

Key Findings from THE STATE OF SECURITY MANAGEMENT

A Baseline Phenomenological and Empirical Study

Funded by



MODULE 7:

Broaden Perspectives on Global Threats

To operate under an ESRM paradigm and address the evolving and dynamic threat environment of today and tomorrow, security executives must expand their perspectives and widen the lens through which they view the world. In addition, educational materials, curriculum, training programs and professional development forums would be well served to incorporate more in terms of global and regional perspectives, as well as geopolitical and social threat considerations.

The concept of the global business environment has been a topic of conversation for a long time, but increasingly that conversation must inform our security risk management thinking and approach. In some respects, global issues affect every business and organization today. For that reason, security executives should broaden their perspectives on the meaning of threats, vulnerabilities, and risk mitigation. Even the concept of assets may have to be adjusted in some cases.

One sometimes neglected consideration is that risk management strategies may need to be tailored based on the ability or willingness of government security forces or law enforcement to respond to incidents or provide protective support. From another

perspective, private or contract security forces under the auspices of a business or organization may overreact in a civil unrest situation and become part of the problem rather than the solution. To some security executives, these are simply part of the everyday thought process, but for more and more of us, a broader, bigger-picture perspective is necessary. This is especially true as the global supply chain continues to expand and become more complex.

During a discussion within the ASIS International Human Threat Management Community, the question of just what is “human threat” was raised. It is much more than we commonly think of when we talk about the insider threat to organizations. In the Middle East and North Africa, human threats

may include disputes over access to natural resources, including land and water—in other words, threats to human needs. This can affect not only social climate but also factors such as the crime and threat environment, workforce availability, incidents that may occur on an organization’s property, utilities access, personal safety, transportation, and the supply chain. Social and geopolitical risks must factor into risk analysis and security executives’ mindset and protection strategies. In addition, the impact of social media as a tool to disseminate real or perceived grievances globally must be considered.

During interviews, a number of thought leaders also mentioned the growing relevance of geopolitical risks, civil unrest, social strife, and political violence. In addition, *Political Risk Outlook 2020* from Verisk Maplecroft states:

The pent-up rage that has boiled over into street protests over the past year has caught most governments by surprise. Policymakers across the globe have...reacted...but without addressing the underlying causes.... [E]ven if tackled immediately, most of the grievances are deeply entrenched and would take years to address.

These aspects of the worldwide risk environment will be with us into the foreseeable future even if no further turmoil develops.

In *Security Operations Management*,

SECURITY THOUGHT LEADER PERSPECTIVE:

Global Threats Now Part of the Job

“The 20th century CSO was primarily concerned about protecting the physical assets of an organization from threats like theft, pilferage, and robbery. But as issues like emerging risks, regional instability, and local conflicts affect companies, the contemporary CSO must understand the geopolitical dynamics of the 21st Century.... Geopolitical risk is at a post-Cold War high and everything is moving faster than before.... The chief security officer must become the chief security strategist.”

—Mangesh Sawant
Senior Vice President, Riskpro

Robert McCrie (2016) relates these real-world issues to the recruitment and advancement of security professionals. He states, “Increasingly, the need for security services is managed on a global basis. This calls for people who can absorb, respect, and work with those of different cultures.”

The seventh in a series of nine modules, this paper explores the findings of an ASIS Foundation study conducted by Kevin E. Peterson, CPP, CIPM II and Joe Roberts, Ph.D. in 2020 and 2021. To download the full *State of Security Management* report, visit [asisfoundation.org](https://www.asisfoundation.org).

The ASIS Foundation, an affiliate of ASIS International, helps security professionals achieve their career goals with certification scholarships, practical research, member hardship grants, and more. The Foundation is supported by generous donations from ASIS members, chapters, and organizations. Online at www.asisfoundation.org.