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BOMBS, BLASTS & BULLETS

A suicide bomber has just detonated themselves in our presence. The casualties amongst us are horrendous. Take your seat and spend a few minutes sharing these triage cards with your colleagues. If you knew that a suicide bomber would cause 27 casualties tomorrow can you please each write down 5 questions that you would like answered today.

Islamic governments have never and will never be established through peaceful solutions and cooperative councils. They are established, as they have always been by pen and gun, by word and bullet, by tongue and teeth. It is through both means that the battles are fought and must be won. This is an extract from the Al Qaeda training found after the London bombings. My name is Jim Truscott. For 26 years I perfected the art of underground warfare and for the last seven years I have been advising industry in crisis situations. Compare me to Osama bin Ladin if you like. We are the same age. We have similar backgrounds as engineers. We have both destroyed many things and we have both worked in industry. I have had him in my sights in Kuwait, in Indonesia and in Homebush Bay, as he has probably had me. Bin Ladin is a hands-on Chief Executive with a huge appetite for risk and a meticulous approach to strategy. Al-Qaeda is in a fight to the death with the capitalist west. While there is no connection with the sub-prime financial crisis, he must be rubbing his hands with glee at this failure in US capitalism.

Cell and Networks, Recruiting, Selection, Training and Indoctrination, Establishment of Cover and Authentication, Positioning by close-access connections and establishment of Cover on the Spot, Surreptitious Acquisition of Information, Communications and meetings with informants and Couriers, Passive and active killing. My task this morning is to put bombs, bullets and blasts into historical and current context. These are the phases of a terrorist operation. As ordinary citizens you will not detect the recruiting phases of a terrorist operation, but you may well detect their hunt for information. The Al-Qaeda manual claims that it is possible to gather at least 80 percent of information about the enemy (us) from the Internet. Al-Qaeda operatives are meticulous, obsessive in surveillance. They understand that infrastructure is vulnerable to cyber and physical disruptions. For example it is a tactic for their operatives to make anonymous threats via telephone and email then to monitor the response. They are trained to act as people who work on the streets; they watch and they learn. Targets are not chosen randomly. Like organized crime they obtain information through infiltration and well-placed informants. They work

in isolated groups and communicate covertly. The key point to remember is that the only time that a terrorist attack can be realistically prevented is in the planning stages.

Terrorism has been around for at least 400 years. Guy Fawkes was probably the first fire bomber in his attempt to blow up the British parliament. Bombings and fire bombings are the most common form of terrorist incident. Australia's first brush with religious motivated violence began with the Hilton bombing in Sydney some thirty years ago when three people were killed and seven wounded. This event is now considered the first act of terrorism as we know it in Australia. It led to military intervention to secure a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting at Bowral which was occurring at the time. As young engineer Lieutenant my troops searched kilometers of rail lines for several days and found nothing. Just last week six Islamists were convicted in a Melbourne courts for plotting to bomb the MCG grand final. It is important to point out that not all terrorists are religious nutters. Indeed many are political activists. The Oklahoma City bombing is a case in point where the truck bomb organized by right wing extremists killed 166 people, the largest attack on US soil at that time.

Luckily for most Australians, we have not yet been directly exposed to mass casualties on Australian soil like has occurred elsewhere. There is no doubt that however that we are on the target list. We know that in 1993 a Japanese cult used a farm 600 km NE of Perth to experiment with toxic agents which were used in the subway attack in Tokyo two years later. We also know that the principal bomb maker for Jemaah Islamiah went to high school in Adelaide. As we were preparing for the Olympics in 2000, Kurds barricaded the Turkish consulate in Sydney. I was there at 6am in the morning. There were no kinetic weapons and the Police quickly resolved the matter but it could equally have been much worse.

Written on the wall deep inside bin Ladin's cave - CARVER. It can be difficult to assess terrorist intent and their capability when the terrorist functions from covert cells, but you can look at your own vulnerability. This is what they do and they use something like the CARVER acronym. When you look at yourself through terrorist eyes, the threat can become a little clearer and it helps determine whether you are a soft target.

C is criticality or relative importance. Where are you vulnerable? A terrorist may seek to destroy critical blood stocks and fire stations in addition to people. This is what we were taught to do in underground warfare. Most terrorists go for mass concentration of people. This is why mass casualty plans are now standard as terrorism puts every public gathering place at risk.

A is for ease of access. Just getting to the target can be confusing at best in the middle of the night in a city; so easy access targets are often preferred. The terrorist may simply turn up in a taxi. Suicide terrorists aside, they do not want to

be caught in the act. They will take the path of least resistance and go to places that do not have people who are looking for things that are unusual or do not have adequate visible patrols. Last year for example there were 82 attempted suicide bombings in Pakistan, but only three actually made their way onto target. On the other hand, you may recall the motor cyclists that simply rode in to Perth airport terminal a few years ago. Compare that with the failed attack at the Scottish airport where the doctor's car bounced off the wall. Compare that again with the attack last week against the US Embassy in Yemen, where they used rifle fire to subdue the guards to enable a car bomber to drive inside. Luckily he did not make it either.

R is recoverability. How easily the target can be repaired, physically and psychologically.

V is for vulnerability and the ease with which people and infrastructure can be put killed with a bomb or a computer virus. Fire, flood, and kinetic energy are all considered. Martyrs are just as scared as anyone else when it comes to delivering the final blow, even with the motivation of 70 virgins and a place in heaven. All terrorists will look for the easier way. The terrorists across South West Asia are often indoctrinated from an early age through the Madrassa school system. Late when the suicide bomber is selected they are taken to 'model heaven' and given rivers of wine to ease their way to paradise. Bombs are a cheap and flexible attack option with relatively few major disadvantages for the terrorist. There is no doubt that terrorists will continue to seek more capable devices and places like Iraq remain a test bed for terrorists to experiment.

E is for effect. Terrorists will concentrate on targets that will cause the greatest adverse effect on people; to get the entire nation to go into mourning. They want media results. Mass fatality attacks are a hallmark of al-Qaeda tactics. They look for maximum impact and devastation and attacks in waves as has been demonstrated many times. A few weeks ago I was in Pakistan helping a company prepare for political instability. Taliban propaganda had 1,000 suicide bombers ready o launch. Clearly not true but it did end up with 11 policemen being killed on a bus crossing a bridge by one bomber.

R is for recognition. The ability to actually identify where to place the bomb.

Bomb, Bullets & Blast. For the moment terrorists do not have sophisticated biological weapons nor nuclear weapons but with the Pakistan as the only Muslim nuclear power, it may only be a matter of time. It has been some years since I had access to classified intelligence but open source predictions say that terrorists or criminals may access tactical nuclear warheads within a few years. The ability to actually weaponize a biological substance is still really only possible for military scientists. How do terrorists make these bombs? Since the early 1990s, the Internet has placed bomb-making information at the disposal of

everyone. The Internet also gives useful information on initiation and timing devices and the Standard Operating Procedures of Emergency Services.

There are basically three types of explosives. You have low velocity explosives like the black powder in fire crackers. You have high velocity explosives that the military use. You also have blasting agents like framers use when they mix Ammonium Nitrate and Fuel Oil to remove tree stumps. Terrorists use whatever they can get their hands on. Mining areas like WA contain a huge amount of blasting agents and detonators. Terrorists also enhance the effects of the blast using gas cylinders, sugar, aluminium powder and flammable liquids. This all sounds too easy, but the problem comes with detonation. This is crux or nothing happens. You can have all manner of elaborate time delays and standoff initiation with clocks, photoelectric cells, mobile phones and the like although many are fickle. The Lockerbie aircraft bombing was supposed to go off over the Atlantic Ocean but because the flight was delayed the plane detonated over Scotland instead. With all of these examples you still need a small detonator to get the larger charge going. Look at the problem that the terrorist who tried to blow up the Pan Am flight when matches that he had hidden in his shoes became damp and would not ignite. Remember when he was caught shuffling his feet.

Kitchen Explosives. I went through my old guerrilla warfare training notes last weekend. To make detonator we would get a rifle cartridge and remove the projectile. We would insert some detonating cord and crimp the cartridge. You still need a delay unless you wish to kill yourself, so make a fuze using a small amount of sugar chlorate to give you about 30 seconds or more to get away. Such devices are referred as improvised explosive devices and maybe concealed in shopping bags, cameras or pipes. The pipe bomb was first used at the Eureka stockade. The Oklahoma bomber used large drums containing ammonium nitrate and fuel oil laid out in a V pattern within the bomb vehicle to make it directional and enhance the blast effect. Suicide bombing generally overcomes all of the tactical and technical considerations as typified by September 11 where firebombing was used to great effect.

1983 Lebanon barracks 12,000 pound bomb- 242 killed

1988 Lockerbie plane- 259 killed in the air and 11 on the ground

1995 Oklahoma truck bomb - 166 killed and hundreds more injured

1995 Tokyo Sarin Gas- 12 killed and 5,700 injured

1998 Embassy in Kenya – 291 killed and over 5,000 wounded

2001 World Trade Towers – 2,967 killed and 19 terrorists

2002 Bali – 202 killed

2004 Spain – 190 dead and 1800 wounded

2004 47 bags of Ammonium Nitrate go missing from Adelaide

2004 Jakarta Embassy - 9 killed and 180 wounded

2005 London – Only 52 died but a day of chaos

Clearly however with a bit of technology, some ingenuity and deception a terrorist

can be successful, especially in confined spaces like underground stations and buses. The Bali bomb was mixed so as to cause heat, fire and blast. For survivors and Emergency Services, responding appropriately in the first 15 minutes is when you will have most impact in saving life. Scoop and run is one tactic used by Emergency Services to rapidly evacuate survivors. This may not be possible in every scenario and in London helicopters were used to deliver doctors and supplies rather than taking casualties away. Interestingly in Israel, bomb squads only have eight hours to examine the scene before it is returned to normal use

Carnage. Most casualties come from the blast and flying debris with proximity being the key determinant. Limbs are torn off and in some cases the only identifiable part of the body maybe the head as is often the case with suicide bombers. Secondary fragments are likely to cause the most carnage. A short distance can dramatically reduce the damage from blast over pressure. Rat poison, an anti-coagulant can be added as well.

The War on Terror. So yes, it could happen in Western Australia. And yes it could be as bad as anywhere else. The war on terror is probably the wrong expression as we really require massive social engineering; but please treat the next 8 hours as your part in that campaign. We are only 20 minutes drive from Campbell Barracks, the home of the Australian SAS. Bin Ladin would do everything in his power to kill their families in the village beside the barracks so we need to be ready. Are there any questions or discussion before I hand back to Debbie.