

# Homeland Security Committee

---

John S. Hollywood, Ph.D., HPM  
Chair, GS Homeland Security Committee

20 Apr 2023



★ MOWW ★

---

MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE WORLD WARS



# Agenda

- About the Homeland Security Committee
- Examples of Chapter Initiatives
- SITREP on the Threat of Mass Attacks and Political Violence
- Discussion



# About “Homeland Security”

- Keeps Americans secure within the boundaries of the United States
- Focuses on internal security and safety of persons, places and things
- Carried out by civilian private and governmental organizations
- Receives intelligence from the bottom up and top down



# About the Homeland Security Committee

- Develops guidelines for Order, region, department, and chapter-level Homeland Security Programs
- Oversees the Chapter Homeland Security Awards (MOWW Policy Manual Appendix N)
- Monitors activities regarding Homeland Security, including open-source threat information, studies, analyses, and guidelines focused on protecting our citizens, key infrastructure, health and safety and ability to react and recover in emergencies
- Reports findings to the membership and the national leadership, including *Officer Review* articles and suggested policy positions
- Coordinates with Law and Order and National Security Committees



# Sample Chapter Goals

- Recognize first responders
- Recognize federal, state and local homeland security personnel
- Support / conduct training and education events to improve community preparedness
- Participate in community preparedness and disaster response activities
- Publish articles on homeland security issues



# Recent Examples

- **Awards:** MOWW awards and customized awards
- **Training & education:** have seen classes on counterterrorism, active shooter response, emergency management and the Incident Command System
  - For and by the Chapter, to YLCs, and by Companions in other venues
- **Community participation:** in parades, for community volunteer efforts, on local governance boards, for federal agencies
- **“Publish”:** in the *Officer Review*, in chapter newsletters (now with automated article extraction), and on radio, television, and podcasts



# Sample Chapter Goals

- Recognize first responders
- Recognize federal, state and local homeland security personnel
- Support training and education events to improve community preparedness
- Participate in community preparedness and disaster response activities
- Publish articles on homeland security issues
- Teach classes on homeland security



# Assessment of the Current Situation - Terrorism & Other Mass Attacks

## Good

## Bad

## Ugly

- Continue to see **no sign of 9/11-scale catastrophic plots**
- **Al Qaeda and Daesh** (or ISIS/ISIL) are shadows of their former selves
- Attack rates are **very low** - on order of a **few per hundred million** per year
- **Preventing most attacks** in advance, **mostly through tips from the public**
- **Tackling shooters** works well

- **Ongoing threat** from mass shootings - **number of incidents continues to rise**
- Threat of vehicle attacks – **hard to detect in advance**

- **Four** different loose causes **may** generate attacks - **left, right, Al Qaeda / Daesh**, and, most of all, **personal grievance** (“mad at world / what have you got?”)
- High concerns about **online communities validating would-be attackers**
- **Volume of death threats is jamming the system**
- Ongoing political & social conflicts **distracting attention from the quadruple threat** and are **unlikely to inspire cooperation**
- Extremists **might** use protests & riots to stage mass attacks - Jan. 6 could have been catastrophic





# Prevention Starts With You: Recognize the Warning Signs



DHS maintains a directory on where and how to report:  
<https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something/how-to-report-suspicious-activity>

## Examples of *motivation* are

- **claims that they are inspired by past attacks**
- **claims that they will fulfill an extremist cause** (especially if they were kicked out of a group for being too violent)
- claims that **someone is (or others are) so harmful or threatening that they have *no choice* but to attack**

## Examples of *preparation* are

- **written plans** for an attack
- **attempts to recruit others**
- **attempts to learn how to kill many people** (in person or online)
- **coordination with known violent extremists**
- **seeking arsenals of weapons & ammunition** (without a benign reason, such as hunting)
- **travel** for training or to the target
- **site probing or breaching**

Source: *Mass Attacks Defense Toolkit*, Hollywood et al., 2022

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TLA1613-1/toolkit/prevent/initial-detection/warning-signs.html>



# If In an Attack: Run, Hide, and Fight

Run	Hide	Fight
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● If you can <b>without running into the shooter</b>, evacuate to the nearest safety point - <b>may be indoors (safe zones, like classrooms)</b></li><li>● Leave belongings behind</li><li>● Help others evacuate</li><li>● <b>Call 911 when safe</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Must be <b>out of view</b></li><li>● Must <b>lock or barricade door from shooter</b></li><li>● In addition, can hide behind large objects</li><li>● <b>Do not try to hide under a table or desk, or just lie on the floor</b></li><li>● Remain quiet, to include <b>silencing cell phones</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>If you are in range of the shooter you are in “Fight”</b></li><li>● Groups should <b>tackle the shooter from multiple directions</b></li><li>● Do not run straight at a shooter - <b>run at an angle</b></li><li>● Use <b>full force to incapacitate</b> - “commit to your actions”</li></ul>

Sources: Ready Houston, *Mass Attacks Defense Toolkit*



# Political Violence: How Bad Could it Get?

**Good news:** real warfare very unlikely - no widespread desires to kill other Americans amplified over generations (unlike before the US Civil War); strong and reliable loyalty of military



C. Figueroa, "Tear Gas outside United States Capitol", Jan. 6, 2021,, *Wikimedia Commons* image

**Bad news is *it happened here*:** mass unrest has been all over the world and has now come to the US; growing comparisons to Northern Ireland's Troubles and past US politically violent periods like the late 1960s



# Assessment of the Current Situation - Political Violence

Good	Bad	Ugly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Much less violence</b> than might be expected given divisions</li><li>• Most “violence” to date has been <b>virtual, rhetorical, and legal</b>, not physical</li><li>• 2020-21 spike in civil violence <b>mostly over</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Even “moderate” violence too much</li><li>• <b>Extremists have hijacked protests for violence</b></li><li>• <b>Elections, COVID-19, and a range of social conflicts remain potential flashpoints</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Far too many threats and validations of violence, filling the system with noise – and could spill over</b></li><li>• <b>Personal estimate: 70%+ of what partisans think about the other side is inaccurate</b> - most really aren’t that extreme or authoritarian</li><li>• <b>Financial &amp; political incentives</b> for ever more social media &amp; media fear and loathing - responses limited</li></ul>



# Final Thoughts

- Homeland security is of vital concern to the US
  - Not just terrorism – disaster preparedness, emergency management, and resilience are also of paramount importance
- Companions can play key roles both helping their communities protect themselves and in improving political discourse about it
  - For mass attacks & political violence: educating about what and how to report tips would be key, as well as what to do in an attack
- Remember to submit your homeland security program for national and regional awards
  - Credit individual Companions' efforts



***“For the Good of the Order”***