

TERRORISM

WHAT IS TERRORISM?

Terrorism is the use of force or violence against persons or property in violation of the criminal laws of the United States for purposes of intimidation, coercion, or ransom.

Terrorists often use threats to create fear among the public, to try to convince citizens that their government is powerless in preventing terrorism, and to get immediate publicity for their causes.

TYPES OF TERRORISM

All acts of terrorism are crimes. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) categorizes terrorism in the United States as one of two types – domestic terrorism or international terrorism.

Domestic Terrorism involves groups or individuals whose terrorist activities are directed at elements of our government or population without foreign direction.

International Terrorism involves groups or individuals whose terrorist activities are foreign based and/or directed by countries or groups outside the United States or whose activities transcend national boundaries.

NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF TERRORISM

Terrorists look for visible targets where they can avoid detection before or after an attack such as international airports, large cities, major international events, resorts, and high-profile landmarks. Terrorist actions are well planned and usually executed without any deviation to their plan. It is also theatrical, creating specific reactions from the audience (population). The terrorist will always stage and even rehearse their plan at least three times before perpetrating their actual attack. Terrorism is directed against governments, businesses, communities, and individuals. It may be perpetrated for the retaliation of perceived injustices to cause confrontation between parties; improve a bargaining position; or to demonstrate strength, commitment, and resolve.

Prior to a number of terrorist attacks, the perpetrators have been observed by security personnel and even recorded on surveillance cameras. However, since terrorists didn't enter the facility or building, in each case security chose to ignore them. Some terrorists have been observed taking photographs and making sketches of the site, yet security personnel hadn't felt it important to stop or question them. Some terrorist devices such as vehicles containing explosive devices had even been cited for parking in a "No Parking

Zone” yet they had not investigated or determined its ownership. Remember, a terrorist will not usually attack unless they believe that their operation will be 100% successful.

Terrorists want media coverage to ensure that many people know about their activities. Some will even telephone the media just prior to, or even from their target, after they have taken control. That is why they select high-visibility targets and attempt to do maximize damage. They want a “High Body Count.” Terrorists hope that attention will increase the public’s fear, cause a planned government reaction, or attract sympathy to their cause.

While you cannot prevent deranged individuals and fanatics from plotting against their targets, the security guard can minimize the terrorists’ efforts with solid preparation and by just doing the job they have been paid to do. Whether a threat or an actual attack, it is the security guard who is on the front line. They are usually the first to arrive at the scene; to size up (observe) the situation; the first to request (report) the necessary emergency response; the first take control of the situation; the first to administer first aid until the emergency agencies arrive; and the first to advise the responding agencies of the specific details of the situation.

COUNTER TERRORIST TECHNIQUES OF PHYSICAL SECURITY

- Deter – Deterring terrorists activity by the hardening of the target, so that the terrorist does not have a 100% chance of success. They include the following: checking identifications, packages, and vehicles before they enter a secured area, making patrols or routes of travel unpredictable, and maintaining confidentiality.
- Delay – The use of barriers, locks, a response force, and the controlling of vehicular access.
- Deny – Deny the terrorists the use of widespread panic and media leverage, which they attempt to exploit.
- Detect – Detection of terrorist activity can be accomplished through the analysis of threat intelligence. It can also occur by conducting entry searches, using detection equipment (x-ray, metal explosive), and closed circuit television.