

BUSINESSSAFE

BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.

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BusinessSafe Threat Topic: Terrorist Attack Planning Cycle

Understanding the terrorist attack planning cycle can aid in identifying and reporting suspicious activity. The actions that make up the cycle are often observable by friends, family, coworkers, or community members and can help in preventing an attack if reported to law enforcement. The terrorist attack planning cycle generally includes the following stages:

Target Selection will usually involve the attacker considering a number of locations to conduct an attack. Attackers will often do research to determine which target presents the best chance of their desired outcome, and may consider things like security, symbolism, potential crowd size, and convenience when making a choice. Often, this research is conducted online. Indicators of this stage may include expressed or implied threats and eliciting information.

- In September 2019, a man in Fort Riley, Kansas, was arrested after sending explosive-making instructions to an FBI source and discussing targets for attack.
[FBI arrests Army soldier who allegedly discussed plans to bomb major American news network](#)

Surveillance is generally conducted by physically studying a location. Attackers may take pictures or video of buildings and facilities paying close attention to the security measures at these locations. Indicators of this stage may include taking photos or video of facilities in a covert manner, measuring distances, testing or probing of security, and taking notes.

- In September 2019, a New Jersey man was charged for offenses related to his support for a terrorist organization. The man had reportedly surveilled multiple potential targets of attack including various New York landmarks and critical infrastructure components.
[Manhattan U.S. Attorney Announces Indictment Of New Jersey Man for Terrorist Activities On Behalf Of Hizballah's Islamic Jihad Organization](#)

Planning will involve the attacker creating a logistical plan of attack using the research gathered during Target Selection and the knowledge obtained from Surveillance. Individuals may attempt to recruit others and purchase weapons or other equipment to be used in the attack during this time. Indicators may include stockpiling of weapons or chemicals and suspicious transactions involving large cash payments, withdrawals, or transfers.

- In February 2020, a Nevada man pled guilty to possessing components of a destructive device. The man reportedly discussed attacking a synagogue using improvised explosive devices and conducting surveillance on a bar catering to the LGTBTQ community. The man possessed notebooks with plans for a potential attack and drawings of explosives.
[Las Vegas Man Pleads Guilty To Possession Of Bomb-Making Components](#)



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Rehearsal involves an attacker going through the motions of an attack. They may stage drills or walk through their attack without weapons. Indicators of this stage may include security and perimeter breaches to test response times.

- In October 2017, a New Jersey man drove a rental pickup truck through a bike path in New York City killing eight people and injuring 11. The man stated that he had conducted a test drive on the same route the week prior to the attack.

[Prosecutors Describe Driver's Plan to Kill in Manhattan Terror Attack](#)

Execution is the culmination of the attack cycle. It occurs when the attacker carries out or attempts to carry out their plans. Indicators may include security breaches, misrepresentation, stolen security credentials, and weapons or chemicals found in suspicious locations.

- In May 2020, a gunman was killed by security personnel after attempting to drive through a gate and opening fire at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi in Texas.

[FBI says Texas naval base shooting is "terrorism-related"](#)

Escape & Exploitation occurs after an attack has occurred if the attacker is not arrested or killed. Some attackers may plan to flee the initial site of attack in order to carry out additional attacks.

- In April 2013, the Boston Marathon bombers fled the scene of the attack and were caught and killed days after the attack in a shootout with police.

[Cops Recall Deadly Shootout with Boston Bombing Suspects](#)

Resources

The Homegrown Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators Booklet, created by the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and National Counterterrorism Center, provides a list of indicators of a homegrown violent extremist attack mobilization.

[Homegrown Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators Booklet](#)

The Department of Homeland Security offers online training to identify steps in the terrorism attack planning cycle.

[Introduction to Terrorist Attack Cycle](#)

The Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative helps prevent terrorism and other criminal activity by providing a standardized process for identifying and reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement.

[Suspicious Activity Reporting Indicators and Examples](#)

Florida's See Something, Say Something Tool Kit provides general and industry-specific information for a variety of businesses.

[Florida's See Something, Say Something Tool Kit](#)

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 [FDLE Suspicious Activity Report Page](#). For all emergencies, call "911."

To sign up to receive *BusinessSafe* directly to your email, visit our [website](#).



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