Communities Against Terrorism

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities Related to Sleepers

What Should I Consider Suspicious?

The following information is intended to list characteristics of persons that may be involved in terrorist activity that are described as "sleepers" or otherwise persons who camouflage their involvement in terrorist activity or planning by attempting to fit in with others in our society.

Recognizing sleepers:

- arrival from countries where violent militant Islamic groups are known to operate
- Long unexplained absences for purposes of religious education, charity work or pilgrimage
- Travel to countries where militant Islam rules

Operational Preparations:

- Study of technical subjects that would help support an operation
- Working in an area that serves as a cover for preparing for an operation
- Engaging in para-military training
- Possession of such items as detonators or personal protective equipment used in biological incidents

- Purchase of chemicals or other dual use materials
- Scouting out military bases, government buildings and other potential targets

Attitude Indicators:

- Support for militant Islamic groups
- Excusing violence against Americans on the grounds that American actions provoked the problem
- Fury at the West for reasons ranging from personal problems to global policies of the U.S.
- Conspiracy theories about Westerners (e.g. the CIA arranged for 9/11 to legitimize the invasion of foreign lands)
- Accusing the West of trying to destroy Islam

What Should I Do?

Be alert to suspicious activity. None of the listed actions, in and of themselves, constitutes a criminal violation. However, when coupled, the acts may indicate suspicious activity that warrants law enforcement scrutiny.

If something seems wrong, notify law enforcement authorities.

Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.

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Homeland Security Section
Terrorism Early Warning Unit
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Terrorism may be national or international in scope, but terrorist incidents occur locally and are preceded by a number of pre-incident activities. Individuals in the community are key to identifying these pre-incident activities. By learning what to look for, **you** can aid law enforcement officials in protecting the homeland.

Your knowledge can be an invaluable resource to the law enforcement community. In your business arena, **you** are best informed about what constitutes suspicious activity.

By being aware of what to look for and knowing how to report suspicious behavior, **you** can make a positive contribution in the fight against terrorism. The **partnership between the community and law enforcement** is essential to the success of anti-terrorism efforts.

It is important to remember that just because someone's speech, actions, beliefs, appearance, or way of life is different, it does not mean that he or she is suspicious. Instead, focus on behavior and activities that are unusual or out of place for the situation and that appear to be suspicious.

The activities outlined on this handout are by no means all-inclusive but have been compiled from a review of terrorist events over several years. Some of the activities, taken individually, could be innocent and must be examined by law enforcement professionals in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate.

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities Related to Bulk Fuel Distributors

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