



EMERGENT THREATS AND SOFT TARGET HARDENING

Dr. Jennifer Hesterman
Colonel, U.S. Air Force (retired)



*Security is always seen as too much -
until the day it's not enough.*

THE SECURITY LANDSCAPE



OVERVIEW



Humans and Security

International Terror

Domestic Terror and Crime

Soft Targets 101

What Are We Doing Wrong?

Takeaways

HUMANS AND SECURITY

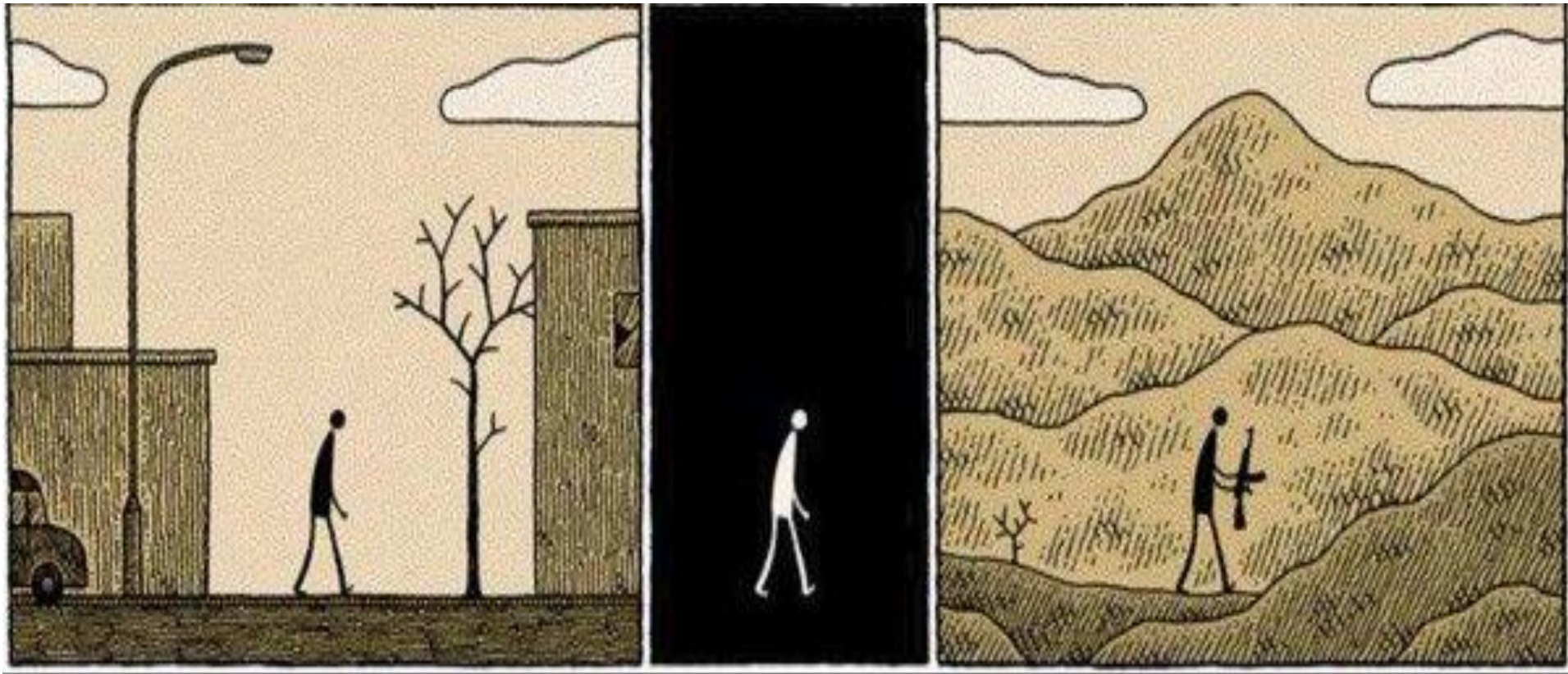


- Security fatigue
- Emotional traps
 - Resignation or acceptance - “new normal”
 - Hopelessness - There’s nothing we can do; defeatism
 - Infallibility - It will never happen here
 - Invulnerability - It can’t happen to me/us
 - Inescapability - If it’s unavoidable, why try to mitigate

HUMANS AND SECURITY



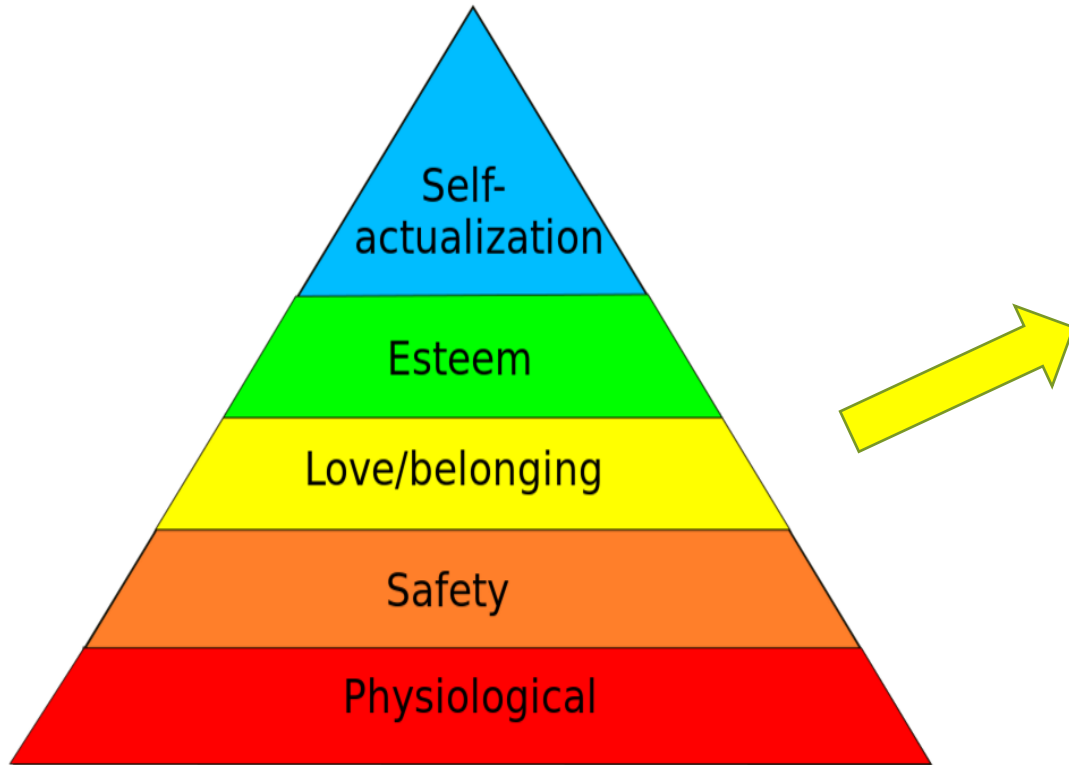
- Hope events are “one off” or bad actors are “unique”
- Move on quickly, no lessons learned
- And now distracted....juggling multiple crises
- Safety fatigue, compassion fatigue from the pandemic



Credit: Tom Gauld for the New York Times



CONNECTION POINT



A person's need to feel a sense of involvement and "belonging" within a social group

Anxiety and stress feeds need for affiliation

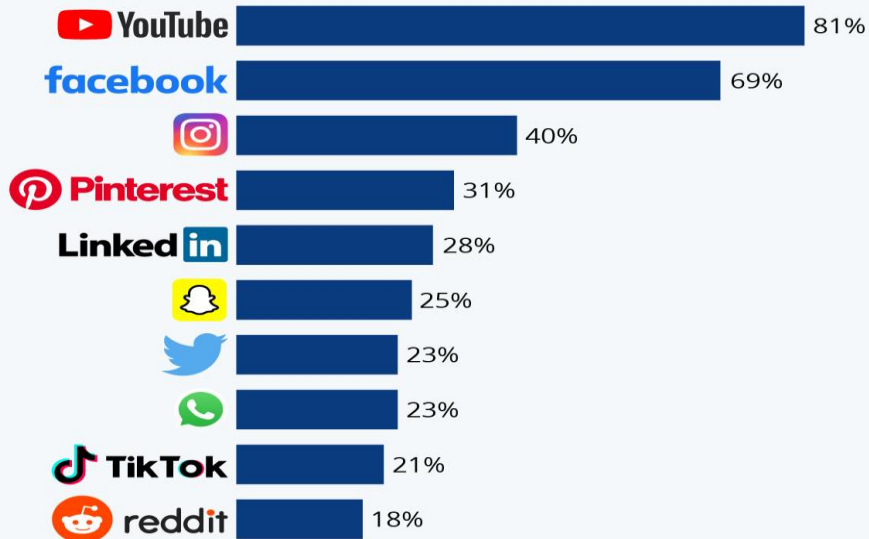
The pandemic "fed the beast"

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?



The Most Widely Used Social Media Platforms in the U.S.

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use the following social media platforms in 2021*



* based on a survey of 1,502 U.S. adults conducted between Jan. 25 and Feb. 8, 2021
Source: Pew Research Center



statista

The Internet accelerates the speed of radicalization, provides instant interface between recruiters and recruits and 24/7 access to tactical information.

ONLINE RECRUITMENT STRATEGY




“Inspired Terror” at Ohio State in 2016
Abdul Razak Ali Artan

MIS- DIS- AND MAL-INFORMATION (MDM)



The United States remains in a heightened threat environment fueled by several factors, including an online environment filled with false or misleading narratives and conspiracy theories, and other forms of mis- dis- and mal-information (MDM) introduced and/or amplified by foreign and domestic threat actors."

<https://www.dhs.gov/ntas>



National Terrorism Advisory System
Bulletin
DHS.gov/advisories

February 7, 2022 2:00 PM ET
*This Bulletin will expire on
June 7, 2022 at 2:00 PM ET*

****The NTAS Bulletin issued on November 10, 2021 and
set to expire on February 8, 2022 is hereby canceled.****

SUMMARY OF THE TERRORISM THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

The United States remains in a heightened threat environment fueled by several factors, including an online environment filled with false or misleading narratives and conspiracy theories, and other forms of [mis-dis- and mal-information](#) (MDM) introduced and/or amplified by foreign and domestic threat actors. These threat actors seek to exacerbate societal friction to sow discord and undermine public trust in government institutions to encourage unrest, which could potentially inspire acts of violence. Mass casualty attacks and other acts of targeted violence conducted by lone offenders and small groups acting in furtherance of ideological beliefs and/or personal grievances pose an ongoing threat to the nation. While the conditions underlying the heightened threat landscape have not significantly changed over the last year, the convergence of the following factors has increased the volatility, unpredictability, and complexity of the threat environment: **(1)** the proliferation of false or misleading narratives, which sow discord or undermine public trust in U.S. government institutions; **(2)** continued calls for violence directed at U.S. critical infrastructure; soft targets and mass gatherings; faith-based institutions, such as churches, synagogues, and mosques; institutions of higher education; racial and religious minorities; government facilities and personnel, including law enforcement and the military; the media; and perceived ideological opponents; and **(3)** calls by foreign terrorist organizations for attacks on the United States based on recent events.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The primary terrorism-related threat to the United States continues to stem from lone offenders or small cells of individuals who are motivated by a range of foreign and/or domestic grievances often cultivated through the consumption of certain online content. The convergence of violent extremist ideologies, false or misleading narratives, and conspiracy theories have and will continue to contribute to a heightened threat of violence in the United States.

RESOURCES TO STAY SAFE

Stay Informed and Prepared

- [Be prepared](#) for emergency situations and remain aware of circumstances that may place you at risk. Make note of your

HUMANS AS FORCE MULTIPLIERS



- The human is the best weapon system!
- We have intuition
 - Constantly sensing, observing, scanning the environment
 - Compiled knowledge + experience = accumulated judgement
- Human security is “left of bang” – prevents attacks
- When educated on threat and response, humans become force multipliers



HUMANS AND SECURITY



Humans: force multiplier or weakest link?

- The human element is the most difficult to address in the security realm - yet can make or break our efforts
- Cauldron of emotions and behaviors not only extremely detrimental to security efforts - but they are also a dangerous and exploitable phenomena

TERRORISM



FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS OF GREATEST THREAT TO THE U.S.



Those with a corporate structure, vast resources, adaptable, impermeable, persistent ideology, staying power. Undefeatable.

- al Qaeda/splinters
- ISIS/splinters
- Hezbollah
- HAMAS

Religious ideology is the most dangerous = apocalyptic

Military tactic of decimation not effective; these are networked organizations with vast resources – the ideology is the glue holding them together

AL QAEDA



“The 26 Year War”

- August 23, 1996 - Osama bin Laden declares war on the U.S.
- Phase I - Embassy bombings; USS Cole; 9/11 attack
- Phase 2 – U.S. Afghanistan operation to eliminate AQ base
- Phase 3 – U.S. Iraq operation; eventually led to rise of AQI then ISIS
- Phase 4 - AQ Main surge, successes, then splintering
- Phase 5 - Leadership mobilizing for the “Declaration of the Caliphate”

National Counterterrorism Center: “We are still at war with al Qaeda”

DoD: “al Qaeda is still at war with us”

AQ: PERSISTENT, MORE SOPHISTICATED



Direct affiliates:

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)
Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)
al-Shabaab
Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (formerly Al-Nusra
Front known as Al-Qaeda in Syria)
Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM)
Al-Qaeda in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Al-Qaeda in Caucasus and Russia
Al-Qaeda in Gaza
Al-Qaeda in Kurdistan
Al-Qaeda in Lebanon
Al Qaeda in Spain
Al-Qaeda in the Malay Archipelago
Al-Qaeda in the Sinai Peninsula

Indirect affiliates:

Caucasus Emirate (factions)
Fatah al-Islam
Islamic Jihad Union
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
Jaish-e-Mohammed
Jemaah Islamiyah
Lashkar-e-Taiba
Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group

ONE UMMAH

JUNE 2020

ISSUE 02

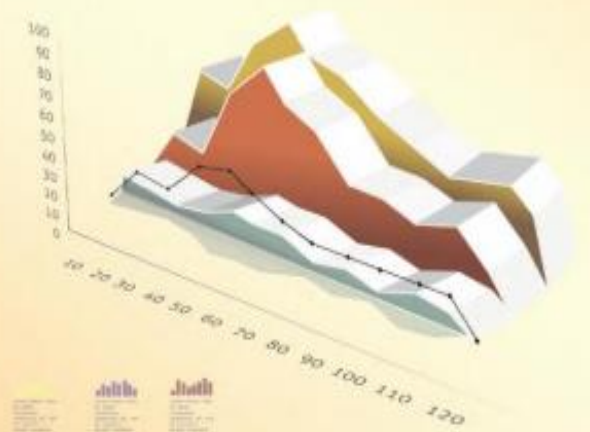


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THE ABYSMAL STATE OF THE US ECONOMY

PART 2



This is not only possible but highly effective. Let me quote an extract from an interview with Admiral Michael Connell here. Responding to a question, he said,

“If I were a hacker interested in inflicting strategic damage on the United States, I would pick either the peak of cold in winter or the peak of heat in summer to take offline the electric grid on the West or East coast to create a chain reaction. For a professional hacker, these are real possibilities.”

Host: 'Do you believe that those who hate us have the ability to suspend our electric grid?'
Admiral Michael: 'Yes, I believe so.'
Host: 'Is the United States prepared for this kind of an attack?'
Admiral Michael: 'No, the United States is not prepared for such an eventuality.'
Such targets are obviously major ones and a lot of preparation, time, and resources are required for any serious security breach to be successful. However, there are many

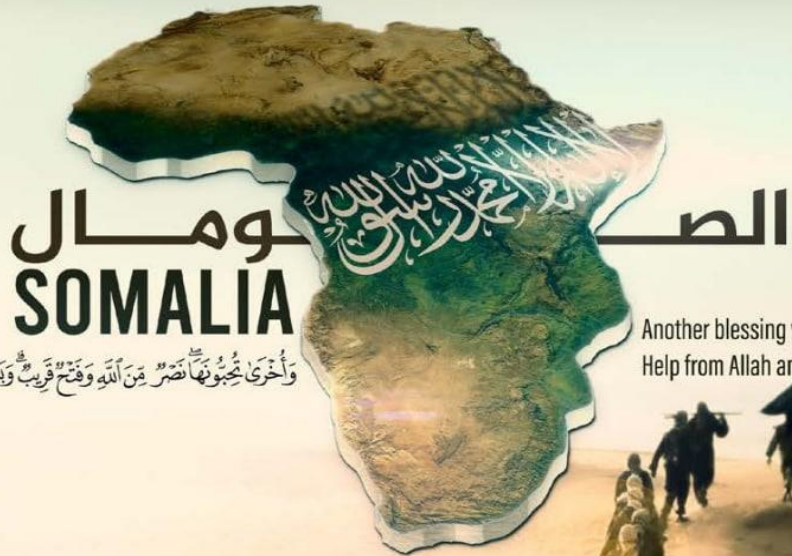


ONE UMMAH

FIFTH ISSUE

JUMADA AL-AWWAL 1444

DECEMBER 2022



وَأُخْرَى تُحِبُّونَهَا نَصْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ وَبَشِيرٌ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Another blessing which you love:
Help from Allah and a near victory



EVERY DAWN IS ECLIPSED BY A SUNSET

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The Agenda behind
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Osama al Maqdisi

THE STRATEGIC GAINS 40
of the Day of Criterion

The Martyr of the Islamic Maghreb
SHAYKH ABU MUS'AB ABDUL WUDOOD 50
Abu Abu Aamir al Naji



5th ISSUE
Jumada al-awwal 1444h | December 2022
A Periodical Magazine
Issued by the al Qa'eda Organization

THE ONE WHO MISSED 16
the opportunity to be his Companion,
let him not miss
the opportunity to defend him (pbuh)
Asim al-Maghribi

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How to end a conflict?
Abu Khalid al-San'ani

ISIS: REGROUPING, RESURGENT



Direct affiliates:

ISIS-Somalia
ISIS-DR Congo
ISIS-Mozambique
ISIS-Bangladesh
ISIS-Philippines
ISIS-West Africa
ISIS-Greater Sahara
ISIL-Libya
ISIL-Khorasan
ISIL Sinai Province

Indirect affiliates:

AQIM
AQAP
Jemaah Islamiyah
Boko Haram
Abu Sayyaf Group
Tehreek-e-Khilafat (Pakistan)
Ansar al-Tawhid fi' Bilad al-Hind (India)
Ansar al-Khiliafah (Philippines)
Jund Al-Khilafah (Egypt)

Rising concern: South Africa



ISIS: MORE SOPHISTICATED

- ISIS Information Security group “Horizons” is publishing an online magazine - “Amn al-Munaser” (Supporter’s Security)
- Tips for online jihadists – exploit apps, methods to evade detection
- Includes security fundamentals of Android and iOS devices, online security, computer security, set up steps for Whonix and a privacy-forward operating system for Linux
- Printed in English, many other languages





ESCALATION IN U.S. PLOTS AND ATTACKS

- Plot to bomb U.S. Military Academy and shoot ROTC cadets
- Tampa, FL, ISIS inspired; Clearwater Beach, Honeymoon Island, Lafayette College
- Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, TX. Radam Salim Alsahli, AQ inspired; one injured, attacker killed
- Mayo Clinic, ISIS, lone actor attacks
- Plot to blow up White House and Trump Tower, ISIS inspired
- Seattle man tried to join ISIS, planned attack on Seattle Pride parade
- ISIS plot to kill former President George W. Bush
- Attempt to establish an “Islamic State Center” in New Mexico



CASE STUDY: COLLEYVILLE SYNAGOGUE STANDOFF

- January 15, 2022 - British citizen Malik Faisal Akram took four people, including a rabbi, hostage at a synagogue in the small town of Colleyville, TX
- On the MI5 watchlist as a "subject of interest" in 2020, investigated and moved to the "former subject of interest" list, no longer considered a threat
- Gained access to the synagogue during the service by claiming to be homeless
- Demanded the release of Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani, US-educated neuroscientist radicalized by AQ, serving an 86-year prison sentence in Fort Worth
- Rabbi fought back and hostages escaped; Akram was killed after a 10-hour siege
- During the standoff, ISIS, AQ and White Supremacist group thought leaders were chatting live about the situation
- Wake-up call about the ongoing threat of foreign terror + he was a "traveler"
- Attacker had a confluence of issues and ideology – mental health issues, radicalized, personal grievances (anti-vax, anti-government)



AQ AND ISIS: SIMILAR STRATEGIES

- Soft targets the primary choice
- Actively recruiting Americans to carry out attacks
- Using the Internet to recruit, inspire, plan, direct, fundraise, boost morale, communicate, share and perfect tactics
- Using drones
- Chatter about WMD (biologicals are the weapon of choice)
- Leveraging the pandemic; pile misery on misery
- Infiltrating/destabilizing/exploiting failed states

NEW TACTICS QUICKLY SPREAD – PREPARE!



Evolution of the truck-into-crowd attack:

- AQ and ISIS propaganda online (late 2015)
- Bastille Day Parade (July 14, 2016)
- German Christmas Market (December 19, 2016)
- London bridges (March 22, 2017 & June 3, 2017)
- Barcelona Square (August 17, 2017)
- NYC truck onto the bike path (October 31, 2017)



ATTACK PLOT TRENDS



- Asymmetric, creative (Cleveland 4th of July plot)
- Preoperational surveillance
- Multiple attacks - but not simultaneous; spread across city, sequential to cause chaos, delay response, cause panic
- Targeting people fleeing from exits
- Attacking at the end of the event
- Targeting first responders



DOMESTIC TERROR IN THE U.S.



- **Right Wing:** neo-Nazism, neo-fascism, white nationalism, religious nationalism, anti-government patriots, militias, sovereign citizens
- **Left Wing:** Revolutionary socialism, antifascism, anarchism
- **Religious:** Most dangerous, apocalyptic, martyr
- **Single Interest:** Animals, environment, climate change
- **Wildcards:** Male supremacism (Incel), Boogaloo Bois, Proud Boys

Challenge: There is no U.S. domestic terrorist group list



DOMESTIC VIOLENT EXTREMISM (DVE)

- Domestic violent extremists are US-based actors who conduct or threaten activities that are dangerous to human life in violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state; appearing to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; and influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping, as per the definition of domestic terrorism in 18 U.S. Code 2331 (5).
- Mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute violent extremism and may be constitutionally protected.

Source: FBI

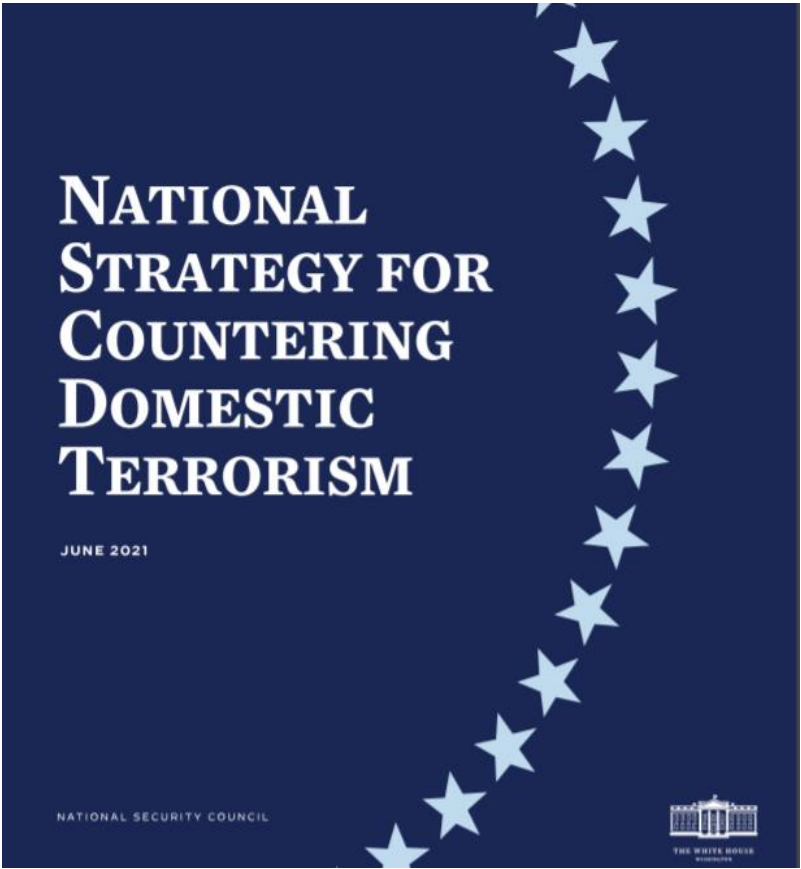


LEADER INSIGHTS

John Cohen, Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Assistant Secretary for Counterterrorism and Threat Prevention, DHS says the FBI has 2,500 open domestic terrorism cases.

“Most significant terrorist threat to the US are lone actors or small groups based on an ideological group they connect with online – combination of beliefs and personal grievances” and “Threat comes from people who have a superficial understanding of the ideology. They’re angry, disconnected, treated unfairly, and participating in these groups provides a sense of self-worth.”

Christy Abizaid, NCTC director: a primary concern is the domestic extremist threat – racially and ethnically motivated – especially those with nexus to foreign groups



THIS IS A
PROJECT
THAT SHOULD
**UNITE ALL
AMERICANS**

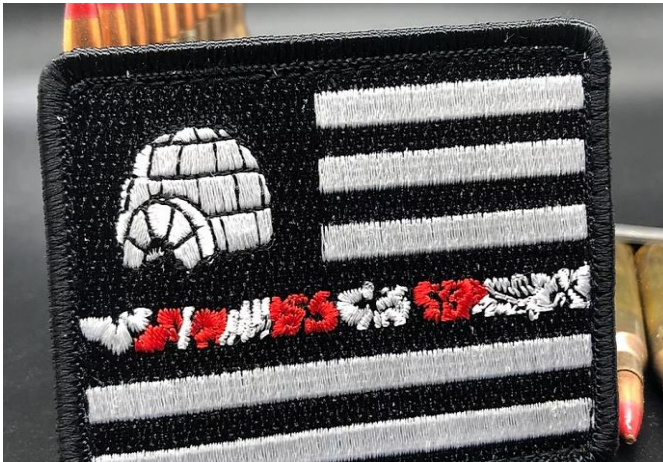


TOGETHER
WE MUST
AFFIRM THAT
**DOMESTIC
TERRORISM
HAS NO
PLACE IN
OUR SOCIETY**

- DHS needs communities to engage – identify high risk individuals, off road and take care of them to reduce risk of violence
- DVE now a top priority - 7.5% of DHS funds; focus is on improving comm between agencies and helping communities with tools and programs



BOOGALOO BOIS: FROM MEME TO MOVEMENT TO MURDER



Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Three Men Plead Guilty to Conspiring to Provide Material Support to a Plot to Attack Power Grids in the United States

Domestic Terrorism Plot was in Furtherance of White Supremacist Ideology

Three men pleaded guilty today to crimes related to a scheme to attack power grids in the United States in furtherance of white supremacist ideology.

According to court documents, Christopher Brenner Cook, 20, of Columbus, Ohio; Jonathan Allen Frost, 24, of West Lafayette, Indiana, and of Katy, Texas; and Jackson Matthew Sawall, 22, of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, each pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to provide material support to terrorists. The charge and plea agreements indicate that the defendants knew and intended that the material support they conspired to provide would be used to prepare for and carry out the federal offense of destroying energy facilities.

“These three defendants admitted to engaging in a disturbing plot, in furtherance of white supremacist ideology, to attack energy facilities in order to damage the economy and stoke division in our country,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security Matthew G. Olsen. “The Justice Department is committed to investigating and disrupting such terrorist plots and holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes.”

GRID ATTACKS



FBI charges neo-Nazi leader in plot to attack Baltimore power grid

By Kanishka Singh and Sarah N. Lynch



PRESS RELEASE

Rifleman Sabotages Pacific Gas and Electric Station

Jul 14, 2014

← Sarah Clendaniel, Atomwaffen Division (AWD)

<https://lawandcrime.com/crime/neo-nazis-plotted-to-completely-destroy-baltimore-with-attack-on-power-stations-feds/>

CPTED TO PROTECT THE GRID?



UK bans fifth neo-Nazi group under terror laws

By Daniel De Simone
BBC News

© 12 July 2021



PROPAGANDA IMAGE

Members of "The Base" tried to groom teenagers in the UK and elsewhere as recruits

News | The Far Right

Canada declares far-right Proud Boys a 'terrorist' organisation

Canada lists 13 groups as 'terrorist entities', saying ideological extremism poses 'most significant' security threat.



New Zealand designates Proud Boys, The Base as 'terrorist' groups

Two US far-right groups join 18 other organisations that have been given an official 'terrorist' designation by New Zealand.



NEWS

Australia Adds U.S.-Based Neo-Nazi Group to List of Banned Terrorist Organizations

BY **KATIE WERMUS** ON 11/24/21 AT 6:10 PM EST

ESCALATING VIOLENCE



- 2019: Worst year for school, church, retail, health care crime; 417 mass shootings; 36 mass killings; 3 majors (VA Beach, Walmart, Ned Peppers bar)
- 2020: Mass shootings up 50% (611); 23 mass killings; 1 major (Molson Coors)
- 2021: 693 mass shootings, 35 mass killings, 5 majors (San Jose VTA, FEDEX Indianapolis, King Soopers in Boulder, Massage Parlors in Atlanta, iHop shooting spree, Evanston IL)
- 2022: 648 mass shootings, 39 mass killings, 11 majors (Chesapeake Walmart, Colorado Springs LGBTQ nightclub, Sacramento entertainment area, Indiana mall, Buffalo grocery store, Uvalde school, Tulsa medical center, Highland Park 4th parade)
- 2023: 81 mass shootings, 7 mass killings, 4 majors – Dance studio, mushroom farm, 3 domestics

Mass shooting: 4 or more shot in one incident, excluding shooter

Mass killing: 4 or more killed in one event

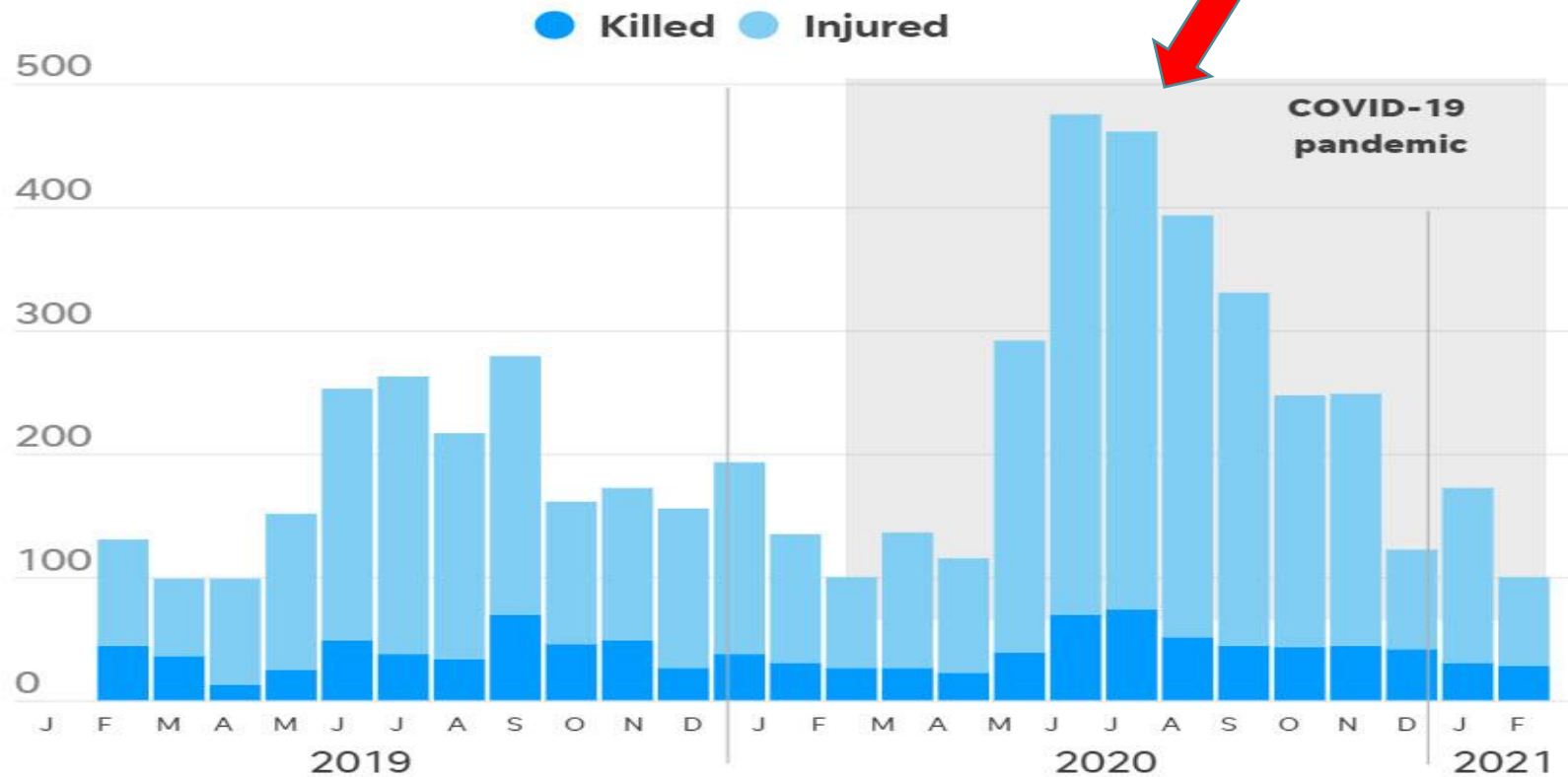
Major mass shooting: 6 or more killed in one event

<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/>



Mass shooting victims

Events that injure or kill four or more people excluding the perpetrator.

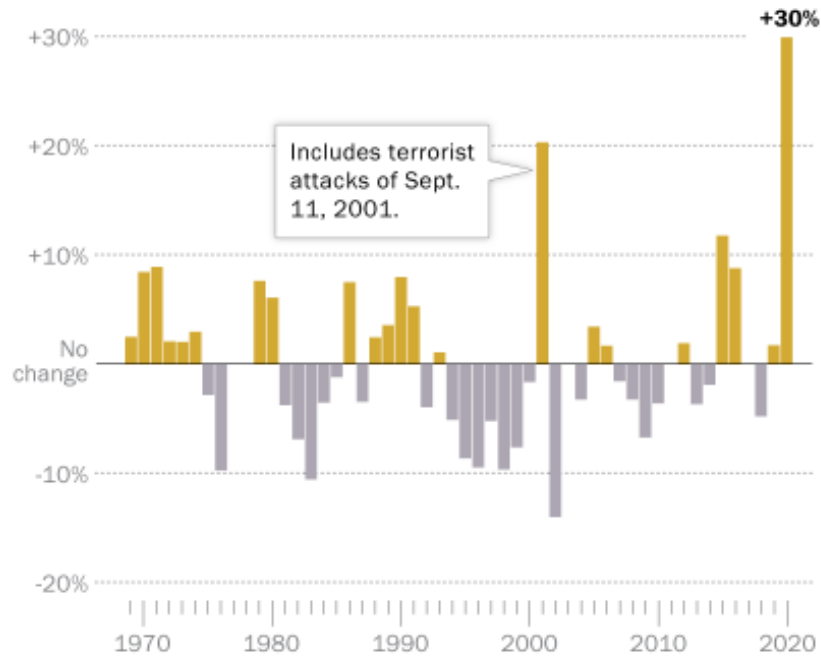


HOMICIDE TRENDS



U.S. murder rate rose by nearly a third in 2020, marking one of the biggest annual increases on record

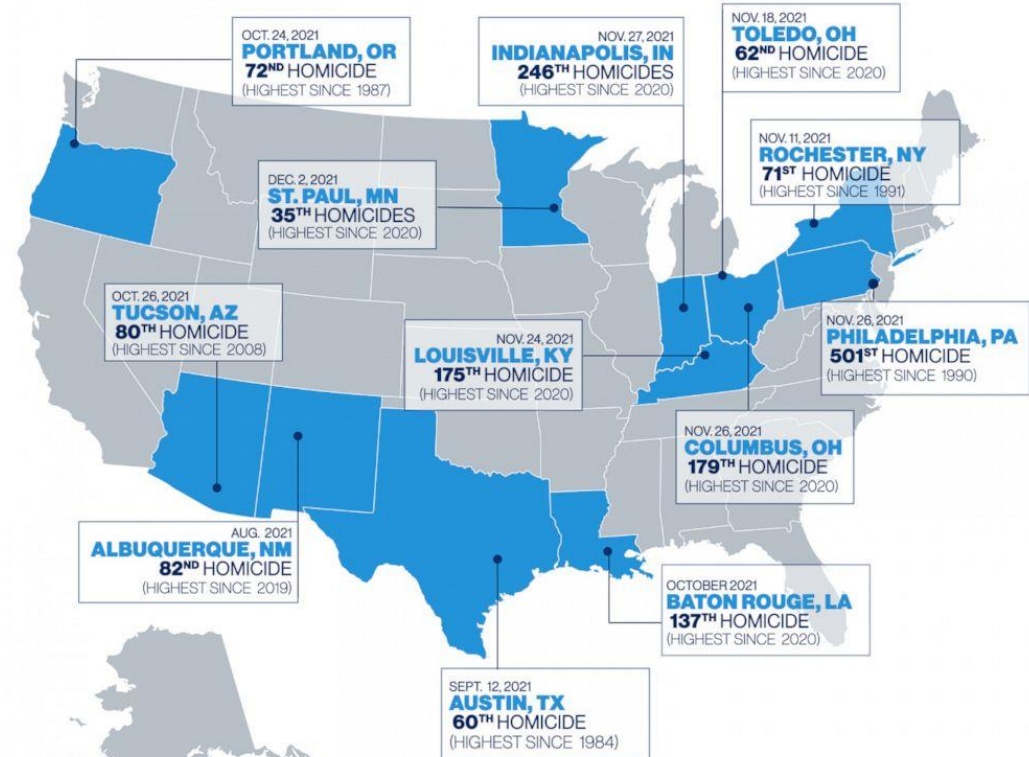
% change in annual U.S. murder rate per 100,000 people



Note: 2020 data is provisional. While the U.S. murder rate rose 30% in 2020, it remained below the levels of earlier decades.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

12 U.S. Cities That Have Broken Annual Homicide Records





ACTIVE SHOOTER

- An active shooter is "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims." DHS
- Mass shooting events average 580 seconds in length

Active shooter incidents increased more than 50 percent last year, FBI data shows

103 people were killed and 140 were wounded in 61 active shooter incidents across 30 states last year, the FBI reported.

Incident Statistics

Active Shooter Incidents 2017–2021

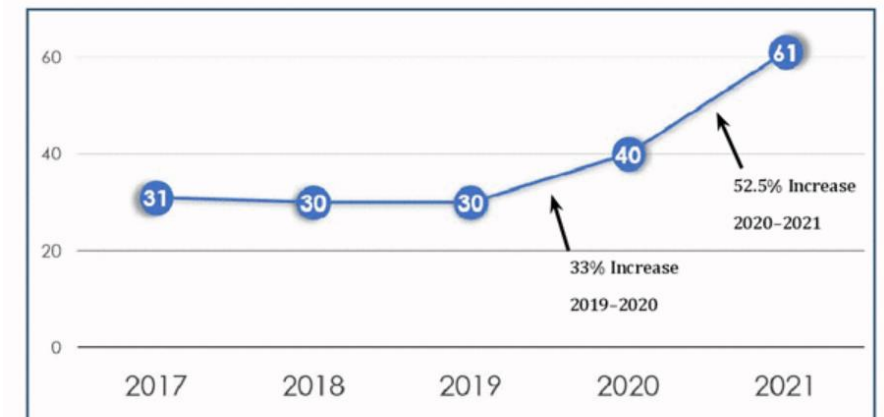


Figure 1

DON'T FORGET STABBINGS



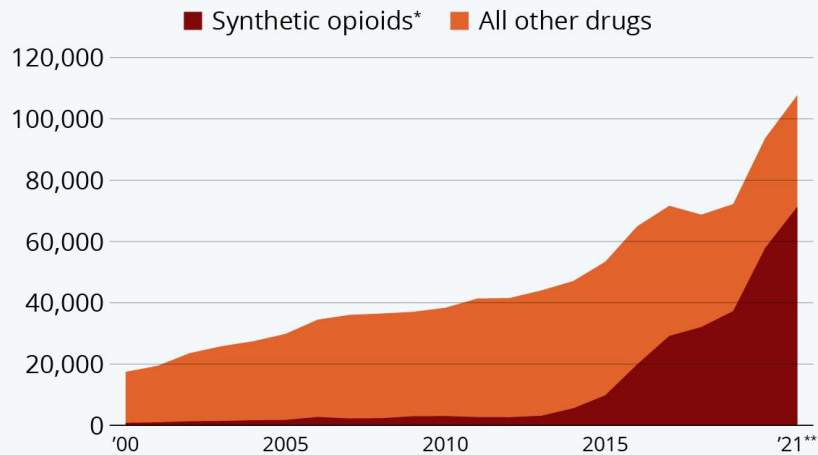
- Knife attacks are on the rise in schools, malls, hospitals, et al crowded spaces
- Gun attacks more feared, but knife attacks are also silent, fast, unexpected and cause devastating injuries
- Knives are easier to obtain and conceal
- Few pain sensors inside the body; a large blade penetrating a critical organ results in death so quickly that most people pass out and die without pain
- People are more willing to engage and try to subdue an attacker with a knife, while choosing to run or hide from a shooter
- Physically confronting an enraged assailant wielding a knife is difficult

DRUGS, GANGS, TRANSNATIONAL CRIME



Fentanyl Fuels Surge in U.S. Drug Overdose Deaths

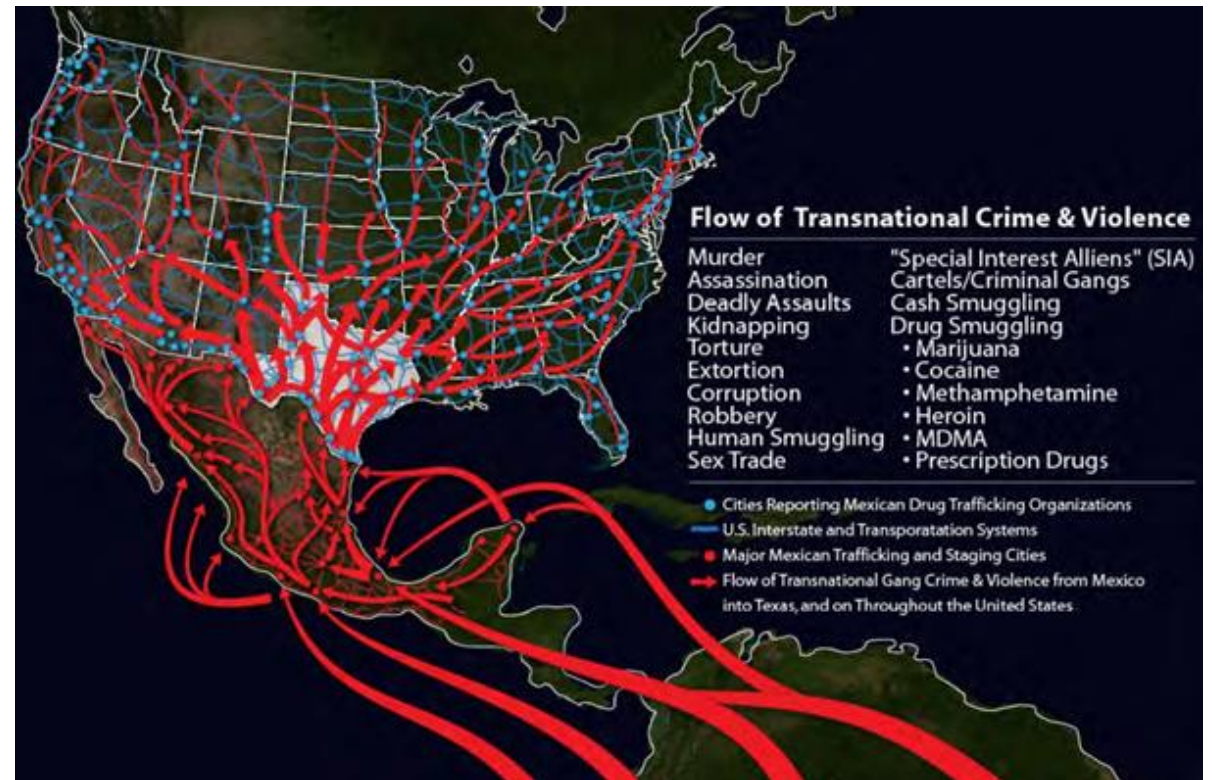
Number of drug overdose deaths in the U.S., by drug class



* mostly fentanyl, excl. methadone
** estimates for 2021 are based on provisional data.
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



statista

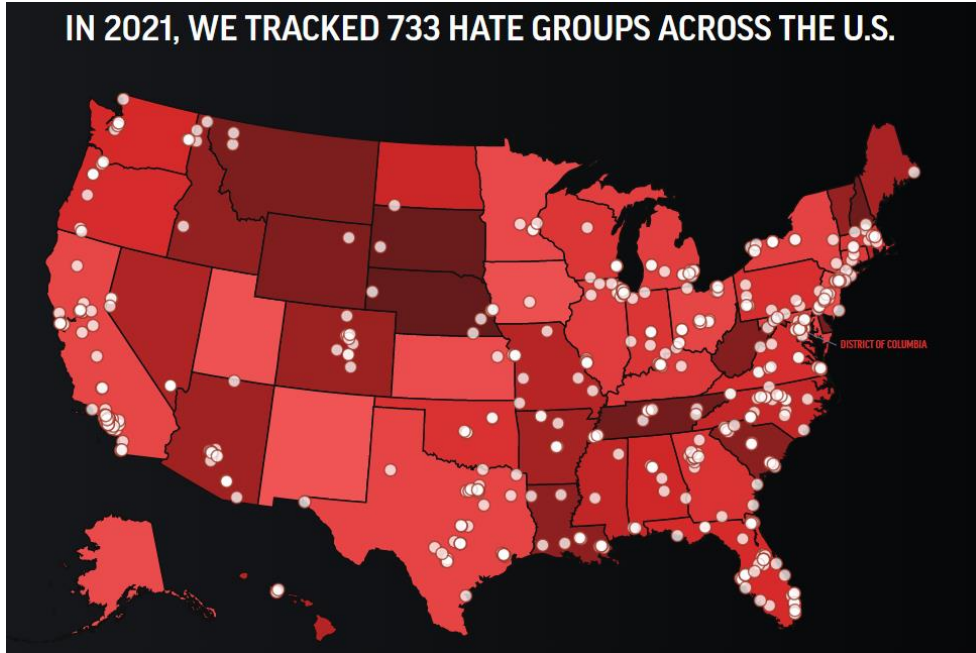


Gang violence accounts for 48% of all violent crime in America. An estimated 1.4 million people make up over 33,000 gangs across the US (FBI)

HATE GROUPS



IN 2021, WE TRACKED 733 HATE GROUPS ACROSS THE U.S.



- A hate group is an organization or collection of individuals that – based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities – has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics.
- A hate crime is a “criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity.” (FBI)
- 53 hate groups in Florida

<https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map?state=FL>



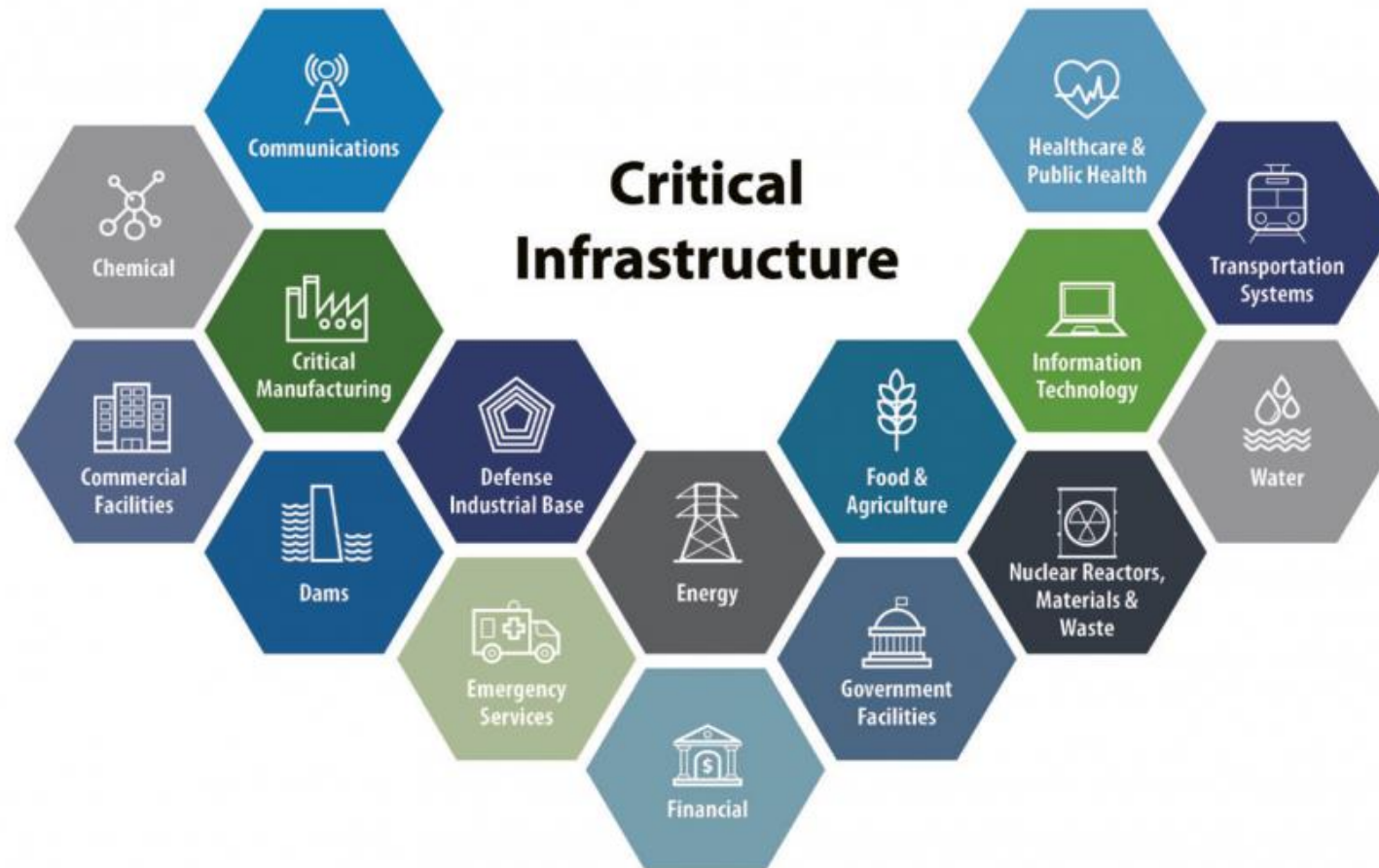
LONE ACTOR TERROR (LAT)

Lone ~~Wolf~~ Actor Terror: “Terror undertaken by individuals who prepare for and execute violence without external assistance” FBI

- Two types of Lone Actors:
 - Well adapted to society, mentally fit; makes a tactical choice to engage in lone actor ops; leaves society
 - Not well adapted, suffering mental health issues or in psychological distress; society leaves them
- LAT doubled in last decade

Visit: ICCT project: Countering Lone Actor Terrorism
<https://icct.nl/topic/countering-violent-extremism/>

TARGET LIST



WHAT IS A SOFT TARGET?



- ✓ A crowded public place
- ✓ People aren't thinking about security
 - ✓ Not typically "fortified"
- ✓ Security not a primary mission
 - ✓ Privately owned
- ✓ Possibly resource-constrained



SOFT TARGET PSYCHOLOGY

- 90% of casualties in conflicts are now civilians
- We protect these targets, don't purposely strike them
- Bound by international law, Geneva Conventions, religious doctrine or ROE in a coalition battle

The threat is met with disbelief, but we must ask

What do we most fear?

How should we respond?

SOFT TARGETING MOTIVATIONS



- Target-rich environment
- Easy, cheap, short planning cycle
- Increased likelihood of success
- Success = Credibility
- Recruiting, morale-boosting
- Proof of viability, group's last gasp
- Test a new strategy, tactic, weapon
- Quickly damage a market
- Plant seeds of fear
- Delegitimize a government – can't protect citizens
- Get the government to negotiate
- Political instability during elections
- Attain global media coverage

SOFT TARGET SECURITY TRUTHS



- Goal of hardening: remove the enemy from the fight before it starts.
- Actions generate results.
- Inaction is a choice, and also generates results.
- “Not seen” does not mean “not there.”
- The “fog of war” means we don’t know everything about the threat, there are inescapable unknowables.
- Security actions no longer canned, must be tailored.
- Copycat attacks **will** happen.

WHAT ARE THE ODDS...?

- The lifetime risk of dying in a mass shooting: 1 in 110,154
- The lifetime risk of being in a terrorist attack: 1 in 1,600,000

But it doesn't mean we do nothing! Doing nothing adds to vulnerability and gives bad actors the advantage.

Lifetime odds of death for selected causes, United States, 2020

Cause of Death	Odds of Dying
Heart disease	1 in 6
Cancer	1 in 7
COVID-19	1 in 12
All preventable causes of death	1 in 21
Chronic lower respiratory disease	1 in 28
Opioid overdose	1 in 67
Suicide	1 in 93
Motor-vehicle crash	1 in 101
Fall	1 in 102
Gun assault	1 in 221
Pedestrian incident	1 in 541
Motorcyclist	1 in 799
Drowning	1 in 1,024
Fire or smoke	1 in 1,450
Choking on food	1 in 2,745
Bicyclist	1 in 3,396
Sunstroke	1 in 6,368
Accidental gun discharge	1 in 7,998
Electrocution, radiation, extreme temperatures, and pressure	1 in 14,705
Sharp objects	1 in 26,744
Cataclysmic storm	1 in 35,074
Hot surfaces and substances	1 in 50,341
Hornet, wasp, and bee stings	1 in 57,825
Dog attack	1 in 69,016

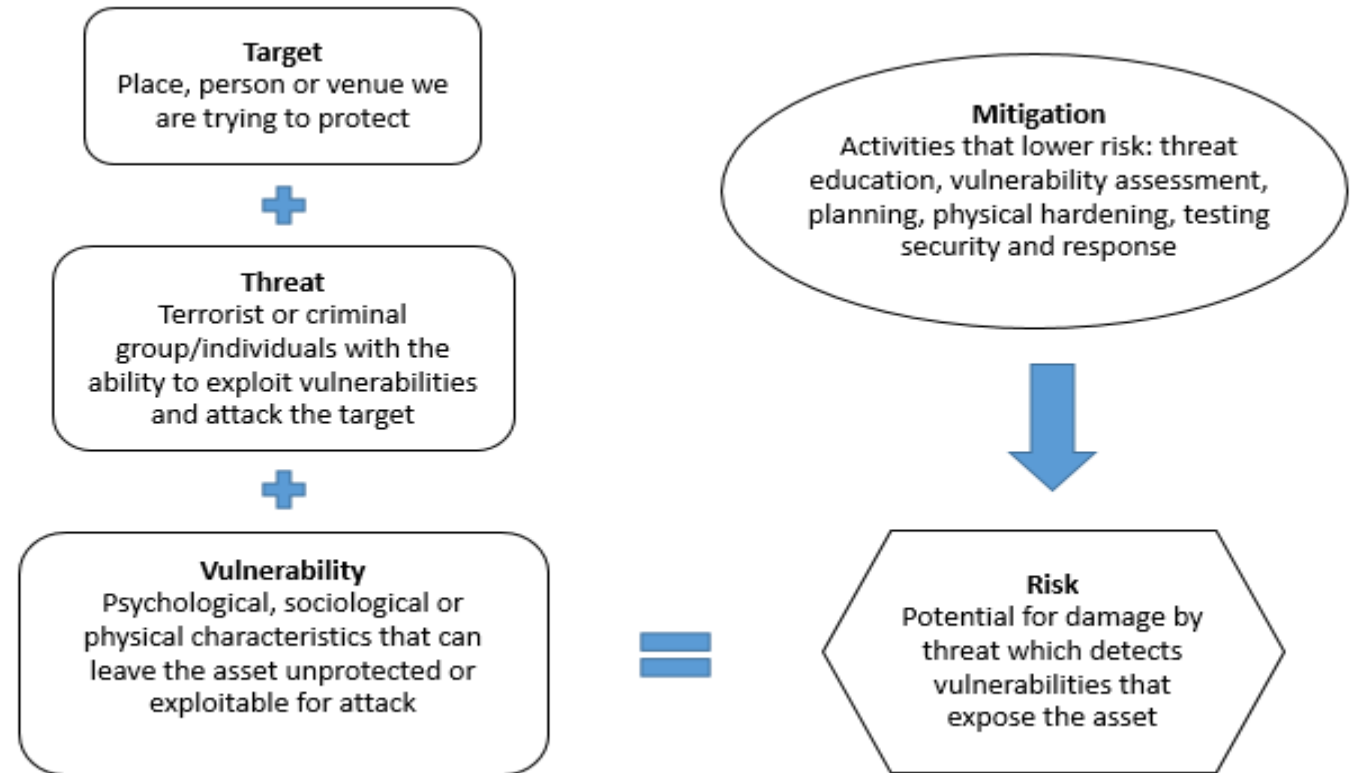
WHAT ARE WE DOING WRONG?





1. NO METHODOLOGY

- ✓ Identify the target
- ✓ Know the threat
- ✓ Assess vulnerabilities
- ✓ Calculate risk
- ✓ Harden/mitigate using an informed planning process





- Most organizations accomplish a risk assessment
- Some accomplish a vulnerability assessment
- Few do a threat assessment – but this is where they need to start!

THREAT ANALYSIS



- Answer why you might be targeted and who are the actors?
- Identify and assess the capabilities of these actors
- Identify threat tactics, and methodologies through case studies plus data from law enforcement and intelligence agencies – most is open source!
- This informs your security planning efforts

UNDERSTAND VULNERABILITY



Definition: Psychological, sociological, or physical characteristics that can leave the asset unprotected, or exploitable for attack.

Identify “how” and “where” the bad actor might strike for maximum effect.

Identify your Achilles Heel.

The ability to deter attack is amplified by understanding vulnerability!



ASSESS VULNERABILITIES



7. Security Environments and Overall Vulnerability to an Attack

- Does your organization have effective internal security procedures?
- What is the law enforcement presence in your area?
- What is the hardness, level of blast protection, etc. of your facilities?
- How accessible (security presence, access control, id badges, metal detection buffer zones, fences, etc.) is your facility?
- Are your assets and/or its potential recognized as a symbol?
- What level of public access is necessary for you to function?
- Can you control high-speed vehicle approaches to your facility?

CALCULATE RISK



Value	C	A	R	V	E	R
5	Loss would be mission stopper	Easily accessible. No effective security	Extremely difficult to replace. Long down time	A dedicated adversary has the capability and expertise to attack	Very high sociological, economical, political impact; considerable loss of lives and/or injured	Easily recognized by all with no confusion
4	Loss would reduce mission performance considerably	Accessible	Difficult to replace with long down time	A dedicated adversary most likely has the capability and expertise to attack	High impact; some loss of lives or injuries	Easily recognized by most
3	Loss would reduce mission performance	Somewhat accessible	Can be replaced in a relatively short time	A dedicated adversary may have the capability and expertise to attack	Moderate impact; some adverse impact on persons	Recognized with some training
2	Loss may reduce mission performance	Difficult to gain access	Easily replaced in a short time	A dedicated adversary most likely does not have the capability and expertise to attack	Little impact; no adverse impact on persons	Hard to recognize. Confusion probable
1	Loss would not affect mission performance	Very difficult to gain access	Immediate replacement. Spare parts are readily available or asset redundancy	A dedicated adversary does not have the capability and expertise to attack	No unfavorable impact	Extremely difficult to recognize without assistance



CALCULATE RISK AND IMPACT

		Consequences				
		Insignificant (1) No injuries / minimal financial loss	Minor (2) First aid treatment / medium financial loss	Moderate (3) Medical treatment / high financial loss	Major (4) Hospitable / large financial loss	Catastrophic (5) Death / massive financial loss
Likelihood	Almost Certain (5) Often occurs / once a week	Moderate (5)	High (10)	High (15)	Catastrophic (20)	Catastrophic (25)
	Likely (4) Could easily happen / once a month	Moderate (4)	Moderate (8)	High (12)	Catastrophic (16)	Catastrophic (20)
	Possible (3) Could happen or known it to happen / once a year	Low (3)	Moderate (6)	Moderate (9)	High (12)	High (15)
	Unlikely (2) Hasn't happened yet but could / once every 10 years	Low (2)	Moderate (4)	Moderate (6)	Moderate (8)	High (10)
	Rare (1) Conceivable but only on extreme circumstances / once in 100 years	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Moderate (4)	Moderate (5)



TARGETED MITIGATION

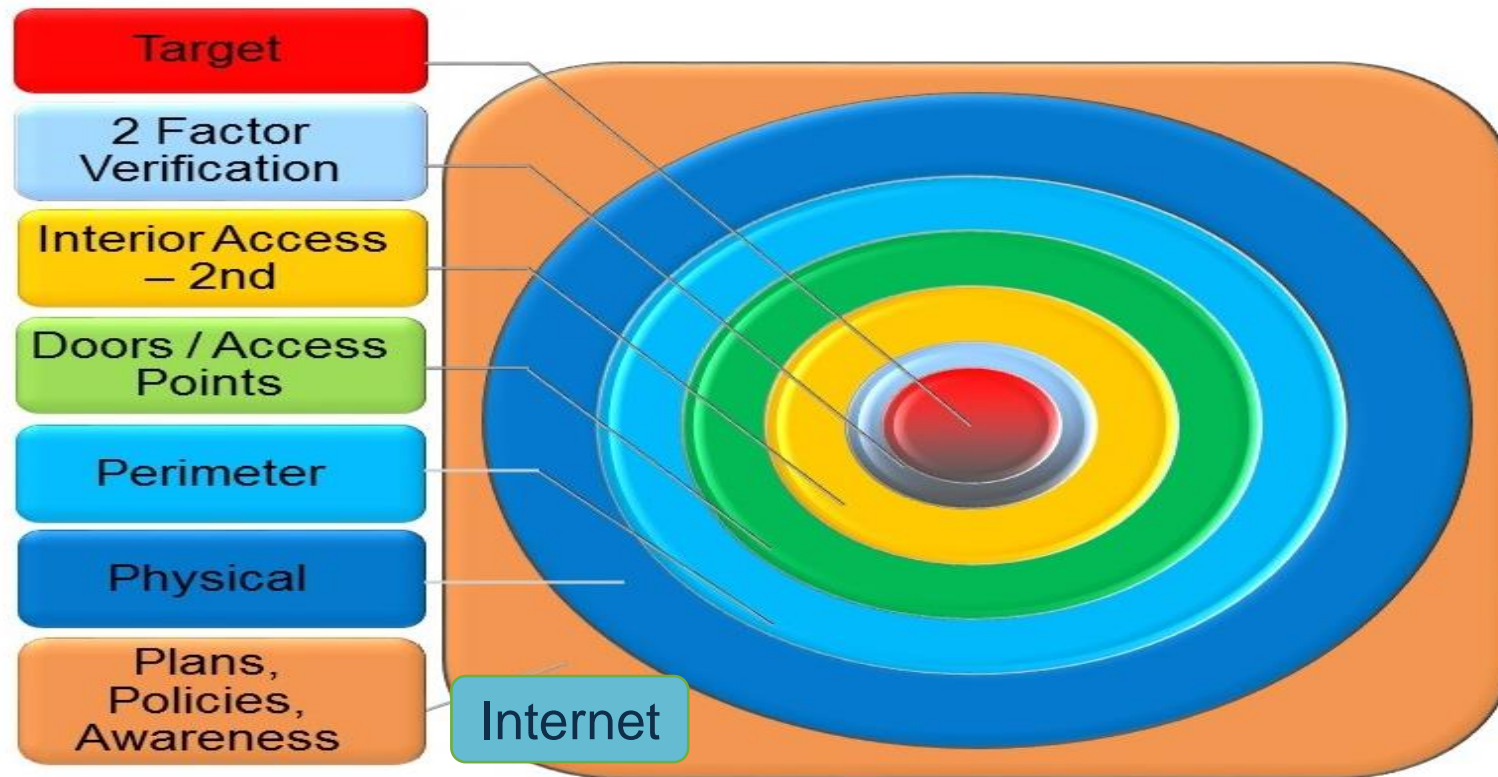
- Effects Based Hardening: System cross applied from the military model of Effects Based Operations
- Visualize violent scenarios unemotionally, through a data-driven lens
- Harmonize/synchronize/prioritize security activities

Prioritized Scenario	Desired Effect	Means	Capabilities and Cost	Implement/ Partially Implement/ Table
1. Highly visible location on busy highway draws opportunists	Lower "heat"	Remove external signage facing road	In house, volunteers, free	Implement
2. Too many people with keys to the main door	Restrict building access	Install electronic key lock on main door and obtain keying equipment and cards	Contracted; \$3,000	Partially implement; rekey current lock, reissue keys; budget electronic key system for summer 2015
3. Holding meetings after hours for outside groups, attendees wandering in building	Restrict access to the rest of the building	Install locking door between basement and upstairs offices	Contracted; \$1,500 with labor	Implement



2. THINK SECURITY STARTS AT THE FRONT DOOR

Defense in Depth Layers



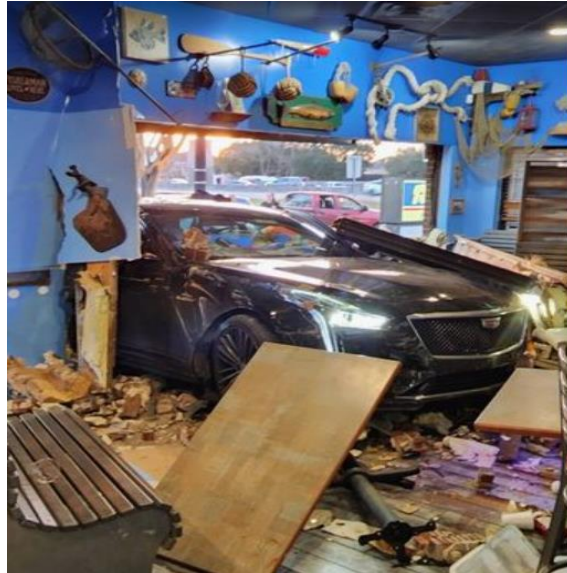
3. NOT “BAKING” IN SECURITY



4. THINK SECURITY IS UGLY



VEHICLE-INTO-BUILDING TREND



CAR CRASHES INTO OUTDOOR DINING AREA

BREAKING NEWS

KTLA 5

FORECASTS

Los Angeles 8AM 50° #klla Los Angeles 12PM 66° 57° 6:44P

5. EXPENDING RESOURCES “RIGHT OF BANG



6. NOT USING INFORMED RESPONSE



For example, Bomb Threats.

What we envision:





What we experience:



BOMB THREATS



If you receive a bomb threat – one of these 4 things is happening:

- There is no bomb (most likely scenario)
- There is a bomb placed outside
- There is a bomb placed inside
- This is an ambush (gun/knife attack)

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST	
DATE:	TIME:
TIME CALLER HUNG UP:	PHONE NUMBER WHERE CALL RECEIVED:
Ask Caller:	
• Where is the bomb located? (building, floor, room, etc.)	_____
• When will it go off?	_____
• What does it look like?	_____
• What kind of bomb is it?	_____
• What will make it explode?	_____
• Did you place the bomb? Yes / No	_____
• Why?	_____
• What is your name?	_____

BOMB THREATS



Total bomb threats made in 2021: 1,136

- Bombings after a threat: likely 0

Total bombings in the U.S. in the last 5 years: 1,684

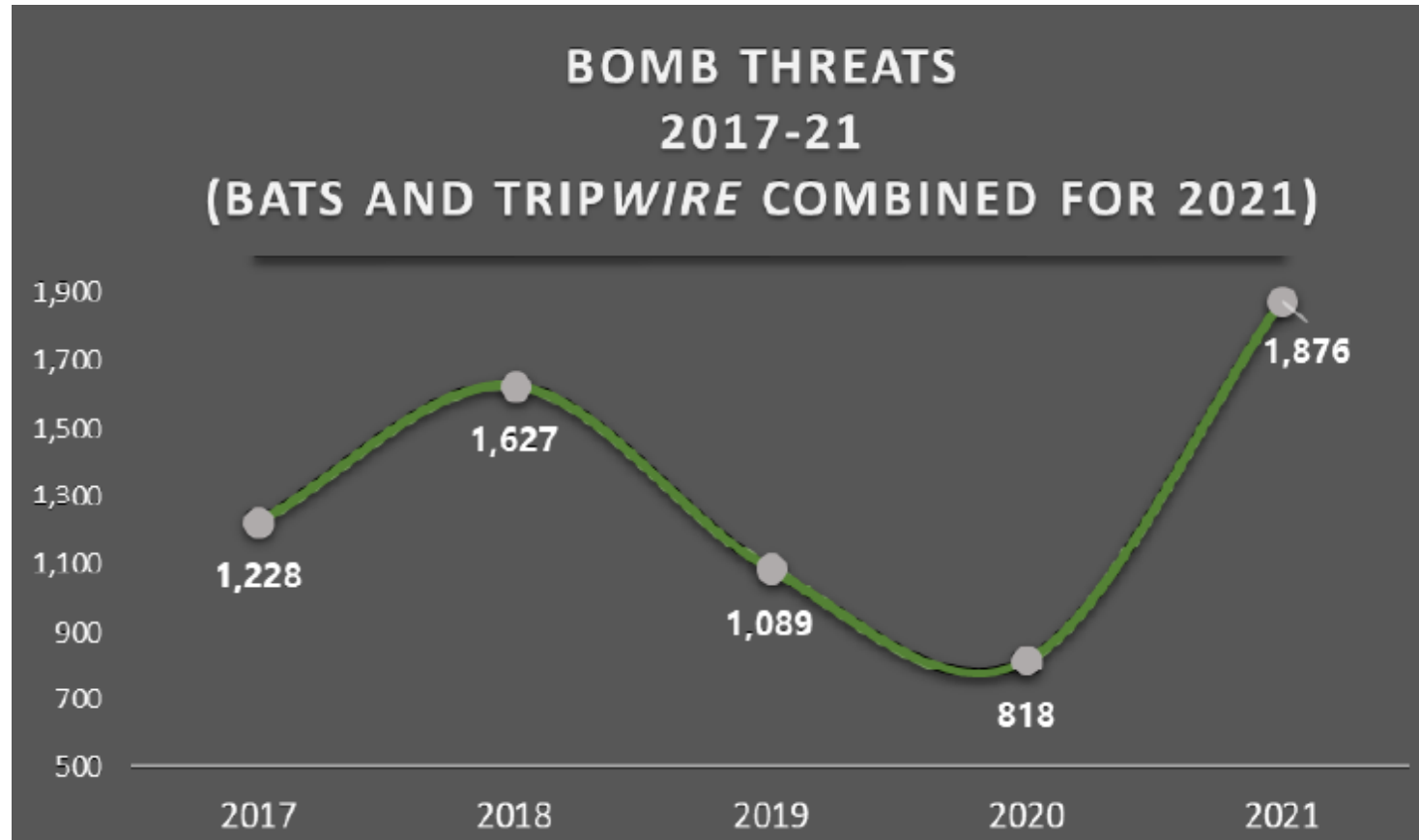
Bombings preceded by a threat: likely 1 (Nashville)

- Most actors who are a bombing threat will never make one
- Evacuating maybe not the best course of action
- Most "bombs" are crudely made devices like a pipe bomb
- Blast radius much smaller than a vehicle bomb
- Buildings provide best protection

Data from the United States Bomb Data Center, ATF

See my article: *Rethinking Bomb Threat Response*, *Journal of Business Continuity and Emergency Planning*, January 2019

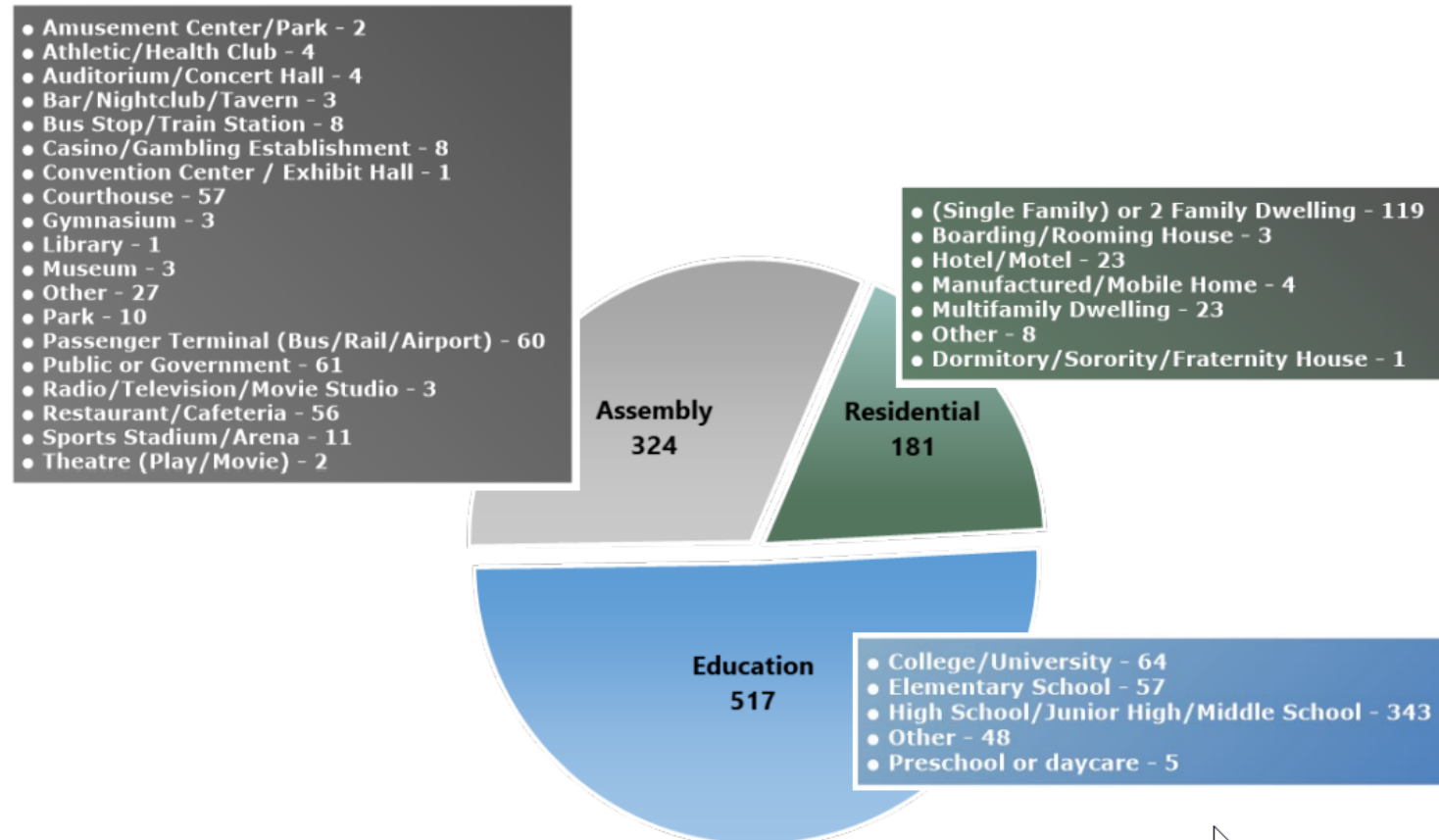
BOMB THREATS



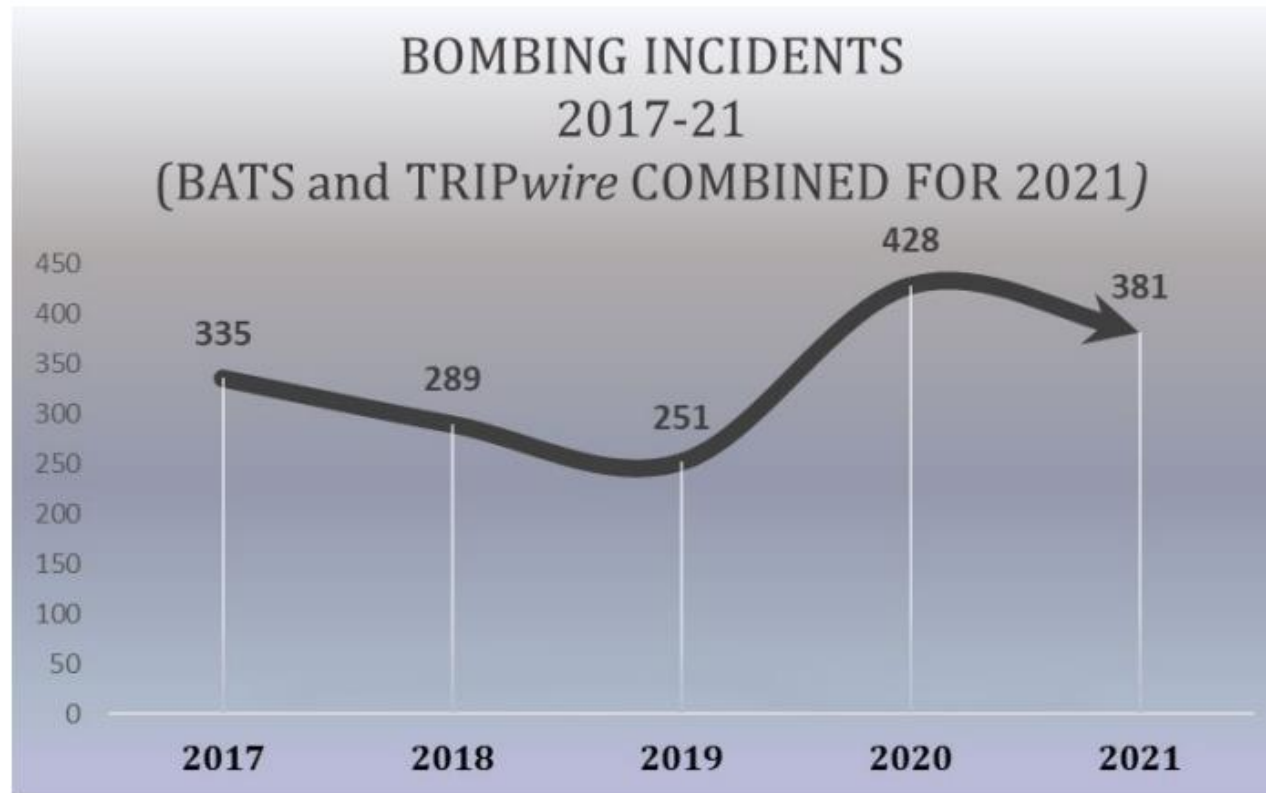


BOMB THREAT TARGETS

(U) Education facilities (517), Assembly (324), and Residential (181) locations were the top three targets of bomb threats during 2021.



BOMBINGS



Source: ATF, United States Bomb Data Center
<https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/data-statistics>



BOMBING LOCATIONS

EXPLOSIONS – 2021

(U) Figure 7 breaks down the total number of bombing incidents by State during CY 2021.

Bombings by State CY2021	
STATES	TOTAL
ALABAMA	3
ARIZONA	12
ARKANSAS	2
CALIFORNIA	45
COLORADO	9
DELAWARE	1
FLORIDA	11

Source: ATF, United States Bomb Data Center
<https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/data-statistics>



7. NO INSIDER THREAT CONSIDERATION

- A malicious insider can do the most damage - they have access and special knowledge of vulnerabilities.
- Don't assume serious insider threats are NIMO (not in my organization)
- As we harden facilities, the insider threat will grow
- May use employees to stockpile, for blueprints, info, access
- Hiring process critical, but also onboarding, steady state
- Everyone has a public life, a private life and a **secret** life
- Must build a culture of safe reporting + mechanism for employees

INSIDER THREAT CATEGORIES



The National Insider Threat Task Force defines the 5 categories of insider threat as:

Leaks: Intentional sharing of proprietary information

Spills: Unintentional sharing of proprietary information

Espionage: Selling proprietary information

Sabotage: Deliberately destroy, damage, or obstruct property

→ **Targeted Violence:** Any form of violence directed at an individual or group, for a specific reason; not a random act

TARGETED VIOLENCE



- Active Shooter
- Domestic Violence
- Harassment
- Hostile Work Environment
- Assault
- Stalking
- Threats/Threatening Behavior
- Workplace Bullying/Violence



INSIDER THREAT AND TERRORISM

“Insider threats continuously evolve and are a constant security vulnerability. Terrorists have used insiders to facilitate and conduct attacks and view them as valuable assets for obtaining information, gaining access, exploiting vulnerabilities, and challenging security countermeasures. **An insider can enable an attack that would otherwise be difficult or unachievable without his or her access and knowledge or increase the severity or impact of an attack. Insider threats may involve one or more witting or unwitting individuals who are exploited for access to a target to carry out, facilitate, or enable terrorist activity.** Complacent personnel may be vulnerable to exploitation and pose a security risk. Once within the organization an insider may be difficult to detect, which is why it is critical to develop and implement comprehensive protective measures, such as initial applicant and recurring employee screening, vetting, and training. Insiders pose threats to critical systems, networks, facilities, or operations by means including espionage, physical and intellectual property theft, sabotage, security compromise, and workplace violence. See the First Responder’s Toolbox “Terrorist Insider Threat” (September 2, 2020) found on the ODNI’s website.



8. POOR CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

- Identify “crisis leaders”
- Have a response and communications plan
- Run realistic exercises
- Pre-craft crisis messages, communicate often, control the message
- Train for the “golden hour” - invest in life-saving, life-preserving education like Stop the Bleed

What’s the cost of NOT protecting facility, employees, visitors?



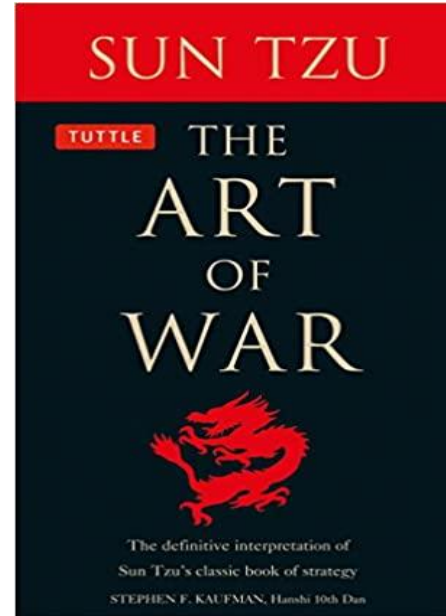
9. NO USE OF IMAGINATION

- Divert/off-road: Concealment, cover, disguise
- Deter: Security language on the property, websites, event announcements
- Deceive: Physical deception tactics – look harder than you are!

The best defense is a good offense!

“Imagination is not a gift usually associated with bureaucracies. It is therefore crucial to find a way of routinizing, even bureaucratizing, the exercise of imagination. Doing so requires more than finding an expert who can imagine that aircraft could be used as weapons.”

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004 Chapter 11 “Foresight and Hindsight”, Paragraph 11.1, “Imagination”



“The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood the enemy is not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that *we have made our position unassailable.*”



TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ We all “do” security!
- ✓ Fight the 5 emotional traps
- ✓ Study the threat, calculate vulnerability and risk
- ✓ Identify the “Achilles heel” – fix it!
- ✓ “The human is the best weapon system”
- ✓ Think rings of security – layers of defense around the target
- ✓ Strongly consider insider threat – fight NIMO!
- ✓ Practice and training = resiliency
- ✓ Bake security into decision-making and all activities

FINAL THOUGHTS



We **can** strike a balance between normalcy and vigilance!

- Citizens now expect/demand safety and security
- Making \$\$ decisions based on their assessment
- In this age, security will not scare them away, but pull them in!

*Shape the environment and culture you want.
Take control, be proactive, get on the offensive!
Unapologetically.*



Thank you for attending!

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