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Composition: Publishers' Design and Production
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Cover and Interior Image (blue siren): © Comstock
Images/Alamy Images

Cover Image: © Athar Hussain/Reuters/Landov
Text Printing and Binding: Malloy
Cover Printing: John Fow Company

Figure 1-1 © REUTERS/Caren Firouz/Landov; Figure 1-2 © John Moore/AP Photos; Figure 1-3 © Jordanian TV/AP Photos; Figure 1-4 © Ric Feld/AP Photos; Figure 1-5 © REUTERS/George Mubla/Landov

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Annan, Michael.
Preventing terrorist suicide attacks / Michael Annan.

p. cm.
ISBN-13: 978-0-7637-4109-9 (pbk.)
ISBN-10: 0-7637-4109-4

1. Terrorism—United States—Prevention. 2. Suicide bombings—United States—Prevention 3. Police training—United States. I. Title.

HV6432.A46 2007
363.32917—dc22

2006019156

6048

Printed in the United States of America
10 09 08 07 06 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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be able to do so. Members of virtual cells and "foot soldiers" are typically not that highly trained and may even be eager to escape the cult-like isolation imposed by their cell and be their former self again. In this case, a sympathetic interrogation approach may yield the best results. When interrogating a potential Islamic extremist, that approach should always be tried first.

Counter-Surveillance

In many jurisdictions, the identification of likely targets for terrorist attacks is covered in a local terrorism response plan. Protective measures are frequently linked to the Department of Homeland Security terrorism alert level. Protective measures are escalated as the alert level increases. The terrorism response plan should be flexible enough to allow for specific counter-surveillance and other protective measures based on local information. Such information may be obtained through specific information provided by federal agencies or through local sources, for example interviews of members of the community.

During the planning stage, terrorist surveillance activities are related to target selection. Therefore, potential suicide bombers may appear at a multitude of potential targets in order to determine the optimal target. Their principal considerations will be the probability of a high casualty count and ease of penetration. The symbolic and economic value can be assessed without being present at the target. The terrorist surveillance activities at this stage will be low-key; the most frequently encountered action is videotaping the target and its vicinity. If the target does not hold any tourist attraction, videotaping may appear suspicious, for example videotaping mass transit facilities, trains, airports, and so on. In an ideal world of unrestricted manpower, a law enforcement agency would simply saturate all potential targets with undercover personnel to monitor the facilities. Because this is not possible, the general population and employees at likely targets should be educated in the threat of terrorism in general, and these indicators in particular. They can become extra sets of eyes and ears for law enforcement. Programs like CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) are a good venue to propagate such knowledge.

Terrorist suspects should be actively targeted for questioning. In addition to the information that may be gained, if the suspect is indeed part of a terrorist conspiracy, the fact that he is being questioned will impede the planning of the attack. The cell may feel that it has been compromised, and may delay or cancel the attack. Law enforcement

agencies must be cautious not to violate the prohibition of racial profiling or any other civil rights of suspects in their efforts. As mentioned above, Al Qaeda recognizes the openness of our society and justice system, and the opportunities for propagandistic victories or even legal action against law enforcement officers and agencies.

The Preparation Phase

The preparation phase for suicide bombings generally coincides with the tactical training phase. It will occur from days to weeks or even months prior to the actual attack, depending on the complexity of the planned operation. Officer intervention during this phase is the last chance to prevent the attack from occurring. If the potential suicide bombers cannot be stopped at this stage, eventually officers will have to respond to a pre-blast or post-blast situation.

Movements and Whereabouts

If the potential suicide bomber is not already present in the United States, then he will most likely enter the country during the preparation phase. If he is already in the United States, then he will now move to the target area. This happened with the 9/11 hijackers. They entered the United States at different ports of entry and came together in the Northeastern United States only in the weeks before the attack. Sleeper cells, however, may have been living in the immediate vicinity of the target for a long time and, therefore, little movement will occur.

Temporary lodgings of potential suicide bombers may share some features that would enable a law enforcement officer to identify them. Due to the low probability that females will be used for Islamic extremist attacks in the United States, there will be a large number of males living together in a rented apartment or house. Typically, the residence will show that it is intended only for temporary use. There will be little furniture, and it might consist of camping furniture, sleeping bags, military cots, and so on. The exterior may be kept up to some degree in order to blend in with the neighborhood. The inhabitants will display an extreme concern for privacy; windows will be covered, and if there is a backyard, then it will show little activity. This extreme concern for privacy may stand out in a routine encounter with officers, such as a false alarm or a noise disturbance call. The residence of an Islamic extremist cell in a Western environment may acquire a special meaning

for the members. Atta wrote "House of the Followers" in Arabic in the memo line of the checks for his apartment rent.

The residence may double as a bomb factory. The construction of explosive devices may cause accidents, fires, and injuries. These indicators were also previously mentioned in connection with vehicle bombs; they also apply to the manufacture of smaller devices, if on a lesser scale.

■ Reconnaissance and Tactical Training

During the preparation phase, reconnaissance efforts will be target-specific; the target has been selected and all efforts are focused on optimal results of the planned attack. Activities such as photographing or videotaping that were also conducted during the planning phase will now become more focused; they may last longer and be more conspicuous as the cell attempts to obtain operational intelligence for the coming attack. The timing of such reconnaissance efforts will probably coincide with the timing of the planned attack in order to capture conditions at the target as they will be during the attack. Ultimately, the attack will be timed to achieve maximum casualties. The reconnaissance efforts may include a cell member spending considerable time at the target to observe and record what happens there over a certain period of time. Of particular interest at certain targets are security guard schedules, locations, and patrol routes. These efforts will help the cell to establish the optimal access, timing, and disguise for the suicide bombers and, if applicable, the optimal disguise of the vehicle or object concealing the bomb. The reconnaissance efforts may utilize equipment such as binoculars, camcorders, 35mm and digital cameras, and night-vision equipment. The prolonged or repeated presence of subjects with such equipment at objects and facilities that typically do not attract such activities should serve as a potential terrorism indicator. In our analysis of the *Al Qaeda Manual*, we have seen that Al Qaeda estimates that only 20 percent of target information will have to be obtained clandestinely—in other words, by spies. These spies may not even be full members of Al Qaeda, but rather well-educated or well-placed supporters. These supporters will come into play during the preparation phase; their tasks will be to obtain inside knowledge of the intended target that cannot be obtained by observation from the outside. These supporting elements will be asked to provide information such as detailed blueprints of the layout of the target facility, emergency exits, locations of utility lines, structural design features and

weaknesses, or VIP schedules and routes of travel. Unexplained possession of such documents, especially if they are confidential, is a strong terrorism indicator. Officers need to be alert to these during routine police contacts.

At this stage, the cell may go so far as to initiate a staged minor incident such as a bomb threat at the target in order to observe the response by security personnel and law enforcement, as well as evacuation procedures and routes. The tactical, target-specific training may include a dry-run of the attack at the intended target or a very similar facility by the potential suicide bomber and squad that will eventually execute the actual attack. The main objective here is for the squad to familiarize themselves with the target and gain speed, stealth, and confidence for the real attack. The unique nature of the 9/11 attacks caused some peculiarities that were observed during the flight training of the pilots: Their instructors described them as very impatient and wanting to train on large aircraft immediately, and they showed little interest in take-off and landing procedures.

■ Behavioral Changes

The 9/11 pilots of the Hamburg cell grew beards and dressed in traditional garb, even though they resided in a large Western city. After they returned from Afghanistan, they reversed these behaviors, shaved their beards, and wore western clothing again. They did this as a result of instructions they received during their brief training in Afghanistan in order to avoid attracting unwanted attention. They also avoided the company of other Islamic extremists and toned down their anti-American rhetoric. In other words, tactical considerations of maintaining a low profile overrode their inner religious convictions. These acts were purely acts of expediency and did not reflect their real attitudes.

During the preparation phase, with the suicide mission drawing closer, the behavior of the potential suicide bomber may grow more volatile. Threats against non-Muslims, Western countries, and the United States can occur, even though they are not uttered against the ultimate target or representatives thereof. However, threats against the target are communicated to trusted third parties, probably in an effort "to let off steam" that inevitably builds up in the psyche. These third parties might be members of a mosque or Muslim community, which the potential suicide bomber is part of. Along the same lines, fantasies about the imagined phenomenal results of the coming attack may also