported that the FBI had received information alleging a terrorist threat against shopping malls in Chicago and Los Angeles during the approaching holiday season. DHS and the FBI stress that serious doubts exist regarding the source's access to this type of information and that no intelligence corroborates this threat. DHS and the FBI have no credible intelligence at this time of any imminent threats to the Homeland.

(U) Potential Indicators and Suggested Protective Measures

(U//FOUO) Law enforcement officers and security personnel should remain alert to and immediately report potential indicators of terrorist preoperational surveillance and planning activities at any commercial retail establishment, transportation venue, or other public gathering place. These indicators include the following:

- (U//FOUO) Prolonged or unusual interest in or attempts to gain sensitive information about entry points, peak days and hours of operation, security personnel, surveillance assets, and access controls such as alarms, barriers, doors, gates, or locks.
- (U//FOUO) Persons loitering, parking, or standing in the same area over multiple days with no apparent reasonable explanation.
- (U//FOUO) Observation of security reaction drills or procedures.

- (U//FOUO) Discreet use of cameras, note-taking, or video recorders over an extended period.
- (U//FOUO) Interest in speaking with building maintenance personnel.
- (U//FOUO) Observations of or questions about facility air conditioning, heating, and ventilation systems.

(U//FOUO) Building or event management personnel may want to consider the following enhanced protective measures during the 2007 holiday season:

- (U//FOUO) Institute increased foot, roving, and vehicle security patrols, varied in routes, size, and timing.
- (U//FOUO) Approach all illegally parked vehicles in and around facilities, question drivers, and direct them to move immediately; immediately tow unattended vehicles in unauthorized areas or that have been parked for an unusual length of time.
- (U//FOUO) Be alert to the presence of unattended backpacks, briefcases, shopping bags, and suitcases.
- (U//FOUO) Review security camera footage daily to detect possible indicators of surveillance.
- (U//FOUO) Provide security and backup for critical utility services such as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and water.
- (U//FOUO) Ensure area businesses, facilities, and utilities are familiar with procedures for alert notifications, crisis management, evacuation, and threat reporting.
- (U//FOUO) Establish liaison and regular communication with emergency responders and local law enforcement, Federal and state law enforcement, and terrorism agencies, and industry organizations to clarify emergency responses, enhance information exchange, support investigations, and track threat conditions.
- (U//FOUO) Review and exercise emergency response management procedures with law enforcement, medical and emergency services, and security to mitigate the effects of an attack.

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