

Security Spotlight

An informational Guide for Securitas Canada Clients and Employees



Securitas Canada, May 2017

Terrorism Threat Awareness



Terrorism can be defined in a number of ways. In the most direct terms, terrorism is a deliberate, criminal use of violence against people or property for political, social or religious ends.

Terrorism Threat Awareness

Acts of terrorism can come from domestic sources, sometimes referred to as "homegrown" terrorism. Homegrown terrorism is when a person, or group, in Canada receives support solely from individuals and organizations, also in Canada, and commits attacks within Canadian borders.

International terrorism involves attacks within Canada that are committed by individuals or groups originating outside Canada or influenced or supported by foreign interests. Most terrorist incidents in North America are perpetrated by domestic terrorists.

Terrorist Precursor Conduct

Depending on the unique features of the security assignment, Security Guards should attempt to be aware of suspicious people, vehicles, things, and items.

Certain kinds of activities are more likely to indicate that terrorist activities are being planned, especially when they occur at or near high-profile sites, at places where large numbers of people gather, or anywhere while a threat alert is in place.

Categories for Terrorist Precursor Conduct

Categories for terrorist precursor conduct are: *Surveillance; Deploying Assets; Suspicious Persons; Suspicious Questioning; Tests of Security; Acquiring Supplies; and Dry Runs.* We will take a closer look at each of these suspicious behaviors and activities **in both the May and June Security Spotlights.**

Precursor Conduct: Surveillance

Surveillance generally involves observing a target area over an extended period of time during the planning phase of an operation. Surveillance is conducted to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the target, to establish a strategy for the attack, and to assess the likelihood that the attack will succeed.

It is helpful if you are alert for vehicles that repeatedly drive by the area—especially vehicles moving slowly and whose occupants seem to be unusually focused on the site. You should also pay attention to those who loiter at or around the site or anyone who makes repeated short visits to the site, but does not seem to have a legitimate business purpose. Try to be aware of people recording or monitoring activities, taking notes, drawing maps, or using cameras, binoculars, or other observation equipment at or near the site. Being aware of suspicious surveillance activity is sometimes as simple as using common sense and being aware of unusual activities or things that do not appear to be normal objects at the site.

Reporting Precursor Conduct

If you see anyone that you think may be engaged in behaviors or activities that may indicate terrorist planning, report it immediately. Follow the procedures in your post orders for responding to and reporting precursor conduct. This may involve alerting the client contact, your supervisor, local law enforcement, or the Canadian Security Intelligence Services. If there is an emergency or an immediate threat, call 911.

The ability to recognize and report intelligence gathering activities and other precursor conduct may interrupt potential terrorist events, crimes, and other threats before they occur.

We will take a closer look at the remaining suspicious behaviors and activities in the upcoming June Spotlight on Security.

Terrorist Aims and Targets

Terrorists use violence and threats of violence to instill fear in the population for the purpose of forcing change. They aim to advance their position by killing as many people as possible and by achieving strong emotional responses from the population affected by their attacks. To achieve these goals, terrorist acts may be more likely to occur at locations where large numbers of people gather or at a time / place where an attack would have a far-reaching or newsworthy impact.

Mitigating Terrorist Threats

The first step in guarding against and mitigating terrorist threats is to be prepared. This involves knowing about terrorism threat alert systems and how they may affect security procedures at your site; understanding procedures outlined in the client's facility security plan; and following your post orders.

The National Security Joint Operations Centre

The scope, scale and urgency of the threat of terrorism resulted in the creation of the National Security Joint Operations Centre in October 2014. Led by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), its goal is to enhance the Government of Canada's response to terrorism-related travel abroad and to mitigate the threat posed by "high-risk" travelers. The Centre houses representatives from key agencies, including the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the RCMP, to facilitate a near-real-time information exchanges. The Centre also helps coordinate rapid inter-agency responses.



Assessing the Terrorism Threat to Canada

The Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre (ITAC) is an independent, expert federal body responsible for assessing terrorism threats to Canada. ITAC constantly examines the terrorism threat environment, relying on information and intelligence from Canadian and international security partners. ITAC provides objective, expert recommendations about the threat level.

Responsibility for approving the threat level rests with the Director of CSIS.

The threat level is determined by several factors. These include past trends and current intelligence on the known intentions and capabilities of terrorist entities and the opportunities they have to conduct attacks. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses are used.

Information used to determine threat levels may often be incomplete. Regardless of the threat level, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

Canada's threat levels do not require specific responses from the public. Rather, threat levels help law enforcement and government agencies and private sector stakeholders to identify risks and vulnerabilities from threats and, in turn, determine appropriate responses to prevent or mitigate a violent act of terrorism.