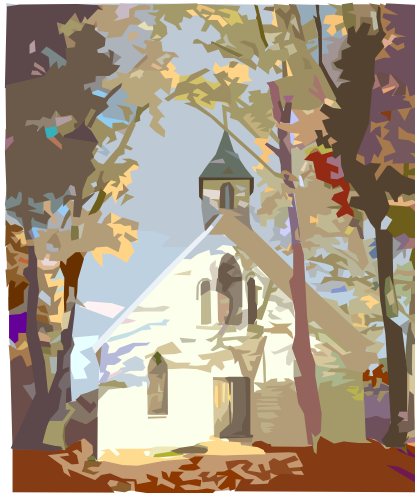


Securing Houses of Worship After 9/11



Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

--FBI Definition

A Community Service Project of

Robert W. Smedley

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Chapter 30, The Florida West Coast Chapter ASIS

Securing Houses of Worship **After 9/11**

Table of Contents

1. Procedure Guide

2. The Church Threat Assessment Guide

3. WEB Site Support

4. Power Point Presentation

5. Sample Printed Promotional Material

Background

Until recently, the biggest threats facing any house of worship included: arson, robbery, theft and vandalism. In the 1990s church burning, especially in the South prompted ASIS International to fund and publish *Securing Houses of Worship, A Community Service Manual for ASIS Chapters*, by Philip P. Purpura, CPP. (enclosed)

The National Church Arson Task Force stated in 1996:

“The burning of churches is a particularly heinous crime because those who would attack our churches seek to strike at our most fundamental liberties and sources of personal support. Historically, churches have served as places of sanctuary, centers of community support, and symbols of freedom.”

During the past five years, arson and bombing attacks on houses of worship have been in the forefront of law enforcement and public attention. Although church fires are not a new phenomenon, they were not a high priority for federal efforts and resources until 1996 with the formation of the National Church Arson Task Force.

In 1996, there was a sharp rise in church arsons, especially among African-American churches in the South. Prior to 1996, ATF had investigated approximately 200 fires and bombings at houses of worship. However, due to limited federal jurisdiction, these incidents were not usually investigated or prosecuted by the federal government.

As a result of the sharp increase in church arsons in 1996, President Clinton formed the National Church Arson Task Force (NCATF) in an effort to coordinate Federal, state and local law enforcement in the battle against church arson. Congress supported the efforts of the Task Force by strengthening federal laws and provided crucial resources for the Task Force's efforts.

For example, Congress passed into law the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996, which granted federal prosecutors greater power in pursuing burnings and desecration at houses of worship. This new law enabled prosecutors to file charges in racially motivated arsons without having to demonstrate that the incident affected interstate commerce and waived the previous requirement that the damage had to total at least \$10,000.

The NCATF is composed of ATF, FBI, DOJ, FEMA, HUD and CRS. ATF applies its expertise in arson and bombing investigations and its jurisdiction in federal arson statutes to investigating and apprehending those who attack houses of worship. The FBI brings its expertise in Civil Rights and Hate Crimes and applies these statutes when applicable. DOJ adds to the effort by providing attorneys to prosecute individuals burning houses of worship, applying the most appropriate statutes. Recognizing that cooperation between the public and law enforcement is essential in the fight against these crimes, the Community Relations Service of DOJ assists by fostering positive relationships between communities and law enforcement. FEMA manages arson prevention and training programs. HUD brings its expertise in coordinating rebuilding programs to the task force.

Today, ATF continues in the forefront in the fight against church arson. Utilizing its statutory authority under 18 USC, section 844, ATF's pursuit of arsonists has become institutionalized in the Bureau. Applying these statutes and ATF expertise to house of worship fires has become a top priority. Additionally, ATF has numerous support programs available in the investigation of church arsons. The National Response Team is available to respond within 24 hours and is comprised of agents with specialized training, chemists, canine handler and an explosives enforcement officer. ATF's laboratory system is one of the finest in the world. With regional laboratories all over the United States, they are available to examine arson debris and detect accelerants and explosive materials.

ATF also utilizes computer technology in the investigation of church fires. The National Repository collects and analyses information on arson incidents and the suspected criminal use of explosives. The Advanced Serial Case Management System (ASCMe) provides on-scene assistance in the collection and collating of large amounts of evidence and data. ASCMe is invaluable in organizing the many pieces of evidence collected in the investigation of church fires. ATF responds to all fires at churches and makes a determination as to which of these resources are needed for a swift arrest and prosecution of the persons responsible.

Due to increased federal jurisdiction and cooperation between agencies, it is anticipated that this trend of success in battling the war against house of worship violence will continue into the future.

1. Procedure Guide

Secure Chapter Support including:

- ASIS Membership Support**
- Printed media**
- Web site**
- Speakers List**
- Newspaper, TV Support**
- Site Survey Teams**

ASIS Membership Support

The first and most basic place to begin is by approaching the Houses of Worship that we as ASIS members attend. Even with several ASIS members attending the same House of Worship, the word will get out very quickly that the local ASIS Chapter is providing a valuable community service.

Printed Media

Pre-printed stories/press releases, customize letters, brochure/mailers to local market from ASIS templates.

Web Site

Provide Site Survey requests via downloadable file at ASIS Chapter web-site; monitor new hits. Provide web-based support to reinforce ASIS as a valuable security partner.

Speakers List

Develop speakers list to include Federal, State and Local Law Enforcement Representatives. Speakers will present the most current information on terrorism and Homeland Security local to the ASIS Chapter.

Newspaper, TV Support

As a public service project of ASIS and the local ASIS Chapter, contact local Newspaper, TV Religious Reporter/Correspondent to Review the urgency and importance of SECURING HOUSES OF WORSHIP. Suggest a story in the local newspaper including the local ASIS Chapter web site for more information. Request a link from the newspaper and TV web-site to the ASIS Chapter for more information.

Site Survey Teams

Site Survey Teams will visit the House of Worship to review the site, assess risk and prepare a written report. The report can be presented to Religious Leaders and Governing Councils. Because this is a community service project of ASIS it is critical to remember this is a public service offering from ASIS.

2. The Church Threat Assessment Guide
The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
National Church Arson Task Force

NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

***Church Threat
Assessment Guide***



Department of the Treasury



Department of Justice



Federal Emergency Management Agency



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms



Federal Bureau of Investigation

1996

CHURCH THREAT ASSESSMENT GUIDE

The following is a guide to assessing church vulnerability to arson and bombing attacks. It should not be considered all inclusive. Your local Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) office, FBI office, fire, police or sheriff's department should be contacted for additional guidance concerning a specific plan for your church.

Area Of Vulnerability

- **Churches** located in isolated or rural areas.
- **Churches** left unattended for extended periods of time.
- **Churches** with unsecured doors and/or uncovered windows leave weak points for forced entry by intruders.
- The absence of an adequate burglar alarm system provides a determined criminal with additional time for criminal activity.
- Heavy shrubs and outside vegetation, and/or the absence of sufficient perimeter lighting, provides security for criminals, not victims.

Affirmative Actions To Reduce Vulnerability

1. Install perimeter floodlights outside the building.

Criminals can conceal their presence and activity from witnesses at night. Adequate lighting that illuminates all points of entry (doors, windows, skylights, etc.) discourages them. Interior lights in areas visible through exterior windows should be left on during all hours of darkness. Exterior lights should have protective screens over them to prevent vandalism. All lights should be checked weekly for serviceability. Relatively inexpensive motion activated and/or timing equipment may be purchased to automatically turn lights on and off.

2. Install an adequate fire and burglar alarm system.

Alarms should be installed by reputable local companies that can service and properly maintain the equipment. Please note that some municipalities or police departments have enacted burglar alarm standards and will not respond to false alarms by inferior systems that frequently cause false alarms. Check with your local police or sheriff's department.

3. Solid wood or sheet metal faced doors provide extra integrity that a hollow core wooden door cannot. Metal security grates or screens that cover the entire door and frame also provide added security.

A steel door frame that properly fits the door is as important as the construction of the door.

With the proper foundation of a sufficient door and frame, the most obvious consideration, door locks, can be addressed. Long throw dead bolts of hardened steel are excellent deterrents to forced entry. Many standard locks are easy to pick or break open. Do remember that exits must remain operable for fire and life safety reasons.

4. Install burglar-proof bars on screens, and large roof vents to prohibit access through them. However, it should be noted that aesthetic or fire safety considerations often preclude their use. If bars are used, they should be operable from interior and not limit exit or evacuation of building. **Local ordinances should be researched BEFORE costly security renovations are undertaken.**

Windows are common points of entry for criminals, regardless of their height from the ground. Burglars can open unlocked windows, break glass and unlock locked windows, saw through metal or wooden frames, or pry entire window frames from exterior walls.

5. Heavy shrubs and vines should be kept low to the ground to reduce their potential to conceal criminals or incendiary or explosive devices. Large trees or vines should be removed to prevent criminals from climbing to upper windows, large vents, or onto the roof.
6. Participate in formal Neighborhood Watch type programs organized by local authorities.
7. Meet with your neighbors and security personnel assigned to your neighboring businesses. Explain your situation and ask them to keep an eye on your church.
8. Educate personnel on methods to deal with telephoned threats and conducting bomb searches. Develop a written protocol for threats and keep it posted.
9. Document any strange or threatening phone calls. Talk with the phone company about tracing your lines or installing Caller ID to identify your callers if you are receiving threats.
10. If a suspicious package or letter is received, immediately call your local police or sheriff's department. Do not touch or manipulate the object in any manner. Be alert for letters or packages that display an excessive amount of postage, contain grease stains, or have unfamiliar or missing return addresses. (*See the "SUSPECT LETTER AND PACKAGE INDICATORS " page*)
11. Keep the handling of threatening correspondence, once identified, to an absolute minimum. Place envelopes, letters or the packages in clear plastic bags and do not compress the bag. Store them in another location until they can be turned over to law enforcement.

Securing Houses of Worship **After 9/11**

12. On a rotating basis, have a member of the congregation, who is at least 18 years of age, check on the church daily. Evaluate the need for a security guard for nights and weekends.
13. Obtain as detailed a physical description as possible of any suspicious person(s) noticed in or around your facility, including a description of vehicles and license numbers. (*Refer to enclosed worksheet, "Suspect Description"*)
14. Duplicate all documents, computer disks, and records that are stored at the church. Complete a comprehensive inventory of all furniture and equipment, to include serial numbers and value. Evaluate insurance coverage frequently.
15. Remove all potential fire hazards from the church grounds, such as trash, lawn clippings and debris. Store all combustible materials in a locked room, shed, etc.

CAUTIONARY NOTES:

- A. DO NOT allow watch persons to sleep inside the church**
- B. The carrying of firearms, nightsticks, mace, or any type of weapon while conducting surveillance or participating in church watch programs should not be permitted.**
- C. DO NOT approach a suspicious person, challenge anyone, or otherwise place yourself in jeopardy. If a suspicious situation is found, report it to the nearest law enforcement agency. Take detailed, legible notes of the activity, which may be used later for court or police purposes.**
- D. DO NOT pursue vehicle or suspects.**
- E. Remember, you do not possess police powers and you are liable as an individual for civil and criminal charges should you exceed your authority. The key is to OBSERVE and REPORT.**
- F. DO NOT allow anyone to check on the church after having consumed alcohol. Do not allow anyone to stand watch and consume alcohol.**
- G. If possible, conduct the watch patrol in pairs.**
- H. Conduct watches in a random fashion and not in an observable pattern.**

OTHER CRIMES AGAINST CHURCHES

It is a crime if your place of worship is defaced or vandalized. Also, should any of the members of your congregation be threatened or intimidated by an individual or group obstructing their free exercise of religious beliefs, immediately contact local law enforcement authorities and the nearest FBI office. All of the above incidents are serious matters which the FBI can and will investigate under Federal Civil Rights Statutes.

CONCLUSION

Securing Houses of Worship **After 9/11**

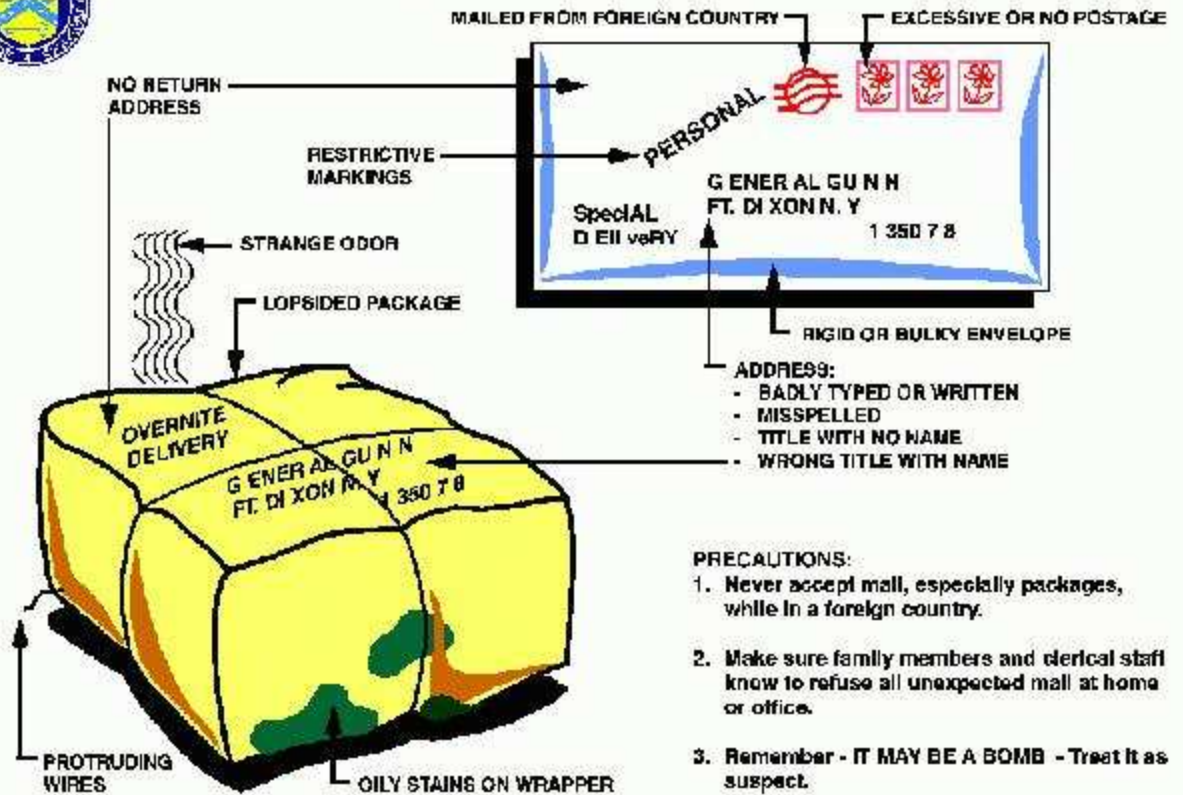
Please realize that a perfect security system does not exist and that some of these recommendations may or may not be practical for a place of worship. However, these suggestions can reduce the potential for an arson, bombing, vandalism or burglary at your church. Many of the listed security measures are quite expensive and may be beyond the means of many churches. Local police crime prevention sections are excellent sources for security evaluations and suggestions. Also, local fire departments can provide on-site fire safety and arson prevention inspections. They will assist you in prioritizing your needs within your budget constraints.

We realize these recommendations are not all inclusive. We welcome your ideas for improving this assessment and also the descriptions of any measures you have taken, not contained within this guide, that should be shared with other congregations. Please contact the Task Force through our Toll Free number, 1-888-ATF-FIRE, to provide this information.

Through the Clearinghouse for Arson Prevention Resources, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is making available an assortment of arson prevention brochures and pamphlets. Technical assistance on the development of arson watch teams is also available. Requests for arson prevention workshops, as well as for on-site safety inspections of houses of worship can be made through the Clearinghouse. If you are interested in arson prevention information, please contact the Clearinghouse toll-free by dialing **1-888-603-3100**. FEMA has also added a special section to its World Wide Web site (<http://www.fema.gov>) in support of the National Arson Prevention Initiative.



WARNING! Suspect Letter and Package Indicators

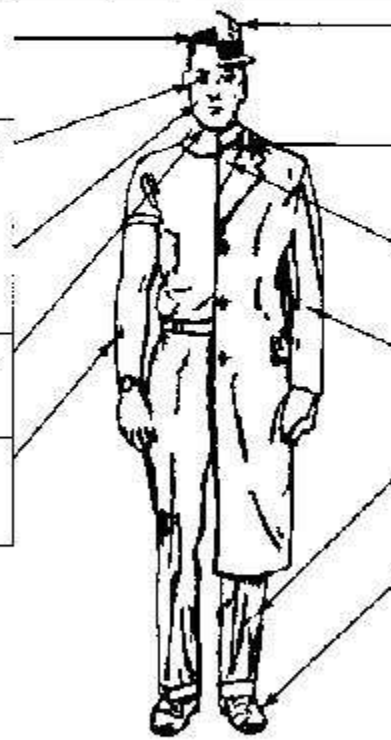


FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BOMB SECURITY OR BOMB THREATS, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ATF OFFICE.

ATF 1324.1 (2005)

SUSPECT DESCRIPTION

FILL OUT AS BEST YOU CAN
GIVE TO THE FIRST POLICE OFFICER ON THE SCENE

SEX	RACE	AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEAPON TYPE
HAIR					FLAT (color, type)
GLASSES TYPE					TIE
COMPLEXION					SHIRT
SCARS/MARKS					COAT
TATTOOS					TROUSERS
					SHOES
AUTO LICENSE, MAKE, COLOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:				DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	

3. WEB Site Support

WEB Site Support will play an important role as a central information point. By providing the Threat Assessment Guide in a pdf format, churches can download the forms and complete the assessment with or without the aid of ASIS. This eliminates the cost duplicating forms and mailing them to the hundreds of churches in the Greater Tampa Bay Area.

Our WEB Site is also an outstanding platform to showcase ASIS to our community.

4. Power Point Presentation



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5. Sample Printed Promotional Material

Securing Houses of Worship After 9/11 Brochure (Attached)

General Press Releases (Attached)

Securing Houses of Worship After 9/11

Press Release

Since 9/11 one of the biggest questions we all need to ask is what are terrorists after? FDLE Regional Director James Sewell recently addressed this question with three powerful points:

1. High Casualties
2. Damage to the Infrastructure
3. Destruction of Symbolic Structures

It is easy to think of targets that fit that profile. We all have. But what about the less obvious targets such as where we worship every week? Long considered safe havens, churches in the U.S have never been considered targets of terrorists. Unfortunately, church bombings around the world have been well documented. The most recent church bombings in the Middle East remind us this problem is far from going away and will probably get much worse.

Before 9/11

Until recently, arson was the largest threat to churches, especially in the south. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) heads the National Church Arson Task Force. The FBI, FEMA, Departments of Justice and the Treasury also support this national program. As a result, cases of arson have dropped drastically and those responsible are rightfully being prosecuted to the fullest extents of the law.

ASIS

The American Society for Industrial Security, (recently shortened to ASIS International) has long been recognized as the largest organization in the world for security professionals. ASIS provides the most comprehensive and up to date security information available in the industry.

ASIS in the Tampa Bay Area

The Florida West Coast Chapter of ASIS recognizes the need for *all* Houses of Worship to be secure. Working with Federal, State and Local law enforcement agencies, ASIS offers it's own extensive resources to help make Houses of Worship more secure.

The First Step: log on to the ASIS WEB site

A site survey, risk assessment form can be downloaded at www.asistampabay.org. You may complete the form yourself or call for our assistance. Written, specific recommendations can be presented to your governing council, for further actionable steps. The security steps outlined do not ensure "against" a terrorist attack. They do highlight security needs and vulnerabilities not previously determined or identified.

This is a public service project locally funded by The Florida West Coast Chapter of ASIS. For more information log on to our web site or call Robert Smedley at 813-350-7943.

Securing Houses of Worship **After 9/11**

The American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) is the preeminent organization for professionals responsible for security, with more than 32,000 members worldwide. Founded in 1955, ASIS is dedicated to increasing the effectiveness and productivity of security by developing educational programs and materials that address broad security interests. By providing members and the business community with access to a full range of programs and services and publishing security's leading magazine – *Security Management* magazine – ASIS leads the way for advanced and improved security performance. For more information about ASIS, visit our Web site at <http://www.asisonline.org>.

Securing Houses of Worship After 9/11

The role of ASIS

The Florida West Coast Chapter of ASIS is here to provide a conduit of site-security help and knowledge to the religious community free of charge. Our world has changed and with that, the importance that all citizens understand that they need to be prepared and prudent in their daily lives. ASIS is not highlighting or encouraging panic, we are presenting sound security practice & principles that everyone should and can be implementing as a habit.

Arson

Prior to 9/11 the greatest single threat to Houses of Worship was arson. This fact has been recognized by the highest sectors of law enforcement and is rightfully prosecuted to the highest extents of the law. The ASIS International Foundation offers an excellent resource titled *Securing Houses of Worship* ©1999 by Philip P. Purpura, CPP. This Community Service Manual for ASIS Chapters, funded by ASIS International Foundation can be ordered on line at: www.asisonline.org

Terrorists: What are they after?

At a recent ASIS Meeting in Tampa, Regional Director Jim Sewell of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) addressed the burning question we all need to ask: What are terrorists after?

They have three objectives:

1. Many fatalities
2. Damage to the Physical Infrastructure
3. Destruction of Symbolic Targets

Many Fatalities

On any given Sunday, the attendance at any service can run from several dozen to the thousands. Imagine bombs exploding at multiple houses of worship on any given Sunday. The casualty list could easily approach or even top the casualties at The World Trade Center. Does that mean smaller Houses of Worship are immune because of their size? If anything they would be easier to approach and target.

Damage to the Physical Infrastructure

The I-4 Corridor and The Sunshine Skyway Bridge, lead the list of obvious “large” physical infrastructure targets. But what about the spiritual “infrastructure” of the houses of worship? Damage to the spiritual infrastructure ranges from the physical buildings to the faith of the congregation with a direct and immediate impact on weekly offerings. Yes, the spiritual infrastructure can be attacked with devastating spiritual and financial losses.

Destruction of Symbolic Targets

Raymond James Stadium, Busch Gardens and of course MacDill AFB fall into this category. However, what is more symbolic than a house of worship?

Securing Houses of Worship **After 9/11**

An invitation to learn more

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