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The FBI's Terrorism Quick Reference Card

First responding officers should be aware of suspicious factors that may indicate a possible terrorist threat. These factors should be considered collectively in assessing a possible threat. This quick reference guide is intended to provide practical information for line officers but may not encompass every threat or circumstance. State and local law enforcement may contact their local FBI field office or resident agency for additional assistance.

1) Possible Suicide Bomber Indicators -A.L.E.R.T.

- A. Alone and nervous.
- B. Loose and/or bulky clothing (may not fit weather conditions).
- C. Exposed wires (possibly through sleeve).
- D. Rigid mid-section (explosive device or may be carrying a rifle).
- E. Tightened hands (may hold detonation device).

2) Passport History

- A. Recent travel overseas to countries that sponsor terrorism.

- B. Multiple passports with different countries/names (caution: suspect may have dual citizenship).
- C. Altered passport numbers or photo substitutions; pages have been removed.

3) Other Identification -Suspicious Characteristics

- A. No current or fixed address; fraudulent/altered: Social Security cards, visas, licenses, etc.; multiple ID's with names spelled differently.
- B. International drivers ID:
 - 1. There are no international or UN drivers' licenses -they are called permits.
 - 2. Official international drivers' permits are valid for one year from entry into the U.S., they are paper-gray in color, not laminated, and are only valid for foreign nationals to operate in the U.S.

4) Employment/School/Training

- A. No obvious signs of employment.
- B. Possess student visa but not English proficient.

- C. An indication of military type training in weapons or self-defense.

5) Unusual Items In Vehicles/Residences

- A. Training manuals; flight, scuba, explosive, military, or extremist literature.
- B. Blueprints (subject may have no affiliation to architecture).
- C. Photographs/diagrams of specific high profile targets or infrastructures; to include entrances/exits of buildings, bridges, power/water plants, routes, security cameras, subway/sewer, and underground systems.
- D. Photos/pictures of known terrorists.
- E. Numerous prepaid calling cards and/or cell phones.
- F. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) unit
- G. Multiple hotel receipts
- H. Financial records indicating overseas wire transfers
- I. Rental vehicles (cash transactions on receipts; living locally but renting)

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***The FBI's Terrorism Quick
Reference Card -- Continued***

6) Potential Props

- A. Baby stroller or shopping cart.
- B. Suspicious bag/backpack, golf bag.
- C. Bulky vest or belt.

7) Hotel/Motel Visits

- A. Unusual requests, such as:
 - 1. Refusal of maid service.
 - 2. Asking for a specific view of bridges, airports, military/government

- 3. Electronic surveillance equipment in room
- B. Suspicious or unusual items left behind.
- C. Use of lobby or other pay phone instead of room phone.

8) Recruitment Techniques

CAUTION: The following factors, which may constitute activity protected by the United States Constitution, should only be considered in the context of other suspicious activity and not be the sole basis of law enforcement action.

- A. Public demonstrations and rallies.

- B. Information about new groups forming.
- C. Posters, fliers, and underground publications.

9) Thefts, Purchases, Or Discovery Of:

- A. Weapons/explosive materials.
- B. Camera/surveillance equipment.
- C. Vehicles (to include rentals - fraudulent name; or failure to return vehicle).
- D. Radios: Short wave, two-way and scanners.
- E. Identity documents (State IDs, passports etc.)
- F. Unauthorized uniforms

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II. Indicators and Detection of Terrorist Explosive/Weapons/CBN Attack¹

1. Possible Explosive Attack Indicators

- Theft of commercial-grade explosives, chemical substances, blasting caps.
- Large amounts of high-nitrate fertilizer sales to nonagricultural purchasers, or abnormally large amounts (compared with previous sales) to bona fide agricultural purchasers.
- Large theft or sales of chemicals which, when combined, create ingredients for explosives (fuel oil, nitrates).
- Theft or abnormal sales of containers (for example, propane bottles) or possible vehicles (trucks or cargo vans) in combination with other indicators.
- Reports of explosions where not authorized.

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- Seizures of improvised explosive devices or materials.

2. Possible Weapons Attack Indicators

- Theft or unusual sales of large numbers of semi-automatic weapons, especially those which are known to be readily converted to fully-automatic.
- Theft or unusual sales of military-grade weapons ammunition.
- Reports of automatic weapons firing.
- Seizures of modified weapons or equipment used to modify weapons (especially silencers).
- Theft, sales, or seizure of night vision or thermal imaging equipment when combined with other indicators.
- Theft, loss, seizure, or recovery of large amounts of cash by groups advocating violence against the government, military, or similar targets.

3. Possible Chemical/Biological/Nuclear Indicators:

- Sales or theft of large quantities of baby formula, or an unexplained shortage in an area. (Baby formula is used to grow certain specific cultures.)
- Break-in or tampering with equipment at water treatment facilities or food processing facilities or warehouses.
- Theft or solicitation for sales of live agents, toxins, or diseases from medical supply companies or testing and experimentation facilities.
- Multiple cases of unexplained human or animal deaths.
- Sales to non-agricultural users or thefts of agricultural sprayers, or crop-dusting aircraft, foggers, river craft or other dispensing systems.
- Inappropriate inquiries regarding local chemical/biological/nuclear sales, storage, or transportation points and facilities.
- Inappropriate inquiries regarding heating and ventilation systems for buildings or facilities by persons not associated with service agencies.

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III. Surveillance, Targeting, and Attack Indicators and Countermeasures

A. Surveillance²

According to the Department of Homeland Security, nearly every major terrorist attack has been preceded by a thorough surveillance of the targeted facility. **Surveillance operations have certain characteristics that are particular to pre-operational activity.** The degree of expertise used in the execution of the operation will increase or decrease the likelihood of detection. Some of these characteristics are:

- Suspicious persons or vehicles being observed in the same location on multiple occasions, including those posing as panhandlers, vendors, or others not previously seen in the area.
- Suspicious persons sitting in a parked car for an extended period of time for no apparent reason.
- Personnel observed near a potential target using or carrying video, still camera, or other observation equipment, especially when coupled with high magnification lenses.

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- Suspicious persons showing an interest in or photographing security systems and positions.
- Personnel observed with facility maps and/or photographs, or diagrams with specific buildings or facilities highlighted; or with notes regarding infrastructure, or listing of certain key personnel.
- Suspicious persons drawing pictures or taking notes in a non-tourist or other area not normally known to have such activity.
- Personnel possessing or observed using night vision or thermal devices near the potential target area
- Personnel observed parked near, standing near, or loitering near the same vicinity over several days, with no apparent reasonable explanation.
- A noted pattern or series of false alarms requiring law enforcement or emergency services response; individuals noticeably observing security procedures and responses or questioning security or facility personnel.
- Persons not fitting into the surrounding environment, such as wearing improper attire for the location.
- Theft of official identification (ID) cards (including family members, retirees), or government official license plates.
- Non-government persons in possession of government official ID cards.
- Recent damage to potential target perimeter security (breaches in the fenceline).
- Computer hackers attempting to access sites with personal information, maps, or other data useful to compiling a target information packet.
- Persons exhibiting unusual behavior such as staring or quickly looking away from individuals or vehicles as they enter or leave designated facilities or parking areas.
- A blank facial expression in an individual may be indicative of someone concentrating on something not related to what they appear to be doing.

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III. Surveillance, Targeting, and Attack Indicators and Countermeasures -- Continued

B. Targeting³

If the intended target of an operation is an individual, the information collected on that person may include several of the following:

- The identity, age, residence, and social status of the intended target.
- A description of the vehicle that the target drives.
- The work environment of the intended target, to include time of departure and return from work as well as the route taken to his/her place of employment.
- The manner in which the target spends his/her free time and the places where he/she spends vacations and holidays.
- The identity and address of the target's friends.
- The identity of the target's spouse, where he/she works and whether the target visits him/her there.
- The identity of the target's children and whether the target visits at the school.
- Whether the target has a significant other (boyfriend or girlfriend), that

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person's address, and when the target visits there.

- The identity of the physician who treats the target.
- The location of the stores where the target does his/her shopping.
- The location of entrances and exits to the target's residence, and the surrounding streets.
- Means of surreptitiously entering the target's residence.
- Whether the target is armed; if protected by guards, the number of guards and their armament, if any.

If the intended target is a facility or important building, surveillance teams may attempt to obtain the following information pertaining to the exterior of the facility:

- The width of the streets and the direction in which they run leading to the facility.
- Available transportation to the facility.
- The area, physical layout, and setting of the facility.
- Traffic signals and pedestrian areas near the facility.
- The location of security personnel centers (police stations, etc.) and nearby government agencies.
- The economic characteristics of the area where the place is located.
- Traffic congestion times near the facility.

- Amount and location of lighting near the facility.

Surveillance teams may also attempt to obtain the following information pertaining to the interior of the facility:

- Number of people typically inside the facility.
- Number and location of guard posts within the facility.
- Number and names of the leaders within the facility.
- Number of floors and rooms within the facility.
- Telephone lines and the location of the switchboard.
- Times of entrance and exit of specific individuals.
- Inside parking available at the facility.
- Location of electrical power switches.

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III. Surveillance, Targeting, and Attack Indicators and Countermeasures -- Continued

Training literature also identifies **the use of photography and detailed drawings by those conducting surveillance operations.**

Photographs are taken to depict panoramic and overlapping views of potential target areas. Surveillance team members typically also draw a diagram of the target of the surveillance operation. The diagram is typically realistic so that someone who never saw the target could visualize it. In order for the diagram to accurately depict the target it should contain the following:

- Shapes and characteristics of buildings and surrounding features.
- Traffic directions and width of streets.
- Location of traffic signals and pedestrian areas.
- Location of police stations, security personnel centers and government agencies.
- Location of public parks.
- Amount and location of lighting.

C. Attack⁴

Pre-Attack Indicative Behaviors:

- Making threats directly to the target or indirectly to third parties.

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- “Leakage” by attacker (behavioral signs of intent to attack), including:
 - vague threats (to manage own emotions of anger, anxiety, or fear);
 - bragging to third parties of intent to attack;
 - exaggerated, larger-than-life articulated fantasies of success or outcome of bombing (e.g., number of victims, joining other martyrs that have preceded him);
 - evasive when questioned concerning past history and future plans, or such information is not realistic or verifiable.
- Casing of properties/buildings.

Pre-Attack Countermeasures:

- Proactively pursue through investigation and questioning any individual reported to be a threat to bomb or carry out a terrorist act and thereby arouse suspicions in others.
- Interview collaterals (family, friends, employers, neighbors and co-religionists) who observe changes in the individual’s behavior (withdrawal from previous social contacts; radicalization of beliefs; travel to countries known to be supportive of terrorist activities; associations with other suspected terrorists; new and unidentified sources of income; increase in religiousness).
- Gather intelligence in communities containing or supporting such activity.

- Develop and acquire assets among trusted community resources (local media, religious leaders, community activists, and professionals).

Attack Preparation: Indicative Behaviors

- No direct threats to the target, but continues to communicate threat to trusted third parties.
- “Leakage” may continue to third parties, but may become more constricted on advice of higher-ups.
- “Boundary probing” with physical approaches to measure restrictions to access, if any (private security, physical boundaries, local law enforcement presence).
- Surveillance of target (victims and location); familiarization with area, decision making concerning dress and appearance, and select time and day to maximize casualties; counter-surveillance of security personnel or barriers already in place.
- Acquisition of materials for the bomb, including the explosive proper, the detonation device, and the container. The latter may be selected on the basis of commonly seen packages or items in the target area (backpacks, grocery bags, retail bags) derived from surveillance.
- May prepare a suicide note or video for dissemination after the bombing.
- May give possessions away and get other worldly affairs in order.

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III. Surveillance, Targeting, and Attack Indicators and Countermeasures -- Continued

- Emotions are likely to be more volatile (quickly changing; may be irritable, sad, easily upset).
- May indulge in “worldly sins” that directly violate religious beliefs (visiting bars, strip clubs, gambling) in order to blend in with victims and avoid apprehension.
- Will pay for items in cash.
- Daily behaviors become consistent with no future (e.g., forgetting to take change, purchasing one-way tickets).
- Handler’s involvement increases to help suicide bomber stay focused and manage anxiety; chief communication will be through e-mail, cell phone, or direct contact.
- May show arrogance and hatred toward Americans through bragging, expressed dislike of attitudes and decisions of US government, superiority of religious beliefs, and difficulty tolerating proximity to those hates (e.g., waiting in a grocery store line becomes intolerable).
- Will engage in “private rituals” within hours of the bombing that have religious and symbolic meaning, such as bathing, fasting, shaving of body hair, perfuming, and increased praying. These acts reinforce the

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meaning of his suicide bombing, steal him to the task, and keep him focused on the larger cause.

Attack Preparation Countermeasures

- Actively interview suspects and close contacts reported to be engaging in preparation to attack.
- Detain and/or arrest, if probable cause to do so exists, to prevent further preparation and attack.
- Conduct “warehouse surveys” of retail outlets for bomb making materials to identify the suspect’s acquisition behavior and gather evidence (e.g., computer stores, Radio Shack or other electronic instrument stores, and chemical ingredient or fertilizer outlets).
- Conduct counter-surveillance of the identified target.
- Harden the identified target to reduce or impede access by a suicide bomber or other suicide terrorists.
- Monitor e-mail or cell phone usage of the suspect bomber.
- Continue surveillance of the suspect’s behavior.

Attack Initiation: Indicative Behaviors:

- Clothing is out of sync with the weather, suspect’s social position (he appears well-groomed but is wearing sloppy clothing), or location (wearing a coat inside a building).

- Clothing is loose.
- Suspect may be carrying heavy luggage, bag, or wearing a backpack.
- Suspect sometimes keeps his hands in his pockets.
- Suspect repeatedly pats his upper body with his hands, as if double-checking whether he forgot something.
- Pale face from recent shaving of beard.
- No obvious emotion seen on the face.
- Eyes appear to be focused and vigilant. Does not respond to authoritative voice commands or direct salutation from a distance.
- May appear to be “in a trance.”
- Suspect walks deliberately but is not running.
- Just prior to detonation, suspect will hold his hands above his head and shout a phrase; or suspect will place his hands and head close to the bomb to obliterate post-mortem identification.

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III. Surveillance, Targeting, and Attack Indicators and Countermeasures -- Continued

Attack Initiation Countermeasures:

- Call or shout a voice command from a distance to break the suspect's concentration.
- Make physical contact with the suspect to distract his attention and physically impede his forward movement.
- Insure physical control before questioning, especially of hands and arms.
- Insure safety of civilian targets in immediate area.

Post Offense Behavior by Attacker's Handlers or Associates: Indicative Behaviors:

- Synchronized serial attacks implemented in stages, in close physical or temporal proximity to increase casualties of first responders, including law enforcement and medical personnel.
- If there is a second attack, it is likely to occur within 20 minutes and be carried out along evacuation route of casualties or near first targeted area.

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- Surveillance of attack site to study first responders' behavior and plan for future attacks.

Post Offense Countermeasures:

- Make counter-surveillance team a part of the first response.
- Include bomb disposal experts in first response to search for additional explosives.

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¹ Source: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Del Stewart,
U.S. Army Intelligence Center

² Source: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Del Stewart,
U.S. Army Intelligence Center; FBI
Intelligence Bulletin 53, February 26, 2003,
“Possible Indicators of al-Qaeda Surveillance.”

³ This section extracted from “Use of
Surveillance by Terrorist Groups,” by the
CONUS Analysis Section, Pol Mil/Force
Protection Branch, Joint Forces Intelligence
Command

⁴ This section extracted from
“Suicide/Homicide Attacker Behaviors and
Suggested Countermeasures,” by FBI
Behavioral Analysis Program & Central
Intelligence Agency analysts, and issued by the
Interagency Intelligence Committee on
Terrorism.

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