

# TERRORISM & PROFILING

The new reality of terrorism dictates new responsibilities and new roles for security and law enforcement agencies. People expect law enforcement to know how to mitigate the terrorist threat, but enforcing the law is very different from preventing terrorist attacks. Historically, law enforcement has focused on catching criminals but to prosecute means finding the evidence that will prove their intent.

The mitigation of terrorism, however, involves the detection of aggressive intentions whether or not a crime has occurred. A terrorist attack usually takes years to plan, terrorists will engage in marking, surveillance, gathering of intelligence, planning, tooling up and rehearsing before the actual execution of and getaway from an attack. While the planning of the attack takes years, the execution takes just moments. It is usually too late to stop a terrorist when the bomb is in his hands. Clearly, looking for the bomb and not the bomber is a misguided approach – the result of traditional and now outdated law enforcement practices.

The media tells us that security is “beefed up” when the number of police officers deployed to a given location is increased. But contrary to conventional wisdom, numbers are not a good way to provide security. Rather, it’s the ability of security and law enforcement to recognize suspicious activities and people, their skill at assessing the seriousness of the threat, and the ability to deploy strategies to stop the threat, that minimises the threat from terrorists who seek to do us serious harm.

Israel has been at the forefront of the war against terrorism, it has developed methodologies to apprehend terrorists in the beginning stages of an attack which greatly reduces the chance that this attack will occur. Chameleon Associates LLC, a Southern California-based consulting firm, has been offering Israeli security strategies to American law enforcement agencies and security services to help them face this new reality. The same training has been available in SE Asia and Australia for the past 2 years. The company promotes the use of a practice they call “predictive profiling,” which is a method of situation assessment designed to “*predict and categorise the potential for inappropriate, harmful, criminal or terrorist behavior*”.

Chameleon promotes the theory that the only real requirement for predictive profiling to work is for law enforcement to make the assumption “*that the threat is constant and immediate*”.

The biggest difference between Israeli, American or Australian security is the Israeli focus on threat, as opposed to the American or Australian focus on risk. Risk being a calculated assumption based on past occurrences, threat, on the other hand, is constant. The Israeli approach is that it doesn’t matter how many people want to kill you, as long as there is one - this is threat.

The word “profiling” is usually associated with the politically charged term of “racial profiling, racial profiling not only presents political problems, but it is very ineffective and counterproductive when dealing with terrorism, terrorists understand law enforcement’s inclination towards racial profiling. They take advantage of that vulnerability by assuming profiles that are opposite of what is thought of as a typical terrorist. Terrorists may use children or elderly women to unknowingly deliver a bomb. Known as ‘mules’, they may also assume the identity of a respectable businessman in order to avoid suspicion in the environment they are operating in.

Contrary to popular belief, most terrorists do not have criminal backgrounds. Most terrorists will try to avoid breaking the law in order not to expose their operations while they are still in the planning stages. Police and to a lesser extent Security Officers are trained to look for a criminal background once reasonable suspicion is found. This procedure may be effective when trying to catch criminals, but it doesn’t work to ferret out terrorists.

Successful “Predictive Profiling” breaks down both the planning and execution of a terrorist attack into an “Aggressors Methods of Operation” (AMO). By Red Teaming an airport or rail terminal for example and thinking like a terrorist the AMO’s are refined, and from which are developed your Suspicion Indicators. This approach allows security and law enforcement to center their attention on the way terrorists work as opposed to focusing on who they are. This is why ‘predictive profiling’ is a very effective method for stopping state-sponsored terrorism where the falsification of identities and the use of ‘mules’ is very common.

Defining these varied terrorist scenarios into individual AMO’s allows security to tell their officers out on the street what to look for. Instead of giving vague instructions such as “look for all suspicious activity,” officers using predictive profiling are able to define suspicion (suspicion indicators) based on the predicted and proven terrorist methods of operations.

Articulating suspicion indicators into law enforcement policies and procedures is also very important from a legal perspective. Fearing lawsuits, security officers are more cautious about confronting individuals who appear suspicious in order to avoid the appearance of disregarding civil liberties, which might generate lawsuits. A detailed procedural framework and a policy written in the context of what terrorists do as opposed to who they are will empower law enforcement officers to engage the terrorist threat with confidence as well as the assurance that what they are doing is correct. Their actions will also be acceptable to the courts who are concerned about justifiable reasons for engagement with suspects.

Predictive profiling emphasizes the use of questioning to detect and determine aggressive intentions behind an observed suspicion indicator. Contrary to law enforcement interrogation practices that aim to prove guilt, security questioning should aim to refute the suspicion that was observed. This type of questioning is performed in a customer service oriented fashion and with a tone and a demeanor that will invoke cooperation

rather than fear. To do this effectively, officers must be taught how to engage in a friendly, inquisitive conversation with a suspicious person in order to extract information that can lead to the refutation of the suspicion. One of the most positive aspects of this type of questioning is that it enhances the public's sense of security while deterring the terrorist. The biggest weapon against terrorism is an open ended question, a suspect with a terrorist intent, who is confronted by security with an intelligent question, may very well force him to choose a different, softer target.

Predictive profiling is the only known method that enables law enforcement and security to hunt down terrorists and put them on the run. It presents knowledge of terrorists' methods, which are the key to mitigation of terrorist threat, and it emphasizes the kind of training that empowers officers to act with intelligence.

An article recently presented in Security Solutions highlighted the story of Richard Reid, the shoe bomber and how Profiling had failed to detect his intentions.



On the contrary, Reid carried out a test run (for surveillance purposes) with a flight from London to Tel Aviv on board an El Al flight but with no explosives. As with all El Al passengers Reid was profiled and questioned. Although El Al security could find no explosives or means to hijack or attack the aircraft he did present sufficient suspicion indicators for them to take precautions. Reids' story for his reasons for traveling (he was supposedly going for a job interview with an IT company but didn't know where it was or who he was to meet), his appearance and general demeanor when questioned did not add up. Reid was allowed to make his flight to Tel Aviv but with additional baggage, he had the company of an Israeli sky marshal sitting either side of him for the trip. On arrival in Tel Aviv Reid traveled on to Egypt and eventually back to France via Afghanistan where he received his explosives training. His trip with El Al prompted Israeli authorities to issue an international warning about Reid which for whatever reason

still did not prevent him from boarding his fateful flight from Paris. When US forces invaded Afghanistan they recovered Reids diary from his training camp in which under the heading El Al he notes “too hard, try someone else”.

Terrorists can't afford failure, if the target they would like has too high a risk of things going wrong they will choose an easier and softer one. The El Al profilers picked him and he didn't endanger their flight – for El Al it was a success.

*Chameleon Associates in conjunction with Complete Risk Management International Pty Ltd have presented workshops and seminars on Predictive Profiling within Australia and Singapore to: RAAF, Australian Customs, Air New Zealand, Australian Dept of Transport and Regional Services, Victorian Police, Singapore MRT, Changi Airport, Singapore Police, and in the US: Boeing, Amtrak, Los Angeles County Sheriffs Dept, Chicago O'Hare International Airport, US Dept of Homeland Security, FBI, Canadian Air Transport Authority, Mall of America, and many more*

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