

## Q: What can law enforcement agencies do to best prepare for nontraditional terrorist threats?



**A:** Agencies can take the following actions to prepare for nontraditional threats:

- Develop leaders who can adapt to the changing culture and understand the importance of building trust with the community and law enforcement partners.
- Connect with other local, state, and federal agencies to keep up with current trends.
- Regularly seek opportunities to connect with the community members, business leaders, public leaders, and corporate security professionals.
- Keep intelligence teams communicating with information coming in and out; ensure they are connected with federal and regional partners.
- Build and maintain frameworks that assist with quick, secure information sharing.
- Keep an open mind and lean into opportunities to embrace the changing culture and available technologies.

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**A:** To prepare for nontraditional terrorist threats, first and foremost, an awareness among the workforce needs to take place. All disciplines within an agency, whether frontline personnel or support personnel, need to have an understanding of the nature of such terrorist threats and their role in threat response. Second, a strategic response should be created. The response should be practiced and effectively communicated within the agency. Outreach and communication with the private sector and all industries within a jurisdiction can create a joint understanding of potential problems. Softer terrorist threats possibly will not pose immediate public safety threats, like shootings or bombings, but can certainly be harmful in many other ways, such as a cyber attack on an industry that could ultimately pose significant challenges to the economy.

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**A:** Terrorism is—thankfully—a rare event in the United States. When terrorism does happen, it can take many forms and is perpetrated by individuals or groups with a wide range of goals. While terrorism and extremist violence are concerns, we don't need a new type of police work to address them. Local law enforcement agencies already uncover and stop terrorism plots, often based on information from community members. To increase community cooperation, law enforcement agencies should do two main things: (1) emphasize community policing efforts and other practices aimed at building and strengthening ties between officers and citizens and (2) build awareness of how people can report suspicious activity anonymously.

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**A:** Preparedness and prevention are essential local, national, and regional strategies to counter nontraditional terrorist threats. These include the delivery of tailored capacity building and training programs supported by reference materials such as INTERPOL guidebooks, manuals, and training videos.

Additionally, intelligence analysis plays an important role in effective policing. The production and dissemination of analytical reports on current and emerging terrorism trends enable involved stakeholders to adapt their strategies and standard operating procedures.

Any approach requires a multiagency and regional outlook, as a lack of coordination increases the risk of all types of terrorism, including attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive materials.

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