Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Introduction

We all have a crucial role in our safety and security.

This program will show you how you—a security professional—can be instrumental in preventing terrorist activity aimed at taking away our cherished freedoms and way of life.

Questions to Think About

1. What are some likely locations in California that could be targets of terrorist activity?
   
   a. Sites where many people gather, e.g. sports stadiums or entertainment centers - Because the purpose of terrorist activity is to cause maximum damage to great numbers of people.
   
   b. Symbolic places such as Disneyland or the Golden Gate Bridge - Because the purpose of terrorist activity is to cause maximum damage to great numbers of people
   
   c. Places that are important for California's economy, such as the water and food supply, financial institutions, the ports, etc. - Because such actions would disrupt our daily lives greatly
   
   d. Government buildings - Because of their symbolic nature

2. How would you define terrorism?

Two official definitions:

   a. U.S. Department of Justice: A violent act or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any segment to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.
   
   b. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.
3. What comes to mind when you hear the expression “Weapons of Mass Destruction?”

Most people think of “bombs” or they will refer to 9/11. Other possible methods of causing mass destruction include chemical and biological or nuclear attacks.

The purpose of terrorism is to terrify—to frighten—civilians by unprovoked attacks against a group or a nation. One of the most commonly used terrorist tactics is murdering large numbers of people.

The white supremacist Buford O. Furrow was sentenced to life without parole for his shooting of five people, including three children, at a Jewish Community Center and for shooting and killing a Filipino-American postal worker. Furrow had previously been chased away from the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles by private security professionals, where he could have inflicted even more damage.

In 1999, a terrorist by the name of Ahmed Ressam attempted to cross the border between the United States and Canada. Ressam was carrying explosive materials in his car that were later determined to be used to blow up the Bradley Terminal at Los Angeles International Airport. Fortunately, US customs agents became suspicious of Ressam’s hesitant answers to their questions and took him into custody. Ressam was sentenced to 130 years in prison.
Terrorist Acts Are Not Always Against People

For example, some people believe they are in the right when they destroy property to make a point for a cause, such as in the case of the vandalizing of car dealerships or the serious arson fires directed at new housing developments.

Although certainly not the only threat, the widely publicized beliefs of organizations like Al Queda are symptomatic of a terrorist group. Their purpose is to disrupt civilian lives and damage structures in order to inflict the maximum possible emotional, physical, and economic damage. They are especially interested in targets that have symbolic value, such as the World Trade Center buildings.

Typical targets are government buildings, mass transit facilities, public buildings, communication and utility facilities, water supply locations, food production sites, and recreational facilities, and any location where large numbers of people gather, such as stadiums, malls, the beach, and so on.

This is where you, America’s security professionals, work! Your awareness and knowledge are crucial to California’s security.

Things to remember:

- The primary purpose of terrorism is to frighten a group of people.
- Not all terrorists have a religious purpose to their actions.
- US customs agents first become suspicious of Ahmed Ressam as he tried to cross the US / Canada border because he acted hesitant and unsure.
- The purpose of a terrorist act is to cause emotional pain in its victims and cause economic damage.
- The following are a list of possible targets for a terrorist act:
  - government buildings
  - mass transit facilities
Why Would a Terrorist Target Your Workplace?
 Answers depend on the site the security officer is guarding. For example, at a parking structure, the terrorist could inflict damage on great numbers of people if the attack happened at the time most people were arriving or leaving. At a bank, a terrorist could attempt to steal funds for a future operation. At a chemical plant, he might want to obtain toxic or hazardous materials.

What Harm Could Come To California Or The Nation If A Terrorist Attack Occurred At Or Near Your Workplace?
 If the officer is in charge of a public area, the main harm could be loss of lives. Other sites would have an economic impact. But above all, the emotional security of Californians would be affected.

When most people think of terrorism, they think of bombs. Can you think of any other means of frightening or hurting large groups of people, maybe biological hazards such as the Anthrax events in Washington, D.C., or the possibility of poisoning the water supply.

What a Potential Terrorist Group Needs In Order To Carry Out an Attack
 First, they may need more people to join the organization, so they conduct efforts to increase group membership. Secondly, they need money to travel, rent cars and houses, buy equipment, and so on. Next they need to select or acquire weapons. The chosen date of an attack may also be important, especially if the terrorists choose a date of national significance, such as Independence Day.
Now they need access to a target site, and this is frequently where you come in. Terrorists will attempt to gain access to the sites they have chosen in order to check them out, frequently wearing uniforms that make them seem harmless or legitimate such as cleaning crews. They may even be impersonating police officers. Terrorists also want to know as much about the selected target site as possible, such as building security measures, the number of possible victims, the target’s vulnerabilities, the predictable schedules of incoming and outgoing people and packages, and possible escape routes.

**What is your role as a security officer in the prevention and possible handling of terrorist attacks?**

It can be summarized in three words: **recognize, report, and react**. This program will train you to recognize pre-incident indicators and show you what you should report about what you notice.

Reporting events or suspicions according to your post orders is very important. The program will also show you how to react both in cases of suspicious activity and in the case that a WMD attack occurs.

**Things to Think About:**

1. **What are three ways in which a terrorist organization might try to recruit members at your workplace?**
   - Holding political rallies
   - Using email to push their point of view
   - Holding secretive meetings

2. **Is there anything a terrorist could steal from your workplace that he could sell to make money? (The Answers depend on the workplace)**
   - Autos or other vehicles
   - Financial instruments
   - Pharmaceuticals (to sell on the illegal market)
   - Art, etc.
3. Under what circumstances would vehicles at your workplace, such as bicycles, cars, trucks, helicopters, or boats, make you suspicious?
   - Parked in unusual places
   - Out-of-the-ordinary size or apparent weight
   - Type of vehicle not normal
   - Delivery van arriving when no deliveries are scheduled

4. Think of ways in which a terrorist might be able to get onto your site without anyone noticing. This could include...
   - By appearing in a known uniform (police, UPS, janitorial, etc.)
   - By having the key code to the doors
   - By blending in (dressing like everyone else)
   - By wearing a tool belt

**Keep In Mind**

1. Terrorist organizations always try to recruit more members.
2. Terrorist organizations never have all the money they will ever need.
3. A bomb is the most common terrorist weapon.
4. A terrorist attack is especially likely on a day of national significance.
5. A potential terrorist can gain access to a secure site by impersonating a security officer.
6. Terrorists need to “case the joint” or conduct surveillance of their target.
7. To move their weapon into place, a terrorist do not always needs something huge, like an airplane.
8. After the attack, the terrorists need to escape, unless it is a suicide attack.
The Nature of Terrorism

There are many definitions, as you will see, but they have certain common denominators. First of all, terrorism is a criminal activity. It is important to understand this. Terrorist activity is not an acceptable and normal manner in which to make one's views heard. Secondly, terrorism involves violence against civilians—people like you and me and our families. Thirdly, a terrorist has as her or his aim to push a social, religious, or political objective. The goal of the terrorist is to force a government or a group of people to change.

Indicators of a Terrorist Plan

What kinds of things do they do?

The first step for an organization to become viable is to increase group size. They do this by holding rallies, posting recruitment fliers, guiding visitors to their web sites, and so on. Be on the lookout for suspicious documents that you find on your site, but keep in mind that freedom of speech and expression is guaranteed by the Constitution.

Another key step for a terrorist is gaining access to money. As with disguises, the easiest way to get money is to steal it—there is no record! ID theft, for example, is on the increase, and using another person's identification is an easy way to illegally obtain cash or merchandise that can be converted into cash. Property that is stolen can always be sold to generate cash. Terrorists frequently commit armed robberies to get quick cash. Naturally, all of these are serious crimes—for whatever reason they are committed. If your site handles financial transactions in any way, keep in mind the purposes to which the money can be put. Also, if your site experiences a theft of uniforms, vehicles with company logos, etc., such kinds of activity should arouse your suspicions and be reported.

Three Types of Weapons That a Terrorist Can Use

- Conventional weapons such as guns, explosives, and incendiary devices
- Chemical and biological agents
Nuclear weapons and radiological material

Pipe bombs come in different sizes, but all can easily be carried on a person. All the components are legal and easily obtainable. The devastation caused by mass destruction weapons such as explosives can be enormous, as several incidents both in the United States and in other countries have shown.

Chemical agents are highly toxic, but are used less often because their effect is hard to limit. The best way of preventing their use is to stop theft of chemicals from your site. The potential users have to get onto your site to steal this material, and that’s where your important position comes into play.

Biological agents cause illness or death. Anthrax is probably the best known of these, but any kind of easily infectious disease-causing agent can also spread terror. In addition, the terrorist needs a way to “deliver” the poisonous substance in the place they want to attack. One simple and effective way is to place the biological agent into the air conditioning / heating system.

Nuclear weapons are extremely hard to come by. One possibility is for terrorists to combine a traditional explosive device with radioactive material, the so-called “dirty bomb”. Your most important role is to prevent access to, transportation of, or removal of potentially dangerous materials.

Terrorist's Want to Choose a Date

Previously we have mentioned dates important to our country such as our Independence Day or Memorial Day, but we should also be aware of other symbolic dates, such as those related to a given religion, or dates that correspond to large groups of people being assembled in one area, such as Superbowl Sunday. Being aware of dates important to different groups and being extra vigilant in the period leading up to such days is crucial. At this point, the terrorists need to check out the site to assess weaknesses, human and physical, and to conduct dry runs.
What to Pay Attention to In Order to Stop Them?

The idea is to become aware of actions that just don't fit the location and situation.

**For example:** is someone coming closer to a sensitive area than he or she has any valid reason to be? Does she stay in one place for a much longer time than the view deserves? Have you had several such small incidents lately? All those add up to suspicions. In addition, if you find “forgotten” cameras or equipment in places where there is nothing of tourist interest to photograph (such as power lines, for example), that's not normal. Maps, drawings, and cryptic notes would also be something you should report.

Finally, anyone asking you questions related to security, such as inquiring about the patrol times of a power plant guard unit, the number of people at the facility, the air conditioning systems, or locations of emergency exits, should be documented and reported.

Moving a Weapon to the Target

Be on the lookout for nervous behavior or odd clothing for the environment, such as being heavily dressed in the 100-degree heat of summer. Should the weapon be brought in a vehicle, pay attention to large containers and vehicles that appear to be overloaded. Similarly, drivers or operators of any kind of vehicle, including private planes and boats, which do not have current valid operators’ licenses should be noted and reported. Also be aware of parked or disabled vehicles in unusual places. Unless this is a suicide operation, the terrorist now needs to escape.

The same indicators that made you suspicious of people arriving should cause you to think twice at the time when they are trying to leave. They may have less to carry, but they may be more nervous and have a greater sense of urgency.

**If it is a suicide operation,** the terrorist does not wish to escape. In the past, we thought we could describe fairly accurately the characteristics of a potential suicide bomber, but this is no longer the case. There is no real profile. Suicide bombs can be delivered by multiple means, such as vehicle bombs, boat bombs, airplanes used as weapons as we saw on September 11th, and an individual with an explosive strapped to his or her body. Given
that the terrorist does not want to escape, the pre-incident indicators are essentially the same as for non-suicide operations with the possible extra stress of the knowledge of death leading to hesitancy, nervousness, or extra bulky clothing to conceal a device.

All in all, the primary skill for you to develop is a sense for “what just doesn’t fit.”

**Imagine**

Imagine you are a small but well-organized group of people who hate California and all it stands for. You could be a religious group, a political group, or any other special-interest group. You want Californians to fear and respect you and to accept you as their new leaders.

**Look For More Members**

You might begin your evil plan by looking for more members for your terrorist cell. How would you go about recruiting? (Think about some possible ways in which the site where you work as a security professional could be involved in the recruiting process.) You might hold rallies, disseminate hate mail, and invite people to secret meetings.

**Plan Your Budget**

You also might start planning your budget. How will you get money? (Consider some ways in which the site where you work could have some relationship to the funding process.) Stealing something of value, such as electronic equipment, to then sell is a common way. The most valuable in their ratio of weight and size to dollar income are legal and illegal drugs. Illegal financial activity is another method, such a breaking into banking databases.

**Choose Your Weapon**

Choosing your weapon and components and where can you find them? (Think about some aspect of the weapon-creation process that might involve the site where you work.)
High impact and “dirty” bombs are probably the weapons of choice. Any site which employs chemicals that can be fatal if not carefully controlled is at risk.

**Select Your Target**

You want to create maximum devastation and fear in the community. What would you select? (You may have to re-think your choice of weapon at this point if you decide that some other means, for example biological rather than explosive, would be more terrifying.) Maximum devastation would be caused by something from which the citizens of California believe they cannot protect themselves. Poisoning the water or food supply, for example, would cause widespread panic.

**Choose a Date**

What date would you choose? Major sporting events could be a choice. Another could be the inauguration of elected officials. The 4th of July is an obvious choice.

**Gather Missing Information**

How will you get onto the site unnoticed?

If you are trying to gain access to a site without anyone sounding an alarm, you’d want to know about the security procedures, the timing of the rounds, and so on. You might also need to find a schematic plan of the building.

Now plan to move your selected weapon to the site you have identified. What means of transportation do you need? How many people? What kinds of identification or disguise?

Your best bet is a kind of vehicle that blends in. For example, at an auto plant a different make of vehicle might be unusual. A delivery truck would be an obvious choice.

Finally, you have been able to detonate the weapon. There is mass panic and devastation. How do you escape?
Act like everyone else. You also need to have an advance escape plan in for where you will meet up with those who will take you away. You’ll also want a back-up plan.
Types of Weapons of Mass Destruction

There are five main kinds of weapons of mass destruction. We use the acronym B-NICE to describe them. They are...

- **B** - Biological
- **N** - Nuclear
- **I** - Incendiary
- **C** - Chemical
- **E** - Explosive

**A Biological Agent** - A biological agent is something that makes you sick and spreads easily. They are intentionally induced mass diseases. Examples are bacteria, viruses, and various toxins.

**Nuclear Terrorism** - Nuclear terrorism can occur in several ways, from a threat or actual deployment of a nuclear bomb to spreading radioactive material, which is the toxic byproduct of a nuclear reaction.

**Incendiary Device** - An incendiary device is any mechanical, electrical, or chemical device purposely used to start a fire. A chemical agent can injure or kill by being inhaled into your lungs by breathing, by being swallowed, or through skin contact. Some examples are those that affect the nervous system, those that cause skin damage, and those that prevent your blood from absorbing oxygen.

**Explosives** - An explosive, commonly known as a bomb, is probably the best known device, and also the most frequently used. Bombs of every kind can cause damage, from the initial force of the explosion, from shrapnel, and from the danger of falling objects. The different weapons show their effects in different timelines. An explosion, of course, has an immediate effect on people, and a fire or the release of nuclear materials will have an effect within a few minutes.

**Chemicals** - Chemicals will also affect human beings very quickly, usually within an hour. On the other hand, bacteria or other biological agents will take more than a few days before people start showing symptoms of illness.
The Following will be a review of different types of weapons:

**Biological**
- Cheap, easy to make and easily available
- Hard to detect in the victim population
- Great psychological damage and fear
- It takes a long time for effects to show up
- It may hurt the terrorists as well
- People will get sick, but perhaps not many will die
- They may not get much sympathy for their cause
- Anthrax, Botulism toxins, Cholera, Plague, Smallpox

**Incendiary**
- Easy to make from home-made materials
- Ignite about 75% of the time
- Fire is very frightening
- Unless accompanied by the effect of a bombing, the victim population knows how to deal with fire
- The terrorist may destroy more property than lives
- Trigger methods can be chemical, electronic, or mechanical
- Delivery methods can be stationary, hand-thrown, or self-propelled

**Nuclear**
- Devastating effects
- Great psychological impact
- Escalates an attack to all-out war
- Heavy
- Expensive (hundreds of millions of dollars)
- Very difficult to make and to deploy
- Death by nuclear explosion
- Radiation burns
- Radiological poisoning
- Long-term effects such as cancers

**Chemical**
- Cheap, easy to make and easily available
- Has an immediate effect
- Great psychological damage (fear)
- Need to have a lot to have a mass effect
- Dangerous to produce and deploy for the terrorist
- Mustard, Cyanide, Chlorine, Sarin

**Explosive**

- Dramatic
- Low risk
- Easy to execute remote attacks
- May damage both the intended group and innocent bystanders, such as babies
- Not simple to make the attack covert
- Over 70% of domestic terrorist incidents involve explosives
- Pipe bombs, Vehicle bombs, Suicide bombs

**Why Would a Terrorist Group Choose One Weapon Over Another?**

It depends largely on the group’s amount of money, their access to the site they want to attack, and the kind of devastation they want to inflict. The viruses and bacteria needed for biological weapons, those that cause mass illness, discomfort, and possibly death, are sadly easy to come by but difficult to employ and to diagnose. We humans have an inborn fear of “plague-like” terrorism because we feel that we cannot protect ourselves and those we love. However, the disadvantages to the potential terrorist mostly outweigh those advantages. Some examples of biological agents are anthrax, botulism, cholera, plague, and smallpox.

As we said before, a nuclear weapon may be either the actual detonation of a nuclear bomb, such as the ones launched over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the Second World War, or the release of radiological materials. A nuclear bomb would have immense effects on both people and structures, and those effects last a very long time. The psychological impact is enormous.
The psychological impact is enormous. However, despite writing in the popular media, it is not all that simple to get one’s hands on the materials to create a nuclear bomb, and it is extremely expensive. It would also cause immediate retaliation by the country which was attacked and it would be likely that the home country of whichever entity released a nuclear bomb would be completely annihilated.

Radiological materials, which can cause both immediate acute poisoning and long-term health problems, can be deployed as a secondary component of another weapon, such as a “dirty bomb.” An example of a dirty bomb would be radiological material attached to a common explosive device, such as a pipe bomb.

An incendiary device is something that starts a fire. Such devices are easy to make from materials anyone can buy. Fire is very frightening because it is dramatic, dangerous, and it grows and moves very fast. However, fire is also a part of the world in which we live and we have expert fire departments in every town and rural area.

The terrorist may end up destroying more property than lives. Incendiary devices can be started by chemical, electronic, or mechanical triggers and they may be left in place (stationary), thrown by hand, or self-propelled like a rocket.

The “C” in the “B-NICE” acronym stands for chemical agents. The nerve agent Sarin, released in the Tokyo subway system by a terrorist group in 1995, is probably one you have heard about. Like biological agents, they are easy to find or steal, easy to make, and are relatively cheap. They also have a strong psychological effect on the victim population. The disadvantages to the terrorist make chemical agents less likely to be deployed; however, we should not downplay the possibility of their uses. Should symptoms be present such as people having difficulty breathing, unusual smells, or suspicious circumstances such as unscheduled spraying, the important thing is to leave the area and notify emergency responders immediately. By far the most common weapon of mass destruction is an explosive—a bomb. Over 70% of terrorist incidents involve bombs. They are dramatic, pose little risk to the bomber, and are easy to explode from a distance. The main disadvantages to the terrorists are that they need to gather a lot of intelligence about the site they want to attack, they run many risks of being
detected before they can execute the attack, and also that they may—or will—kill or hurt innocent bystanders.


**WMD Video Review**

In the WMD video the term “**CBRNE**” is used for the types we described previously. **CBRNE** stands for:

- C – Chemical
- B – Biological
- R – Radiological
- N – Nuclear, and
- E – Explosive weapons

The video also uses the term “**TLO**” when describing a special role for a police officer, a “terrorism liaison officer.” The video tells the officers to report their suspicions and evidence to the TLO. In your role as a security professional, however, you will report according to your post orders.

As security professionals, you will in most cases not stop vehicles and make arrests. However, the point of the video you watched is to remind you to be vigilant and suspicious of unusual behavior.

1. **What was the reason for the traffic stop?** The truck allegedly ran a red light.

2. **Which behaviors made the officer suspicious?** They did not have valid driver’s licenses and their passports were from two different countries. They seemed unsure about what they were doing and where they were going. They said they were gardeners but they seemed too well dressed for that job.

3. **What did the officer find in the cab of the truck?** He found maps pointing out sites where many people gather.

4. **What did the officer find in the truck bed?** It was loaded with ammonium nitrate, which is used as a fertilizer, but there was just too much of it for any valid purpose.

5. **If you noticed people behaving like this at your site, what would you do?** You would call your supervisor to verify that the people had
a right to be where they were. If he or she were unavailable, comply with your post orders.

What You Could and Should Do

The video introduced the indicators, choices of, and effects of weapons of mass destruction. In the following, we will consider the scenario of an event which has occurred and what you could and should do.

Your first action is to call for assistance. Secondly, as hard as it may be, you need to keep yourself from becoming a victim of the incident. How can you help people if you are unconscious? While you are not a trained first responder, it is useful to know what those first responders will need and how you can contribute to everyone’s safety.

1. Think about whom you would notify in the case of a Weapons of Mass Destruction incident.

2. How would you isolate or evacuate persons, and...

3. How would you protect yourself so you don’t become a victim?

The first stage of action for you is to notify first responders and your superiors, according to your post orders. Use a landline if at all possible. Since you already know very well how your site is organized, selecting the safest approach route for the first responders should be possible for you. Your first priority is life, your own and everyone else’s. Incident management means preventing a problem from becoming even more serious. Be prepared to answer questions that the first responders will ask about the incident. As you are calling for assistance, stay on the line until the dispatcher has gathered all necessary information or until it gets to be unsafe for you to stay there.

The first issue in the aftermath of a WMD attack is whether to shelter people in place or give orders to evacuate. Your post orders will tell you who has the authority to order an evacuation. In helping law enforcement and other first responders with this stage, you are performing an important function.

Being aware of your post orders is crucial. Review them! If you don’t have your post orders, ask your supervisor for them. The decision to shelter-in-place versus evacuation depends on an accurate assessment of the situation.
and has many variables that must be considered. If the situation involves hazardous materials, you should first take careful note of the wind direction. You, and other people who may be exposed, will want to first move first cross-wind and then upwind to avoid exposure. In the case of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction, expect mass hysteria. The more order and calm reassurance you can provide, the better. Help as much as you can.

Consider the possibility of secondary devices and try not to move anything. Stay alert about possible suspicious activity and articles that don't belong. Focus on protecting evidence as well as victims. You cannot help others if you are unable to function, so your self-protection is essential. Do not become a victim. Do not rush in. Assess the situation and keep your distance. Try to determine the wind direction. Do your best to avoid contaminated areas.

**Three Main Concepts in Protective Measures:**

- **Time** - To subject people for as short time as possible to the hazard; time is of the essence to save lives. Time also means that the danger will lessen the more time passes.

- **Distance** - Avoiding contact with a contaminant.

- **Shielding** - Shielding means using any protection you have available.

In conclusion, your first task is always to notify the proper authorities while keeping yourself safe. Secondly, to help the victims as much possible, try to put as much time and distance between them and the danger as you can. Finally, shield yourself and the persons in your area from the hazards using any physical means you have available. *Your calm and reassuring presence will help.*
Some Questions to Think About

1. **Where should you find the contact information for whom to notify in an emergency? What is your backup plan if you cannot reach the first person on your list?**

   Answer: Depends on post orders.

2. **At your site, who has the authority to order an evacuation?**

   Answer: Depends on post orders.

3. **If the person identified in question #2 is unavailable, what do you do?**

   Answer: Depends on post orders.

4. **What are secondary devices?**

   Answer: A secondary device is an additional weapon at the scene that is planted to cause harm to the first responders. For example, a first explosion may draw the fire department and the secondary device, for example a bomb, is set to go off to kill the arriving fire fighters.

5. **If you think airborne hazardous materials have been released, what path of evacuation would you take?**

   Answer: Crosswind, then upwind.

6. **Why would you pay attention to people leaving the scene of the incident?**

   Answer: They might be the terrorists trying to get away.