

Counterterrorism Considerations for Waterfront Locations

Terrorists may continue to focus their efforts against waterfront locations¹ because of the potential for mass casualty events and restricted access. Previous attack plots targeting waterfront locations included various tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), such as the use of firearms, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and vehicular ramming. First responders should consider these TTPs when coordinating with local, state, federal, and private-sector partners.

COORDINATION, COMMUNICATION, AND PREPLANNING EFFORTS AIMED AT ATTACK PREVENTION:

Efforts toward preventing terrorist attacks among key stakeholders should include maintaining communications and establishing agreed-upon response procedures to ensure the safety of all involved. Stakeholders may consider quarterly meetings to share information, including threats, tips, or suspicious activity reports (SARs). In addition, each stakeholder should maintain points of contact for the following partners:

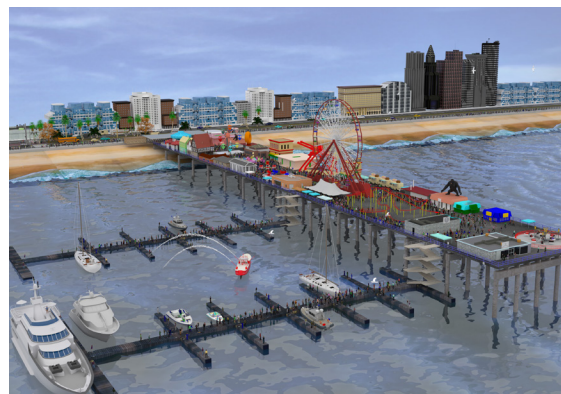
- ✓ State and Local Police Departments (PDs) or Sheriff's Offices, including PD maritime units (if one exists)
- ✓ Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- ✓ Private-sector and other infrastructure partners
 - Security and safety directors (harbormasters)
 - Mass transit
 - Transportation (delivery trucks)
 - Electric companies
 - Hospitality industry
 - Entertainment industry (music performers)
 - Dignitary and VIP security details
- ✓ US Coast Guard (USCG)
- ✓ FBI Field Office and Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)
- ✓ DHS state and local fusion centers

Other US Government (USG) entities to consider during coordination include the DoD (Navy) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. These entities may be in the vicinity of waterfront locations and possess additional threat intelligence, intrusion detection capabilities, and maritime security forces.

¹ Waterfront locations, for purposes of this product, are defined as piers (singular and including finger piers), wharfs, harbors, marinas, and yacht clubs that may include shops, restaurants, entertainment or concert venues, recreational activities, museums, residential buildings, and boat parking.

NOTICE: This is a Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT) publication. JCAT is a collaboration by the NCTC, DHS and FBI to improve information sharing among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial governments and private sector partners, in the interest of enhancing public safety. This product is **NOT** in response to a specific threat against the United States. It provides general awareness of, considerations for, and additional resources related to terrorist tactics, techniques and procedures, whether domestic or overseas. Consider the enclosed information within existing laws, regulations, authorities, agreements, policies or procedures. For additional information, contact us at JCAT@NCTC.GOV.

SCOPE: This product provides awareness for public safety personnel and private-sector partners on mitigating and responding to threats against piers and waterfront locations. In addition, this product serves to encourage communication and coordination among stakeholders to enhance security and emergency response protocols.



Counterterrorism Considerations for Waterfront Locations *(continued)*

Considerations for Public Safety Personnel: The following security measures and best practices may assist first responders and other security personnel in identifying and mitigating potential threats:

- Create and maintain a dedicated working group of stakeholders that regularly communicates with the local JTTFs and fusion centers regarding possible suspicious activity.
- Prepare and exercise a response implementation plan in the event of a threat, including procedures for communicating with and evacuating the public.
- Familiarize your agency with the geographic layout, foot traffic patterns, and private security officers, which may vary depending on jurisdiction and type of waterfront.
- Identify critical access points and install lifesaving equipment in difficult to access locations.
- Conduct training exercises using a waterfront location as a scenario.
- Maintain a law enforcement or security personnel presence on public transportation, such as ferryboats or water taxis, for consistent visibility and to act as a deterrent for possible threats.
- Determine whether those present on vessels docked on a pier or in a marina are full-time residents, short-term residents (weekend or vacation stays; residents on transient boats) or daytime visitors.
- Identify and become familiar with cruise ships docked at waterfronts and their potential impact on foot traffic.
- Be aware that security considerations will vary based upon the type of pier (whether more entertainment or commercial-oriented).
- Consider the use of a surveillance system, including automated license plate readers (ALPRs), and regular security officer patrols. ALPRs may be used in high vehicle traffic areas as reference images for suspicious activity.
- Ensure private-sector waterfront operators are familiar with reporting initiatives (SARs).
- Consider installing emergency call boxes along the waterfront venue.
- Consider use of helicopters (private or public) and unmanned aerial systems (where permissible) to provide aerial imagery, a 3D perspective, maintain additional visibility, and generate reference images if suspicious activity is reported.

SPECIAL EVENTS may include fireworks displays, festivals (land and water), concerts, fleet week, and special holiday events. The following may help with establishing protocol during special events:

- Develop communication plans with all levels of government and private-sector partners.
- Consider boat registration or a permitted process to control access to the pier, wharf, or harbor during large special events.
- Monitor temporary or pop-up entertainment venues that may also increase the number of pedestrians.



Counterterrorism Considerations for Waterfront Locations *(continued)*

- Become familiar with entertainment schedules—such as public boat rentals for unique water access, dinner cruises, and free or regular music performances—that may increase pedestrian traffic.
- Engage with hotel industry partners, dignitaries, and VIP clientele on site.

RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS TO AN ATTACK: In the event of an attack, responding personnel should capitalize on partner resources (maritime assets, USCG, EMS, Fire, and other law enforcement municipalities), establish lines of communication, and deploy the necessary resources needed for an effective coordinated response.

- **Determine location of attack and actors involved:** First responders should work with personnel on scene to determine how the attack occurred.
- **Ensure physical resources are readily available to all responding personnel:** All first responder personnel should have access to equipment, including appropriate communication equipment, rescue equipment, and plans to streamline incident response.
- **Evacuation:** Evacuation, medical, and tactical response efforts will vary depending on the waterfront location. Responding agencies should use all available public and private assets, including ferry boats and private boats, to assist in evacuation efforts.
- **Use USCG resources:** Responding units should also contact USCG, which maintains 24/7 command centers, to assist all responding personnel with necessary resources.

RESOURCES

DHS

- **COUNTER-IED TRAINING AND AWARENESS** <https://www.cisa.gov/bombing-prevention-training>
- **STATE AND LOCAL FUSION CENTERS** are focal points for gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing SAR information. <https://www.dhs.gov/fusion-centers>
- **HOMELAND SECURITY INFORMATION NETWORK (HSIN)** is a secure and trusted national web-based portal for information sharing and collaboration among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private-sector partners engaged in homeland security missions. <https://hsin.dhs.gov/>
- **IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING®** program raises public awareness of indicators of terrorism and terrorism-related crime and emphasizes the importance of reporting suspicious activity to proper state and local law enforcement officials. <https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something>
- **NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE** provides law enforcement with a tool to help prevent terrorism and other related criminal activity by establishing a national capacity for gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing SAR information. <https://www.dhs.gov/nsi>

USCG

- **AMERICA'S WATERWAY WATCH** <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Inspections-Compliance-CG-5PC-/Port-and-Facility-Compliance-CG-FAC/Americas-Waterway-Watch/>
- **AREA MARITIME SECURITY COMMITTEE** <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Inspections-Compliance-CG-5PC-/Office-of-Port-Facility-Compliance/Domestic-Ports-Division/amsc/>



Counterterrorism Considerations for Waterfront Locations *(continued)*

- **DISTRICT AND REGIONAL COMMAND CENTERS** <https://www.uscg.mil/contact/>
- **PORTS, WATERWAYS, & COASTAL SECURITY - Office of Counterterrorism & Defense Operations Policy** <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Response-Policy-CG-5R/Office-of-Counterterrorism-Defense-Operations-Policy-CG-ODO/PWCS/>

FBI

- **THE DOMESTIC SECURITY ALLIANCE COUNCIL (DSAC)** is a strategic partnership between the USG and the US private industry that enhances communication and promotes the timely and effective exchange of security and intelligence information between the federal government and the private sector. <https://www.dsac.gov/>
- **e-GUARDIAN** helps meet the challenges of collecting and sharing terrorism-related activities among law enforcement agencies across various jurisdictions. <https://www.fbi.gov/resources/law-enforcement/eguardian>
- **INFRAGARD** is a partnership between the FBI and members of the private sector for the protection of US Critical Infrastructure. <https://www.infragard.org/>
- **LAW ENFORCEMENT ENTERPRISE PORTAL (LEEP)** is a secure, Internet-based information-sharing system for agencies involved in law enforcement, first response, criminal justice, counterterrorism, and intelligence. <https://www.cjis.gov/>

LOCAL RESOURCE EXAMPLES

- **CHICAGO PD MARINE AND HELICOPTER UNIT** <https://home.chicagopolice.org/about/specialized-units/marine-and-helicopter-unit/>
- **PORT OF SAN DIEGO HARBOR POLICE** <https://www.portofsandiego.org/public-safety/harbor-police>
- **SAN FRANCISCO PIER 39 – San Francisco PD Marine Unit** <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/> or call 415-837-7000
- **SANTA MONICA PIER – LA County Sheriff’s Department, Marina Del Rey Station** <https://lasd.org/marina-del-rey/>
- **WASHINGTON, DC METROPOLITAN PD HARBOR PATROL** <https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/harbor-patrol>

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE is responsible for several waterfront parks throughout the country to include:

- **BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS** <https://www.nps.gov/boha/index.htm> and
- **GEORGETOWN WATERFRONT PARK** <https://www.nps.gov/places/georgetown-waterfront-park.htm>

NCTC

- **FIRST RESPONDER’S TOOLBOX: Complex Operating Environment—Special and Other Significant Events** https://www.odni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/jcat/firstresponderstoolbox/First_Responders_Toolbox_-_Special_and_Significant_Events_with_Feedback.pdf
- **INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM GUIDE:** <https://www.dni.gov/nctc/index.html>

REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM (RISS) holds periodic information-sharing meetings and disseminates information to member agencies through bulletins, flyers, or other publications. <https://www.riss.net>



RESOURCES

State and Local Police Department (PD) or Sheriff's Office, including PD maritime units (if one exists)

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Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

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Private-sector partners and other infrastructure

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US Coast Guard (USCG) 24/7 Command Center

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FBI Field Office and Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)

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DHS and local fusion centers

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JOINT COUNTERTERRORISM ASSESSMENT TEAM



JCAT

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SCOPE

This product provides awareness for public safety personnel and private-sector partners to threats against piers and waterfront locations. Additionally, this product serves to encourage communication and coordination among stakeholders to enhance security and emergency response protocols.





WATERFRONTS

KEY FACTORS

- Violent extremists may target waterfront locations due to potential for mass casualty, reduced security personnel, and limited access points for first responders, all of which hinders emergency response.
- Communication and coordination among key stakeholders can enhance security and emergency response protocols.
- Key stakeholders should form regular meetings to share information, including threats, tips, or suspicious activity reports (SARs).
- Special events may include fireworks displays, festivals (on both land and water), concerts, fleet week, and special holiday events, which can create a target-rich environment and require additional security.
- Resources are plentiful to protect waterfront environments, but pre-planning is essential to leveraging those resources.



PRODUCT FEEDBACK FORM

(U) JCAT MISSION: To improve information sharing and enhance public safety. In coordination with the FBI and DHS, collaborate with other members of the IC to research, produce, and disseminate counterterrorism (CT) intelligence products for federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government agencies and the private sector. Advocate for the CT intelligence requirements and needs of these partners throughout the IC.

NAME and ORG:

DISCIPLINE: LE FIRE EMS HEALTH ANALYSIS PRIVATE SECTOR DATE:

PRODUCT TITLE:

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR QUESTIONS.

WHAT TOPICS DO YOU RECOMMEND?

