



WESTCHESTER COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



TERRORISM

INDICATORS

SEVEN SIGNS OF TERRORISM

The Five "W"s

What to Remember When
Reporting Suspicious
Activity

What is happening?

Who is doing it?

Where is it taking place?

When did you observe it?

Why are you suspicious?

If You See Something, Say Something!

Report Suspicious Activity to the New York State Intelligence Center 1-866-48-NYSIC or Your Local Police Department.

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7 Signs of Terrorism

1. Surveillance

The first sign is someone trying to monitor or record activities. If terrorists are targeting a specific area they will most likely be observed in that area during the planning phase of the operation. Terrorists will attempt to determine the strengths, weaknesses, and number of personnel that may respond to an incident. Routes to and from the target are usually established during the surveillance phase. It is important to note suspicious actions such as someone using cameras (still or video), drawing diagrams or annotating on maps, using vision-enhancing devices, and being in possession of floor plans or blueprints of places such as high-tech firms, financial institutions, or government/military facilities. Any of these surveillance type acts **MAY** be an indicator that something is not right and should be reported immediately. Nothing is too insignificant.



2. Elicitation/ Seeking Information

The second sign is the attempt to gain information through inquiries. This includes anyone attempting to gain information about a place, person or operation. Elicitation attempts can be made by mail, fax, telephone, or in person. Examples would be someone inquiring about a critical infrastructure like a power plant, water reservoir or a maritime port. Terrorists may attempt to research bridge and tunnel usage, make unusual inquiries concerning shipments or look into how a facility such as a hospital operates. They may also attempt to place "key" people in sensitive work locations to gain intelligence.



3. Tests of Security

Tests of security or probing are techniques terrorists would use to attempt to gather data. These are usually conducted by driving past or even penetrating the target, moving into sensitive areas, and observing security or law enforcement response. Specific areas of interest to terrorists would include how long it takes security or law enforcement to respond to an incident, number of responding personnel, or the routes taken to a specific location. Terrorists may also try to penetrate physical security barriers or test the response procedures in order to assess strengths and weaknesses. Vehicles may be parked for unusually long periods of time, sometimes in no parking areas, as a test of security.

4. Acquiring Supplies

This may be a case where someone is purchasing or stealing explosives, weapons or ammunition. It could be the unusual purchasing or storing of fertilizer or harmful chemicals. Terrorists would also find it useful to acquire law enforcement equipment and identification, military uniforms and decals, as well as flight passes, badges or even flight manuals. Terrorists often use false or stolen identification documents including passports and driver licenses. They may try to produce counterfeit identification by photocopying. Any of these items would make it easier to gain entrance to secured or usually prohibited areas. Anyone wearing a uniform should have the proper identification on them.



5. Suspicious People Who Do Not Belong

Another pre-incident indicator is observing suspicious people who just don't belong. This includes suspicious border crossings, stowaways aboard a ship or people jumping ship in a port. It could be someone in a workplace, building, neighborhood or business establishment who does not fit in because of their demeanor or unusual questions he/she is asking, or statement they make. This does not mean we should profile individuals, but it does mean we should profile behaviors.

6. Dry Run/Trial Run

Another sign to watch is for "dry runs." Before the execution of the final operation or plan, a practice session will be run to work out the flaws and unanticipated problems. This is especially true when planning a kidnapping but it can also pertain to bombings. A dry run may be the heart of the planning stage of a terrorist act. If you find someone monitoring a police radio frequency and recording emergency response times, you may be observing a dry run. Multiple dry runs may be conducted at or near the target to gain intelligence.

7. Deploying Assets/Getting Into Position

The seventh and final sign to look for is someone deploying assets or getting into position. This is your last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs. It is also important to remember that pre-incident indicators may come months or even years apart. Therefore, it is extremely important to document every fragment of information, no matter how insignificant it may appear, and forward this information to **law enforcement**.