BusinesSafe is based on the idea that certain businesses and industries may be exploited by terrorists who portray themselves as honest customers seeking to purchase, lease or somehow appropriate certain materials, licenses and/or services to covertly further a terrorist plot.

The following are general indicators of potential terrorist planning or activities. Alone, each indicator can result from legitimate recreational or commercial activities or criminal activity not related to terrorism; however, multiple indicators combined with other information may possibly suggest a terrorist threat.

- Physical surveillance, which may include note taking or the use of binoculars, cameras or maps near key facilities.
- Attempts to gain sensitive information regarding key facilities or personnel through personal contact or by telephone, mail or e-mail.
- Attempts to penetrate or test physical security and response procedures at key facilities.
- Attempts to improperly acquire explosives, weapons, ammunition, dangerous chemicals, flight manuals or other materials which could be used in a terrorist attack.
- Suspicious or improper attempts to acquire official vehicles, uniforms, badges, access cards or identification for key facilities.
- Presence of individuals who do not appear to belong in the workplace, business establishment or near a key facility.
- Behavior which appears to denote planning for terrorist activity, such as mapping out routes, playing out scenarios, monitoring key facilities and timing traffic flow or signals.
- Stockpiling suspicious materials or abandoning potential containers for explosives (e.g., vehicles or suitcases).

The following examples of activity relating to Property Managers, Building Superintendents, Doormen, Concierges, though not fully inclusive, may be of possible concern to law enforcement:

- Receiving complaints of transient activity occurring at odd hours of the day or night. Examples may include a number of visitors frequenting a premises during the late hours and congregating thereat on a recurring basis or persons who have been regularly observed moving unidentified objects in and out of the premises under the cover of darkness.
- The revelation that your premises have been discretely modified for storage purposes or there are “secret locations in the apartment for securing documents, records, arms, and
other important items.” (Quote from Al Qaeda Training Manual section: “Security Precaution Related to Apartments”).

- Locks and keys have been replaced without permission.
- An unusual request has been made for building blueprints or schematics and such material is later lost or stolen.
- The decor and furnishings do not match the purported occupation of the lessee (The Al Qaeda Training Manual cautions: “The cover of those who frequent the location should match the cover of that location.”)
- A strange chemical smell or other unique or distinctive odor can be detected coming from the premises.
- Containers used for the storage of chemicals or other materials not commonly associated with a residential dwelling or required to operate the purported business at the location are linked to premises (i.e., placed in the garbage disposal area).
- Visitors found in your building claim to be lost or appear disoriented.
- Maintenance work that is not announced or scheduled takes place.
- Deliveries arrive that are not anticipated or requested.
- Unknown persons ask for directions, re: the building’s sensitive areas (utility rooms, HVAC systems, etc.) or security system (cameras).
- Groups of individuals, especially those with no visible means of support, share a common address. (Terrorist operatives will often cohabitate to facilitate operational planning. Additionally, they may attempt to position themselves in an area that will ease their surveillance of potential targets.)
- Suspicious inquiries concerning utilities servicing the apartment building or complex particularly which apartments are gas fed. (Terrorists have expressed interest in renting apartments and subsequently igniting their gas lines to cause a catastrophic explosion and building collapse.)
- Observations of unusual purchases or carrying of weatherproofing materials including weather-stripping, packaging, sealing, or duct tape utilized for the sealing of drafts which may be exploited for sealing a room.
- Unusual inactivity of tenants observed in gas fed apartments.

Your impressions and assessment based upon your professional business experience are extremely valuable and should help guide you in determining if a customer request, a fact pattern, or set of circumstances is unusual.

Please remember that the conduct of an individual will not necessarily be criminal in nature. Suspicious incidents should be reported immediately to your local law enforcement agency, Crime Stoppers, or your regional FDLE office. You may also email a tip regarding a suspicious incident utilizing the link on the BusinessSafe homepage.

For all emergencies, call “911.”