

Seven Signs of Terrorism

1 Surveillance

If there is a specific target that terrorists have chosen, that target area will most likely be observed during the planning phase of the operation. This is done to determine the strengths, weaknesses and number of personnel that may respond to an incident. Routes to and from the target are usually established during the surveillance phase. It is important to note suspicious actions such as someone recording or monitoring activities, drawing diagrams or annotating on maps, using vision-enhancing devices, and having in one's possession floor plans or blueprints of places such as high-tech firms, financial institutions, or government/military facilities. Any of these surveillance-type acts *MAY* be an indicator that something is not right and should be reported immediately. Nothing is too menial.



2 Elicitation

The second sign or signal is elicitation. This includes anyone attempting to gain information about a place, person or operation. An example is someone attempting to gain knowledge about a critical infrastructure like a power plant, water reservoir or a maritime port. Terrorists may attempt to research bridge and tunnel usage, make unusual inquiries concerning shipments or look into how a military base operates. They may also attempt to place "key" people in sensitive work locations.



3 Tests of Security

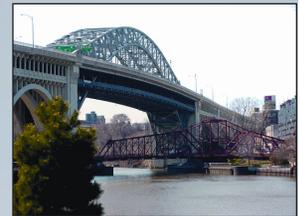
Tests of security are another area in which terrorists would attempt to gather data. This is usually conducted by driving by the target, moving into sensitive areas and observing security or law enforcement response. Items of interest would include the time in which it takes to respond to an incident or the routes taken to a specific location. Terrorists may also try to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures in order to assess strengths and weaknesses. Often, legitimate employment is gained at key locations to monitor day-to-day activities and gather detailed knowledge in order to make their mission or scheme more effective.

4 Acquiring Supplies

It may be a case where someone is purchasing or stealing explosives, weapons or ammunition. It could be someone storing harmful chemical equipment. Terrorists would also find it useful to acquire law enforcement equipment and identification, military uniforms and decals, as well as flight passes, badges or even flight manuals. If they cannot find the opportunity to steal these types of things, they may try to photocopy identification badges or attempt to make passports or other forms of identification by counterfeiting. Any of these items would make it easier for one to gain entrance to secured or usually prohibited areas.

5 Suspicious People Who Don't Belong

Another pre-incident indicator is observing suspicious people who just "don't belong." This does not mean we should profile individuals, but does mean we should profile behaviors. This includes suspicious border crossings, stowaways aboard a ship or people jumping ship in a port. It may mean having someone in a workplace, building, neighborhood or business establishment that does not fit in because of demeanor, language usage or unusual questions he/she is asking.



6 Dry Runs

Another sign to watch for is “dry runs.” Before execution of the final operation or plan, a practice session will be run to work out the flaws and unanticipated problems. A dry run may be the heart of the planning stage of a terrorist act. If you find someone monitoring a police radio frequency and recording emergency response times, you may be observing a dry run. Multiple dry runs are normally conducted at or near the target area.



7 Deploying Assets/Getting into Position

The seventh and final sign to look for is someone deploying assets or getting into position. This is a person’s last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs. It is also important to remember that pre-incident indicators may come months or even years apart. Therefore, it is extremely important to document every fragment of information, no matter how insignificant it may appear, and forward this information to the Ohio Homeland Security tipline at 877-OHS-INTEL.



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Strategic Analysis and Information Center

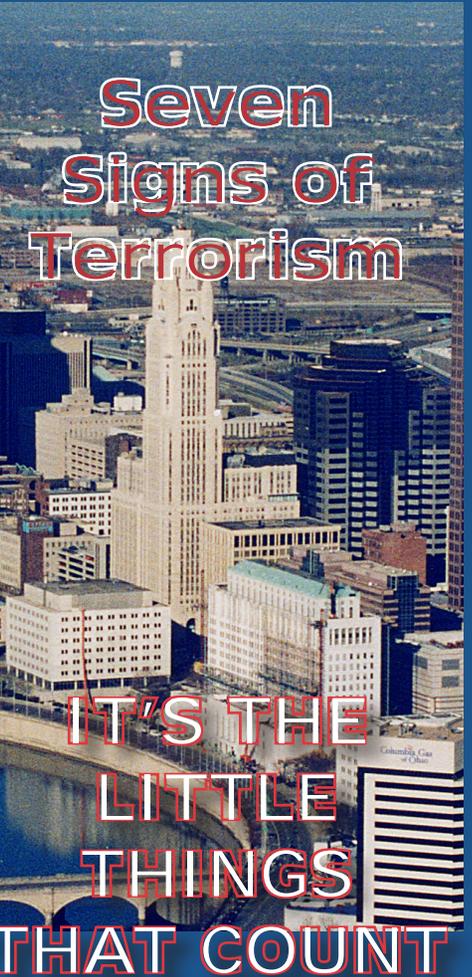
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