(U//FOUO) First Responders Potentially Vulnerable To Luring

(U//FOUO) Terrorists overseas have demonstrated interest in creating disturbances, sending false alarms, or conducting preliminary attacks—intended to lure authorities to a particular location or area—for the purpose of conducting an attack, including against arriving law enforcement, fire service, or emergency medical services personnel. When employed, the initial incident or attack may be small, appear to have failed, or be an obvious hoax.

(U//FOUO) Luring is not a new phenomenon, and there are criminal examples of the tactic having been used in the Homeland; however, there is also terrorism precedent. In 2012, a US-based violent extremist expressed interest in making false 911 calls for the purpose of targeting first responders arriving at the scene of a fake event. The incidents highlighted below originated or occurred overseas, and there is no indication of a specific terrorist plot against first responders in the US; however, so far in 2016, terrorists continue to express a desire to use this tactic.

- (U//FOUO) A violent extremist planned to target law enforcement personnel by renting homes and rigging them with explosives. Attackers would then place calls for service to the residence and remotely detonate explosives against responding personnel.
- (U//FOUO) In yet another example, an al-Qa’ida affiliate was allegedly planning an operation similar to the December 2009 “false surrender” insider attack against US Government employees that killed seven officers.
- (U//FOUO) Finally, terrorists allegedly planned to mount a diversionary initial attack for the express purpose of carrying out an attack against a high-value target.

(U) DEFINITIONS: For the purposes of this product:

- (U) LURING is creating a disturbance, false alarm, or preliminary attack—intended to draw first responders to a particular location or area—for the purpose of conducting a direct attack against arriving personnel.
- (U) DIVERSION draws security forces and first responders away from the intended primary target of an attack and may be used as part of a complex or multipronged attack. Diversion delays the response, and depletes first responder resources.
- (U) SWATTING is reporting false emergencies using technology that makes calls difficult to trace, which can lead dispatchers to deploy substantial resources in response to nonexistent emergencies.

(U//FOUO) Luring exploits a key dynamic, specifically the requirement for police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel to quickly respond to a call for service whenever and wherever required. Responding personnel should remain aware of potential threats.

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luring and secondary attacks during calls for service or other encounters with the public. Recognizing suspicious activities, items, or behaviors during the course of regular duties and partnering while on patrol or at a static post are general personnel safety considerations; other considerations include:

(U) Training:
• (U//FOUO) Make training as realistic as possible by wearing uniforms, appropriate protective gear, and duty weapons.
• (U//FOUO) Incorporate luring and secondary attack scenarios into planning and training.
• (U//FOUO) Conduct mandatory in-service or specialized training in alternate locations, including classrooms, gymnasiums, vacant schools, shooting ranges, and transit stations.
• (U//FOUO) Practice effective operational security by making training schedules confidential.

(U) Arrival at the Scene:
• (U//FOUO) Perform extensive scene size-up and relay information to all responding agencies and jurisdictions.
• (U//FOUO) Establish security perimeter around the scene early in the response.
• (U//FOUO) Be alert to suspicious individuals, vehicles, or items at or near the incident scene.
• (U//FOUO) Perform security sweeps for secondary devices.
• (U//FOUO) Identify staging and treatment areas free of obstructions or items—trash cans, Dumpsters, flower pots, or vegetation—that might conceal secondary IEDs.

(U) Other Law Enforcement Activities:
• (U//FOUO) Closely follow departmental policies and procedures when conducting surveillance or meeting informants in the field, including not meeting alone, controlling the location, and having cover units in high-risk locations.
• (U//FOUO) Carefully screen informants or the general public entering police facilities, regardless of the officer’s relationship with the informant.

(U//FOUO) Next Generation 911: 911 communication centers across the US are rolling out new technology termed Next Generation 911 (NG911), which allows people to text their emergency and location to public safety dispatchers. NG911 is described as a true solution; however, pranks and false alarms are inevitable, and there are valid arguments about whether public safety communication centers could be compromised by hackers, allowing location data to fall into the wrong hands.

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(U) Additional Considerations:

- (U//FOUO) In contrast to 911 calls for service, chance encounters during patrols can be used by violent extremists to ambush law enforcement, including perceived “low risk” encounters, such as broken down vehicles or stranded motorists.

- (U//FOUO) Emergency operations centers and dispatchers may be best positioned to identify luring, diversionary, or swatting tactics early because they have a collective operational picture of calls for service and anticipated response times throughout their respective jurisdictions and neighboring areas of responsibility.

- (U//FOUO) Dispatchers should highlight and record suspicious calls for service particularly repeat calls from specific locations, including swatting.

- (U//FOUO) Incidents of luring, diversion, swatting and other suspicious activities potentially related to terrorism should be reported to your local FBI Field Office or Joint Terrorism Task Force.

(U) Additional Resources: The following products provide additional information on topics related to luring and can be found on the JCAT Special Interest Group (SIG) on FBI’s Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (https://www.cjis.gov), and the JCAT tab on the Emergency Services (ES) and Intelligence COIs on the DHS Homeland Security Information Network (https://hsin.dhs.gov):

- (U//FOUO) Diversion as a Terrorist Tactic (Fire Line; 25 February 2013)
- (U//FOUO) Terrorist Use of Secondary Improvised Explosive Devices to Target First Responders (Fire Line; 21 September 2012)
- (U//FOUO) Terrorist Use of Secondary Explosive Devices to Target First Responders and Onlookers (Roll Call Release; 4 May 2010)
- (U//FOUO) Swatting: Diversion of Emergency Response Personnel (Roll Call Release; 23 June 2009)