

Complex Operating Environment – Ferry Systems

Foreign terrorist organizations have expressed interest in targeting ferry systems and other waterfront locations. Previous attack plots targeting ferry boats included tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), such as the bombing of ferry passenger boats. First responders should consider these TTPs when coordinating with local, state, federal, and private-sector partners.

PLANNING AND COORDINATION EFFORTS ENHANCE ATTACK PREVENTION:

Stakeholder efforts toward preventing terrorist attacks on ferry systems should include identifying key partners, assessing readiness for coordinated response, and establishing procedures to ensure public safety. Stakeholders may consider quarterly meetings to share information, threats, or tips.

STAKEHOLDERS MAY INCLUDE:

- State and Local Law Enforcement (LE)
- Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Private-sector partners; Ferry boat operators/owners
- Port Security
- Transportation (delivery vehicles)
- Utility companies
- Retail and hospitality industry
- Entertainment industry
- US Coast Guard (USCG)
- FBI Field Office and Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)
- DHS
- State and local fusion centers
- Other waterfront infrastructure owners and operators



CONSIDERATIONS:

The following security measures may assist in mitigating threats to first responders and public safety personnel:

Public Safety Personnel

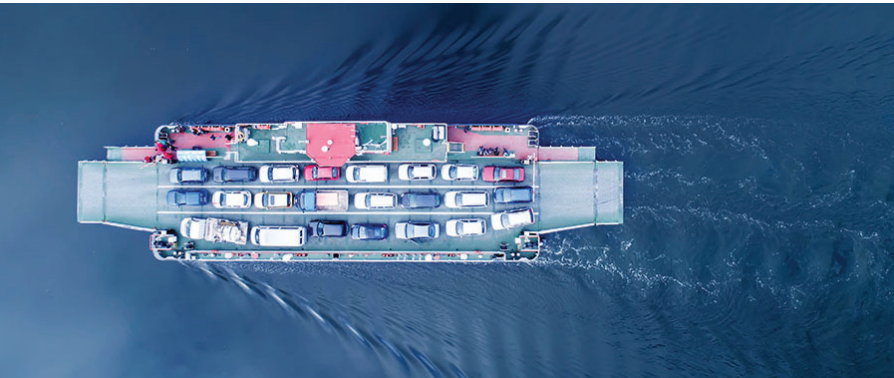
- Maintain ferry system familiarization across disciplines, ensuring first responders are familiar with maritime terminology and know what to expect when responding to an emergency.
- Develop a working group to regularly communicate with local JTTF and fusion centers.
- Plan and exercise coordinated responses to ferry system emergencies. Consider sharing blueprints, schematics, and reference guides with first responders.
- Identify locations of life-saving equipment aboard ferry boats and at waterfront locations in difficult-to-access areas. Keep personal floatation devices in any vehicle that might respond to a water emergency.
- Conduct tabletop and full-scale training exercises that include all stakeholders.
- Ensure private retail and entertainment operators are familiar with suspicious activity reporting.
- Consider strategic installation of emergency call boxes along the waterfront venue.
- Consider use of unmanned aircraft systems (where permissible) to provide aerial imagery and crowd estimates for special event awareness.

Private-Sector Partners

- Maintain awareness of law enforcement or security personnel presence and resources for ferry boats or water taxis.
- Recognize peak hours and crowd management needs at waterfront locations; consider adjustments to staffing and security posture as needed.

SCOPE: This product provides situational awareness to first responders and private-sector stakeholders of terrorist threats to ferries and related infrastructure and highlights preventative measures, considerations, and resources for public safety, preparedness, and response. This product is not a response to a specific threat against the United States. It provides general awareness of, considerations for, and additional resources related to international terrorism threats and/or threats resulting from general terrorist tactics, techniques, and procedures.

- Be aware that security considerations will vary based upon the type of pier (entertainment vs. commercial-oriented).
- Consider a range of capabilities and technologies to manage a dynamic and evolving threat environment. For example, mobile security cameras stationed in crowded locations and equipment, such as metal detectors, that are capable of detecting threats concealed on passengers and property can help enhance security measures.



NOTICE: This is a Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT) product. JCAT is a collaboration with NCTC, DHS, FBI, and state, local, tribal, and territorial government personnel to improve information sharing and enhance public safety. The product promotes coordination among intergovernmental authorities and the private sector in identifying, preventing, and responding to terrorist activities. Consider the enclosed information within the context of existing laws, regulations, authorities, agreements, policies or procedures. For additional information contact us at JCAT@ODNI.GOV. **This document is best printed in 11 X 17.**

RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS TO A FERRY-BASED ATTACK:

In the event of an attack, responding personnel should consider available partner resources (maritime assets, USCG, EMS, fire, emergency services, other law enforcement municipalities, and state and local agencies), quickly establish lines of communication, and consider use of a command post to manage unified response.

- **Determine location of attack and actors involved:** First responders, dispatchers, and private-sector partners should work to determine if the attack occurred on a vessel offshore, at a waterfront location, or both. Seek cover and concealment upon response, if feasible.
- **Ensure resources are readily available to all responding personnel:** First responders should have access to equipment and established communication channels and prepare for evolving and complex emergencies that may involve an active shooter, suspicious package, fire rescue operation, hostage situation, or mass casualty event.
- **Evacuation:** Responding agencies should consider use of all available public and private assets, including ferry boats, to assist with rescue and evacuation. Consider cargo, such as passenger vehicles, that could affect evacuation routes.
- **Leverage USCG resources:** Responding units should also contact the USCG, which maintains 24/7 command centers to assist all responding personnel with necessary resources. Responding units can hail the USCG on channel 13/16.
- **Consider the need for additional resources:** If resources from surrounding jurisdictions are needed to aid in the response, early notice will enhance resource delivery.
- **Understand the footprint of a ferry boat:** When possible, consider reviewing blueprints for ferry boats operating within your jurisdiction. Stairs may be narrow and affect entrance and egress of first responders and emergency equipment. Voids within the vessel might conceal attackers or victims seeking shelter.
- **Considerations for aluminum hulls:** Care should be used when responding to a vessel in distress; aluminum hulls might be damaged during response and create a secondary emergency.

SPECIAL EVENTS may include boat club activities, fireworks, and concerts. The following may help with establishing protocol during special events:

- Identify points of contact for event leaders to estimate scope and resourcing needs.
- Monitor impromptu pop-up events that may affect waterfront location or ferry boat operation.



RESOURCES

- **FUSION CENTERS**
<https://www.dhs.gov/fusion-centers>
- **SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING (SAR) MARITIME TRAINING**
<https://courses.dhs.gov/courses/course/nsi-training-maritime>
- **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>
- **DISTRICT AND REGIONAL COMMAND CENTERS** <https://www.uscg.mil/contact>
- **PORTS, WATERWAYS, & COASTAL SECURITY–Office of Counterterrorism & Defense Operations Policy (CG-ODO)**
<https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Response-Policy-CG-5R/Office-of-Counterterrorism-Defense-Operations-Policy-CG-ODO/PWCS>



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PRODUCT FEEDBACK

Please use the link below to complete a short survey. Your feedback will help JCAT develop counterterrorism products that support the public safety and private sector community.

<https://www.JCAT-url.com>

For further information, please email JCAT
jcat@odni.gov



(U) The Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT) is a collaboration by NCTC, DHS, FBI, state, local, tribal, and territorial government personnel to improve information sharing and enhance public safety. The First Responder's Toolbox is an ad hoc, unclassified reference aid intended to promote counterterrorism coordination among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government authorities and partnerships with private sector officials in deterring, preventing, disrupting, and responding to terrorist attacks.