



INTELALEERT

Week of February 1, 2005

Timely Information and Analysis on Corporate Security, Threats, and Preparedness

Illegal immigration moves east and poses growing threat to national security

The security crackdowns in Arizona are driving thousands of illegal immigrants over the once-quiet New Mexican border with Mexico, creating a new frontier in America's southwest. While the number of Border Patrol agents has been greatly increased along the Arizona's border with Mexico, the agents in New Mexico are faced with a problem far beyond their capacity to provide security. They are currently arresting more than 140 illegal immigrants a night, but as in Arizona, many more are making their way across the border unimpeded. Armed confrontations and high-speed chases have become routine.

Recent figures indicate that over 3 million illegal aliens crossed into the United States from Mexico last year. Of these, only some 25% were caught, including a growing number of OTMs (government lingo for 'other than Mexicans'). According to agents on the ground, 10% of those apprehended are Arabic speaking males from countries like Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen. Those who are not caught, are picked up by their confederates and transported to communities throughout the country.



Line of illegal aliens moving across a privately owned ranch on the Cochise County, Ariz.-Mexican border.
Photo by Donald Barnett, Bisbee, Ariz.

Al-Qaeda has a strong presence in parts of South and Central America and is known to be actively recruiting from the Hispanic population there. Many US companies find hiring illegal aliens attractive because of the low wages they can be paid. But it is becoming increasingly clear that these companies accept a risk that goes beyond 'getting caught'. One of the easiest ways to compromise a company's security is from the inside. Giving undocumented employees access to product, supply and delivery chains, critical infrastructure and process represents both a real danger to the community and the nation, and a significant financial liability to the company.

Reports of laser beams focused on U.S. aircraft rising

More than 30 incidents of laser beams aimed at aircraft were reported during the month of January, according to federal authorities. The battery-powered devices are available to any buyer for as little as \$5. The impact on a pilot on final approach is that he may be suddenly unable to see either his instruments or the runway. The potential for a major accident under these conditions is significant. Although this is not a new phenomenon, the growing popularity of the newer green lasers, which have a range of up to two miles, over the red lasers, which have a much shorter range, is reason for concern.

These instruments are marketed on the internet and sales are not yet restricted to qualified buyers. But they are not toys and pose a real danger to commercial and private air traffic. Under the current situation, the implications for organizations with heavy travel components should not be ignored. GGi strongly recommends protective measures for pilots of private corporate aircraft.

Container security high on list of port vulnerabilities

Port security in the United States is receiving increasing attention as reports of threats to ports and surrounding infrastructure continue to surface. Despite strong security measures for shipping that went into effect in July 2004, ports remain vulnerable to security breaches in many areas. The possibility of using containers to carry weapons, bombs, or even terrorists is high on the list of port security issues. Last year, 48 million cargo containers were shipped between the world's ports. More than 6 million of these entered the US on 23,000 ships, but only about 2 percent are opened and inspected when they arrived at American seaports. Our inability to screen most incoming cargo poses a significant danger to port areas.

Improving security at US ports is a difficult technical and logistical challenge because the systems developed for protecting both port and cargo must operate without interrupting ongoing seaport activities. The demands are severe, but in light of the dangers, a dedicated approach to these issues is critical to our harbors and the population centers that surround them. Exciting new technologies for scanning containers, protecting access to ports, and intercepting dangerous cargo and activity are continuously being tested and introduced. The continuing threat to US ports and harbors makes them a key priority in our war against terrorism.

Short items of interest

- ♦ The University of Tennessee's Graduate School of Medicine is looking for doctors to specialize in homeland security. The curriculum will be open to physicians who have finished residency training in family medicine or general medicine. Physician training includes a diverse two-year homeland security curriculum, including lectures on various homeland security issues such as bioterrorism and nuclear disasters.
- ♦ The purchase of airline pilot's uniforms on the internet is worrying homeland security officials. It is feared that such sales could lead to breaches of security at the nation's airports. A Chicago television reporter tested the system by purchasing a pilot's uniform online without any identification required. The uniform arrived at his door within 48 hours. The illegal sale of police uniforms, badges, decals, and other equipment has been an ongoing security concern for several years.



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