

Safety Corner

Mitigating the threat of terror

As participants expect a safe environment at an event, the organiser should provide security services commensurate with the involved risk. Event organisers need to manage three key elements of security risk: threat, vulnerability and criticality. Events in this context can be conferences, concerts or shareholder annual general meetings and more.

While threat and vulnerability must be systematically identified and constantly reviewed, the mitigation tactics should be scalable subject to the perceived threat and vulnerability. If you are organising an event, below are some tips for you to help organisations mitigate the threat of terror:

1. Be like an onion, not an apple. Adequate security services should have numerous layers in place to deter, deny, delay and detect attacks. Also, good security services should be resilient, not just provide emergency responses.
2. Engage competent security service providers to assess risk and recommend proportionate mitigation tactics. Special tactics providers may be needed if the threat involves organised terrorists.
3. Put in place a systematic and audited thought process when identifying and reviewing the risk in connection with the security threat. The event organisers must understand what types of threat and attack they are expecting, the attackers' mind sets and event vulnerability to specific attack types before they can implement mitigation measures.
4. Properly understand and assess an event's vulnerability to attack before you put mitigation measures in place. What attack type(s) is the event vulnerable to? Why, when and where?
5. Properly understand the tactics which can be used to mitigate the vulnerability, what is available, and how they can be implemented. It will help plan proportionate responses.
6. Implement the most proportionate mitigation tactics and rationalise their benefits.
7. Doing nothing is an option. However, you need to rationalise your decision. Equally, you sometimes need to rationalise why you do not use some tactics.
8. Fully understand the residual risk. Despite numerous measures in place, an event can still be vulnerable. The residual risk should be reported accurately to senior management to make sure that they understand what risk they are exposed to.
9. Plan contingency measures in the event of elevated threat.

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