

# SELECTIVE SCREENING of RAIL PASSENGERS



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# URBAN MASS TRANSIT IS AN ATTRACTIVE TARGET...

- Attacks cause alarm, disruption, and economic harm
- Relatively low security compared to other targets of similar value
- Congregations of strangers guarantee anonymity
- Easy access and escape
- Crowds in contained environments more vulnerable to conventional explosives and unconventional weapons
- Successful London and Madrid Operations inspire groups wishing to act more quickly with less planning

# ...A DILEMMA BECAUSE MANAGERS FACE REAL CONSTRAINTS

- Passenger volume and delay sensitivity
- Multiple points of access
- Technology for selection unavailable which means security is labor intensive
- Inability to bear higher costs for long periods
- Legal challenges
- Public resistance to sustainable measures that reduce rather than eliminate risk

## MARCH 2007 MTI PROJECT— “SELECTIVE SCREENING OF RAIL PASSENGERS”

- Explored if screening – particularly selective screening – is a viable security option in urban mass transit
- Asked five key questions:
  1. If 100 percent screening not possible, do selective searches make sense?
  2. If only some passengers are screened, where there is no specific intelligence, what should be the appropriate selection process?
  3. What combinations of selection methods are appropriate under different conditions?
  4. What role can current and future technology play in passenger screening?
  5. What are the characteristics of a good screening program?

# OBJECTIVES OF SCREENING: RISK REDUCTION

- **Stopping all attacks is a sound bite – and not a good one**
- **Reducing risk *is* possible and realistic**
  - Most devastating attacks done by individuals who seek to escape
  - While suicide attackers not easily deterred, requirement to commit suicide reduces ranks of potential attackers.
  - 13 bombers and 191 casualties in Madrid; 4 and 52 in London
  - Even suicide attackers want to complete their mission
- **Even Partial Screening can:**
  - Complicate planning and increase chances of interception
  - Deter attacks altogether
  - Redirect methods to be less lethal
  - Divert attacks to locations with fewer casualties
- **Deterrence is critical**
  - Depends on good detection which depends on well run programs
  - Increased by adjusting selection method, changing screening location, interjecting police randomly and if possible massively, increasing interaction with passengers

# SELECTIVE PASSENGER SCREENING REDUCES RISKS AND IS A VIABLE SECURITY OPTION FOR ELEVATED THREATS

- Creates deterrence, possibility of detection
- Can be implemented rapidly and redeployed in changing patterns
- Reinforces staff alertness
- Assists in prevention of other crimes
- Some is better than none, more is better than some

# SELECTION METHODS

- **100%: Impractical & dangerous**
  - 1 peak hour at Penn = 60 hours at O'Hare
  - 1 peak hour at NY's Lex Ave Station *in one* direction = 7.2 Hours at O'Hare
  - Can *create* accessible crowds as terrorist targets
- **Random:**
  - Mathematical formula independent of all factors
  - Should be hard to predict by observation
- **Selective: Looks for indicators of an attack**
  - Behavior and Appearance: Attitudes, body language, behavior in crowds
  - Clothing and bags: Inappropriate or bulky
  - Ticket & ID: Not practical for transit
  - Others: Time and route of travel; proximity to target of symbolic importance
- **Technology:** Not yet viable for selection
- **Canine:** Some possibilities for specially trained teams
- **Ethnicity, National Origin, Age, Gender**
  - Illegal and dangerous if not linked to good intelligence. Terrorists have evaded profiles in Israel and elsewhere
  - If driven by intelligence, and used as one factor, both legal and appropriate.

# SEARCH METHODS

- Questioning or inspection
- Inspection can focus on:
  - Clothing and carried articles
  - Bags or packages
  - Identification
- Inspection can be conducted with or without technology:
  - Visual check
  - Hand search
  - Trace detection technology
  - Bulk detection technology
  - Canines

# LIMITATIONS: A DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENT

- **Resources:** Exhausted after 2-4 weeks without outside assistance
- **Legal:** Legal survival requires a carefully planned regime with clear policies and procedures, and a clear relationship to threat
- **Public:**
  - Wants screening to be passive and egalitarian
  - Wants screening to promise absolute safety
  - Therefore objects to selective screening as non-egalitarian and incomplete
  - Withdraws support with time and distance from an attack or publicized threat
- **Response:**
  - Professionally run programs
  - Persistent campaign of public and passenger education
  - Avoid short-term benefit of promising what cannot be delivered.

# CURRENT PRACTICES OVERVIEW

- Public transit possible or likely target
- Screening likely needed but 100% impossible
- Limitations imposed by resources, public or senior management attitude, and legal liability. Combination of limits depends on location
- All
  - Want better links with intelligence agencies
  - Want workable solutions practically drafted
  - Trust informal transit networks:
  - Would use many practices after being tested by other agencies:  
Examples: NTI training, BASS and court-approved screening system (NYC)
- Technology: Many want
  - Screening large numbers without lines (expectations may be unrealistic)
  - More focused TSA effort
  - TSA clearing house because of vendor marketing efforts

# CURRENT PRACTICES (CON'T)

- Policies and Planning: Considerable variation
- Resources:
  - Numbers and ratios of armed officers differ
  - Augmentation from outside required
  - Use of undercover officers varies
  - Deterrence increased through
    - Surges
    - Community policing
    - Utilization of trained staff
  - Innovative public participation campaigns
  - Could sustain screening for 2-4 weeks without help
- Training: BASS and NTI common

# CURRENT PRACTICES (CON'T)

- **Procedures and Contingency Plans**
  - New York and New Jersey
    - Voluntary Screening of bags using ETD or Canines
    - Passengers selected at random plus...
    - Officers trained in BASS
    - Stations chosen without announcement
    - Undercover officers monitoring process is key
  - One system experimenting in canine selection
  - State of policies and contingency plans vary in preparation but most:
    - Would implement screening after attack
    - Would implement program very close to NY/NJ
    - Focus on random plus behavioral profiling and use Intel
    - Focus on stations with high volume, name recognition; but also include smaller entrance stations and non-rush hour times
  - All fear sudden, vague threats alerts with no exit criteria
  - Only one agency had a formal plan for evaluating screening

# TECHNOLOGIES FOR SCREENING

- Challenge is both easier (threat mass) and more difficult (throughput) than in aviation
- Caveats:
  - Define what you are looking for (and what you are not looking for)
  - Technology simply provides new (and not always complete) data to operator
  - Understand operator-technology interface
  - Don't under-estimate costs (including management burden)

# TECHNOLOGIES (CON'T)

- Current and near-term technology cannot perform selection but can less intrusively and more effectively search those selected
- Strategic investment needed in “stand-off” technologies since challenges are significant.
  - Optimistic Scenario for single individuals: 3-5 years
  - Optimistic Scenario for crowds: Many more
- The most promising technologies for bulk detection
  - Active Infrared
  - Backscatter
  - Active and Passive Millimeter Wave Imaging
  - Terahertz imaging and spectroscopy

# COMPONENTS FOR SELECTIVE SCREENING WHEN THREAT ELEVATES

- **Random:**
  - Should be official method
  - Helps pass legal muster
  - Properly managed introduces uncertainty for attacker
- **Behavioral Profiling**
  - Can be adjusted based on new studies and information
  - Can be applied to those evading as well as going through voluntary screening
- **Canine screening:** Teams trained to sample people with good results
- **General or Specific Threat Information:** Former often provided and not too useful; latter is very useful but not often available or provided. But...

# SELECTIVE SCREENING WHEN THREAT ELEVATES (CON'T)

- When holding the bag it is a good idea to *persistently* ask agencies these questions:
  - How specific and reliable is the Intel?
  - Has the means, intent and presence of attackers been evaluated?
  - What about method and target chosen?
  - How long might the threat last and *what event or assessment* will determine when it is over?
- Public has many misperceptions about Intel and therefore mistrusts security measures

# DIFFERENT SCENARIOS REQUIRE DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS

- **Credible/Specific/Short-term:** Strengthen all elements, but use combined focus of Intel and behavioral profiling
- **Credible/Less-Specific/Longer term:** Strengthen random and behavioral profiling but continuously alter to conserve resources and maintain unpredictability
- **Credible/Non-Specific and Short term:** (often tied to an anniversary or event): Strengthen all methods
- **Credible/Non-Specific and Long-term:** Use random and behavioral profiling but structure for a long-haul.
- **Not credible:** Do nothing!

# ALWAYS USE FORCE MULTIPLIERS

- Alter Screening locations unpredictably
- Actively involve police and transportation system staff
- Employ police pop up operations
- Involve the public

# CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD SELECTION PROCESS

- Maintain high probability of detection
- Maximize deterrence through unpredictability
- Plan for contingencies, including expansion and contraction
- Fully cost screening
- Actively engage Public and passengers through outreach and education
- Use appropriate *field deployable* technologies
- Flow procedures and protocols down from sound policies
- Continuously train on protocols
- Use program of quality assurance and testing
- Motivate your first line supervisor
- Ensure unwavering top agency support

# RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

- 9/11 Bill spoke to public transit
- Information Sharing with TSA increasing: PT-ISAC stood up,
- TSA focus on smaller IEDs
- TSA inspections increasing with focus on terrorism (as opposed to response)
- DHS Grants expanded to pay for training and operational staff time
- Continued training in behavior assessment but additional planning for screening undetermined
- Recent TRB Decision Guide
  - Published 6 months after MTI work
  - Conclusions track closely
  - Will be helpful to transit operators particularly if read together
- Standards process could take on screening, using MTI and TRB publications.

# KEY JUDGMENTS

- Urban mass transit attractive target for years to come
- 100% screening not realistic option
- Selective screening a sustainable, viable option
- Goal is risk reduction, not elimination. Forcing terrorists to prolong planning, divert, or be less successful is a success
- Current technology can facilitate inspections but cannot select
- Selective screening runs counter to public expectations – programs must be closely managed and controlled to avoid racial profiling
- Legal challenges will remain
- Good selection process based on sound policies and procedures, resourced properly, combines different selection techniques, maximizes deterrence and unpredictability, uses existing technology, and maximize interaction with passengers
- Vigorous public information programs emphasizing risk reduction are needed.