



# AIR CARGO SECURITY POLICY NEWSLETTER

Homeland Security & Terrorism Updates

Feb 4, 2011

This issue of the newsletter reports on several developments of interest to the international homeland security community.

The items covered in the newsletter are

- New U.S. National Terrorism Advisory System [NTAS] to more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats to the American public ( replacing the U.S. "National Threat Advisory " )
- State of America's Homeland Security Address given by the Secretary of Homeland Security at George Washington University
- U.S. National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC), the interactive Counterterrorism Calendar for 2011 and 2009 Report on Terrorism
- RAND Corporation testimony entitles "*The al Qaeda inspired Terrorist Threat – An appreciation of the current situation*" before the Canadian Senate on the al Queda inspired terrorist threat
- A Fox News report on Jihadists promoting theft to fund the "war on the West"



Comments in the RAND Corporation report on the current situation with Al Qaeda included the following”

*“Ultimately, the effects of terrorism are primarily psychological. Perceptions count more than statistics.....”*

*“The greatest long-term threat to al Qaeda is irrelevance...”, and*

*“Nonetheless, al Qaeda will continue to be a tenacious and resilient foe. Its campaign, now in its third decade, will almost certainly go on. Successfully countering it must be viewed as a long-term effort, a very long-term effort—not a finite war with a clear beginning and end, or a permanent war without end, but not the peace we would all prefer”.*

## U.S. National Terrorism Advisory System

By the end of April, terror threats to the United States will no longer be described in shades of green, blue, yellow, orange and red. The National Terrorism Advisory System [NTAS] will notify specific audiences about specific threats. This could be in the form of a one-page threat description sent to law enforcement officials describing the threat, what law enforcement needs to do about it, and what the federal government is doing.

The five-tiered color-coded terror warning system, was created after the terrorist attacks of 9/11; the use of colors emerged from a desire to clarify the nonspecific threat information that intelligence officials were receiving after the 2001 attacks

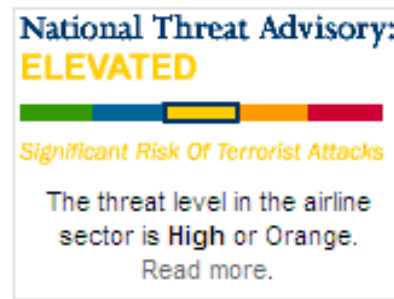


Figure 1 - The current “Homeland Security Advisory System Homeland Security Advisory System” which will be phased out

The full statement by DHS can be found at: [http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr\\_1296158119383.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr_1296158119383.shtm)

Included in the DHS statement are the following comments:

*“Security is a shared responsibility, and we must work together to keep our nation safe from threats,” said Secretary Napolitano.*

*“This new system is built on a clear and simple premise: when a credible threat develops that could impact the public, we will tell you and provide whatever information we can so that you know how to keep yourselves, your families and your communities safe.”*

*“HSAS [Homeland Security Advisory System] was first introduced on March 11, 2002. In July 2009, Secretary Napolitano formed a bipartisan task force of security experts, state and local elected and law enforcement officials, and other key stakeholders—co-chaired by Fran Townsend, former Assistant to President George W. Bush for Homeland Security, and Judge William Webster, former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and*



Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)—to assess the effectiveness of HSAS. The results of this assessment formed the basis of the National Terrorism Advisory System”.

“Under the new system, DHS will coordinate with other federal entities to issue formal, detailed alerts when the federal government receives information about a specific or credible terrorist threat. These alerts will include a clear statement that there is an “imminent threat” or “elevated threat.” The alerts also will provide a concise summary of the potential threat, as well as social media channels including Facebook “Additionally, NTAS will have a “sunset provision,” meaning that individual threat alerts will be issued with a specified end date. Alerts

and via Twitter @NTASAlert’s information about actions being taken to ensure public safety, and recommended steps that individuals and communities, businesses and governments can take”.

“The National Terrorism Advisory System alerts will be based on the nature of the threat: in some cases, alerts will be sent directly to law enforcement or affected areas of the private sector, while in others, alerts will be issued more broadly to the American people through both official and media channels—including a designated DHS webpage ([www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts)) may be extended if new information becomes available or if the threat evolves significantly”.

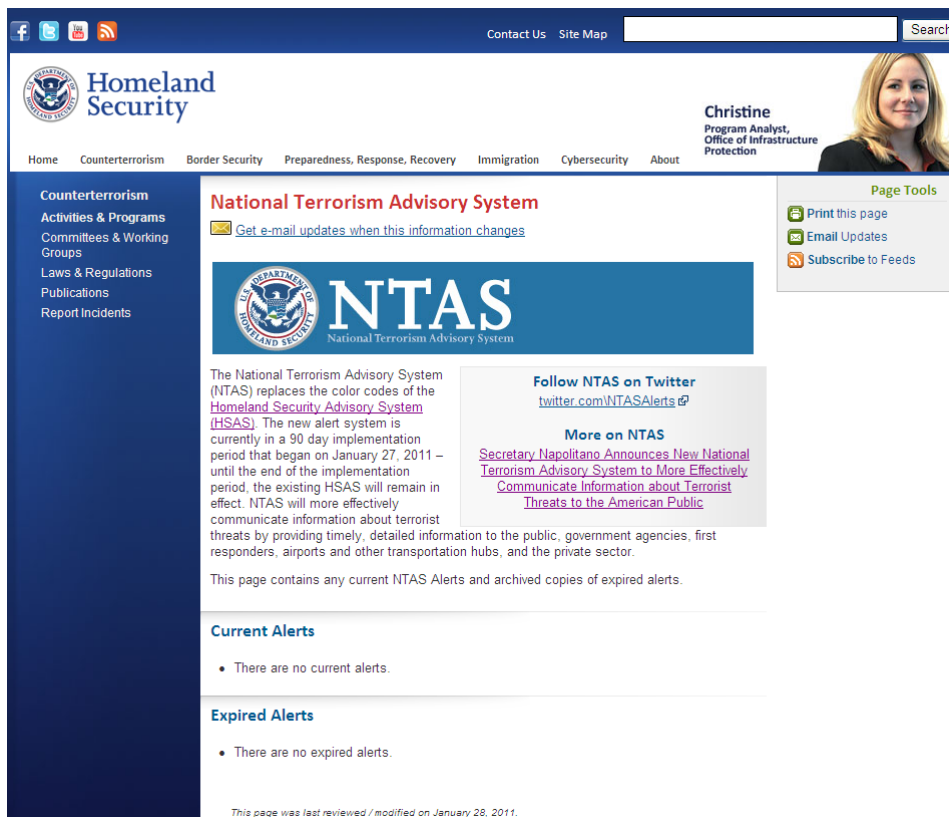


Figure 2 – NTAS Web Site – <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/ntas.shtm>



## State of America's Homeland Security Address

In her remarks, Secretary Napolitano launched the National Terrorism Advisory System described above, and mentioned the workforce of the Department -

*At the Department of Homeland Security over the last two years, we've seen some extraordinary progress and hard work pay off. But that could not have happened without the dedicated, professional men and women of this great Department, like the nearly 50,000 Transportation Security Officers who work tirelessly, and often thanklessly, to deter and prevent terrorist attacks on passenger planes; the more than 20,000 Border Patrol agents who put their lives on the line to protect our borders; the more than 10,000 officers and investigators who enforce our immigration laws, and bring to justice those who seek to traffic drugs, arms and people; the more than 40,000 men and women who serve in the United States Coast Guard protecting our maritime borders; or the thousands of scientists and engineers working on the next generation of security technology; the security guards at government buildings; the trainers of our law enforcement professionals; or the intelligence analysts working around the clock to stay ahead of emerging threats.*

Secretary Napolitano explained the approaches of DHS to "hometown security" and including the public in the homeland security:

*But the homeland security enterprise extends far beyond DHS and the federal government. As I said, it requires not just a "whole of government," but a "whole of nation" approach. In some respects, local law enforcement, community groups, citizens, and the private*

*sector play as much of a role in homeland security as the federal government. That is why I like to say that "homeland security starts with hometown security."*

*"And so, every day at DHS, we are doing everything we can to get more information, more tools, and more resources out of Washington, DC, and into the hands of the men and women on the front lines.*

*That is why we launched the national "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign last year to raise awareness of potential terrorist tactics, and emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement. You've no doubt heard this campaign if you've ridden on Metro or Amtrak. And we have continued to expand this effort across the country in partnership with professional and collegiate sports, shopping centers – like the Mall of America – and retailers – like Wal-Mart".*

On the counterterrorism and aviation security fronts Secretary Napolitano stated that:

*"We have made historic strides in aviation security - accelerating the deployment of new security equipment at our domestic airports, and launching an international initiative that, in October of last year, produced a first-of-its-kind global agreement by 190 nations to increase aviation security standards worldwide. During the coming year, we will continue, and hopefully complete, negotiations with the European Union on strengthening information sharing in the aviation environment, and extend such information sharing to other continents as well*

*We will build on these efforts by leading an international effort to strengthen the security of*



*borders. This includes an initiative called Project Global Shield that we have launched with the World Customs Organization, or WCO, and 60 other countries to prevent the theft or diversion of precursor chemicals that can be used by terrorists to make improvised explosive devices. It also includes a new initiative with the International Civil Aviation Organization, the WCO, and other international partners, to identify and protect the most critical elements of our supply chain from attack or disruption, including key transportation hubs. Together with other Federal departments and agencies, we're seeking to bolster the resiliency of the global supply chain so that if a terrorist attack or natural disaster does occur, the supply chain can recover quickly, and any disruption can be minimized".*

In discussing Cybersecurity, the Secretary mentioned that:

*"Over the past two years, we've increased our capacity to fight cyber crimes and cyber terrorism, opening a new 24/7 watch and warning center, and testing our country's first national-level cyber incident response plan, while increasing our stable of cyber experts by some 500 percent."*

The full remarks of this statement by Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano can be viewed on the DHS web site at:

[http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/speeches/sp\\_1296152572413.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/speeches/sp_1296152572413.shtm)

## **U.S. National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC)**

The following text is taken from the "what we do" introduction to the NCTC at <http://www.nctc.gov/>

*"NCTC serves as the primary organization in the United States Government for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism possessed or acquired by the United States Government (except purely domestic terrorism); serves as the central and shared knowledge bank on terrorism information; provides all-source intelligence support to government-wide counterterrorism activities; establishes the information technology (IT) systems and architectures within the NCTC and between the NCTC and other agencies that enable access to, as well as integration, dissemination, and use of, terrorism information.*

*NCTC serves as the principal advisor to the DNI on intelligence operations and analysis relating to counterterrorism, advising the DNI on how well US intelligence activities, programs, and budget proposals for counterterrorism conform to priorities established by the President.*

*Unique among US agencies, NCTC also serves as the primary organization for strategic operational planning for counterterrorism. Operating under the policy direction of the President of the United States, the National Security Council, and the Homeland Security Council, NCTC provides a full-time interagency forum and process to plan, integrate, assign lead operational roles and responsibilities, and measure the effectiveness of strategic operational counterterrorism activities of the US Government, applying all instruments of national power to the counterterrorism mission".*





NCTC's Counterterrorism Calendar provides information on known terrorist groups, individual terrorists, and technical information on topics such as biological and chemical threats.



Figure 3 - NCTC's 2011 Counterterrorism Calendar at <http://www.nctc.gov/site/index.html>

The NCTC also provides an annual report and statistical information to assist academics, policy makers and the public in understanding terrorism data.

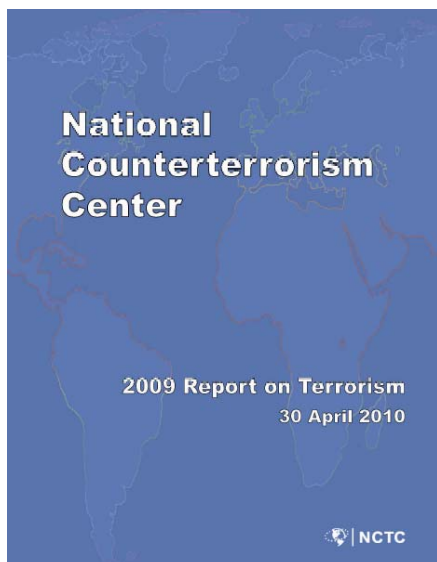


Figure 4 - NCTC's 2009 Report on Terrorism at [http://www.nctc.gov/witsbanner/docs/2009\\_report\\_on\\_terrorism.pdf](http://www.nctc.gov/witsbanner/docs/2009_report_on_terrorism.pdf)

The statistical information included in this report is drawn from the data NCTC maintains on the [www.nctc.gov](http://www.nctc.gov) website

The following observations appear in the 2009 report:

*“Approximately 11,000 terrorist attacks occurred in 83 countries during 2009, resulting in over 58,000 victims, including nearly 15,000 fatalities. Attacks decreased by about six percent in 2009 and deaths by about 5 percent. This marks the second consecutive year for declines of both attacks and fatalities. Unlike the preceding four years where the Near East witnessed the greatest number of attacks, the largest number of reported terrorist attacks in 2009 occurred in South Asia, which also had, for the second consecutive year, the greatest number of fatalities. Together, South Asia and the Near East were the locations for almost two-thirds of the 234 high-casualty attacks (those that killed 10 or more people) in 2009.*

- *Of the 10,999 reported attacks, about 4,850, or 44 percent, occurred in South Asia. These attacks accounted for approximately 6,270 fatalities, or 42 percent of the worldwide total in 2009. Attacks in Afghanistan nearly doubled from 2008 and increased in Pakistan for the third consecutive year.*
- *Another 30 percent of the attacks occurred in the Near East with attacks in Iraq accounting for three-fourths of these incidents. Compared with 2008, attacks in Iraq declined by nearly one-quarter, continuing an ongoing decline since August of 2007. Since 2005, Iraq continues to be the country with the most attacks and fatalities due to terrorism.*
- *Almost 700 of the 850 reported attacks in Africa were associated with turmoil in the*



*Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Compared with 2008, attacks in Africa rose by 140 (19 percent) and fatalities increased by over 250 (8 percent).*

- *The number of reported attacks in 2009 increased in the Western Hemisphere by about 27 percent, mostly attributable to increases in Colombia; in East Asia and the Pacific the number of reported attacks declined by 16 percent, mostly attributable to declines in the Philippines.*
- *Islamic extremists conducted several attacks in the United States, including two that resulted in fatalities. These attacks represent the most significant activity by such extremists in the United States since 2001”.*

#### **RAND Corporation testimony before the Canadian Senate on the Al Qaeda inspired terrorist threat.**

In the introduction to testimony presented before the Canadian Senate Special Committee on Anti-terrorism on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010, RAND Corporation researcher Brian Michael Jenkins provided the following background on Al Qaeda

*“Al Qaeda has become many things and therefore must be assessed from different angles. It is the heir to a long tradition of jihad, the banner carrier and symbol of a radical expression of faith.*

*It is the author of an ideology and strategy of war, the center of a global network of like-minded fanatics, the instigator of a global terrorist campaign, and an active communications system augmented by an online army.*

*Al Qaeda is a brand name that still has value, although it has been tarnished by the jihadists’ violent excesses. It is a source of inspiration and a contributor to ongoing insurgencies in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Algeria, and elsewhere, an ally of other extremist groups, a conveyer of societal and individual discontents, a magnet for the most violent jihadists, and a source of legitimacy for their violence. Each of these dimensions of al Qaeda and individual conflicts has its own trajectory and therefore must be assessed separately.*

*And what can be counted? Ultimately, the effects of terrorism are primarily psychological. Perceptions count more than statistics”.*

After providing an analysis of Al Qaeda in 2001 and in 2010 and providing a tongue in cheek “Briefing to Bin Ladin” Brian Jenkins mentions on the topic of Homegrown Terrorism that:

*“Al Qaeda’s recruiting was always global, but it has become more difficult to get its acolytes to training sites in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Recognizing this reality, the organization now places increased emphasis on do-it-yourself terrorism, urging local would-be warriors to do whatever they can, wherever they are.*

*Al Qaeda’s communicators know that homegrown attacks provoke greater alarm than engagements on distant battlefronts. They can count on the news media, partisan politics, and public anxiety to exaggerate the threat. People in the West have unrealistically come to expect 100 percent security, viewing any terrorist attempt as a failure on the part of those charged with their protection.*



*Attacks by homegrown terrorists arouse suspicion of local Muslim communities. They prompt rhetoric and reactions that can be portrayed as anti-Muslim, thereby fostering resentment and facilitating al Qaeda recruiting.*

*Even foiled attempts and deliberate hoaxes have utility. They require little investment, which al Qaeda now brags about, but they bring high returns. High body counts remain a desirable terrorist goal, but creating terror will suffice. This change in al Qaeda's rhetoric—embracing useful failure—represents a fundamental shift, a lowering of the bar.*

*Most of the terrorist plots uncovered in the United States appear to be one-off responses. They indicate veins of resentment, pools of radicals, handfuls of terrorists, but they do not provide evidence of extensive terrorist undergrounds or armies of sleepers.*

*We have developed a fair understanding of the radicalization process, but we cannot predict who will become a terrorist. No doubt, some start down the path but drop out before crossing the line into terrorist activity. We know only about those who have carried out attacks, plotted to carry out attacks, attempted to join terrorist groups abroad, or provided terrorists with material assistance”.*

The report concludes with the following statement:

*“At issue here are intentions, not competence. The would-be jihadists who have been identified demonstrated earnest intent. Their ideological commitment was manifest. They were ready to be terrorists.*

*Al Qaeda promises masculine glory and a sensual afterlife to frustrated young men. But martyrdom is not a political program, and re-*

*establishment of a caliphate offers little to those seeking political freedom, equality under the law, employment, education, a better life on earth for themselves and their children, which may be why most of al Qaeda's intended audience has ignored its summons.*

*The greatest long-term threat to al Qaeda is irrelevance.*

*Nonetheless, al Qaeda will continue to be a tenacious and resilient foe. Its campaign, now in its third decade, will almost certainly go on. Successfully countering it must be viewed as a long-term effort, a very long-term effort—not a finite war with a clear beginning and end, or a permanent war without end, but not the peace we would all prefer”.*

The full RAND Corporation testimony entitled – “The al Qaeda inspired Terrorist Threat – An appreciation of the current situation” can be viewed at:

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/2010/RAND\\_CT353.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/2010/RAND_CT353.pdf)

### **Jihadists Promote Theft to Fund War on West**

A report published by Catherine Herridge on January 17, 2011 on Foxnews.com concluded that:

*“Followers of one of the fastest-growing radical terror groups are being told to steal, embezzle and seize property – especially from Americans – in order to finance their jihad.*

*The new edition of Inspire magazine -- launched by the group behind the air cargo printer bombs in October, the underwear bomb plot in December 2009 and the most recent pre-*





*Christmas alert -- is now telling followers that such crimes are justifiable, especially if the U.S. government and U.S. citizens are targets.*

*In the fourth edition of the magazine, launched by Al Qaeda in Yemen in July, American-born radical cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki encourages his disciples to fund more attacks through crime. The Middle East Media Research Institute provided Fox News with its copy of the magazine.*

*In an attempt to deal with the cash-shortage jihadist groups are facing, Al-Awlaki gives religious justification to any actions used by jihadists to obtain money. In the article, titled 'The Ruling on Dispossession of the Disbelievers' Wealth in Dar Al-Harb,' he deals with the issue by ruling that Western countries are considered Dar Al-Harb, i.e. the territory of war, countries on which the rules of war apply," says an analysis from media research group.*

*Since this is the case, Al-Awlaki says Jihadists living in the West are not bound by any laws or contracts that prohibit them to harm their countries of residence."*

