TERRORISM IMAGERY RECOGNITION

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Terrorism Imagery Recognition

Executive Summary

Group logos, flags, and other extremist imagery are prevalent throughout most terrorist and extremist groups. Imagery provides a means of evoking existing emotional and historical memories in addition to communicating ideas to potential recruits. Logos and symbols are often used as visual representation of groups and/or their ideology. Print, internet propaganda, tattoos, clothing and accessories, stickers, and other graphic media are the most common representations of extremist imagery. First responders need to be aware of common extremist imagery as it may indicate involvement or support for a particular domestic extremist organization or international terrorist group.

This product provides law enforcement and homeland security partners with information drawn from open source materials including online editions of printed newspapers and relevant counterterrorism sites.

Domestic Extremism

Domestic groups such as animal and environmental extremists, generally use graphic and photographic imagery to garner support for their causes by using images that evoke emotional responses from the viewer.

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) – Founded in 1976, ALF is an underground group of autonomous cells in several countries that wish to "effectively allocate resources (time and money) to end the 'property' status of non-human animals." Many ALF graphic and photographic images depict a masked individual in military-style clothing accompanied with a small animal.

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) – Modeled after ALF, ELF is composed of autonomous cells who take direct action against businesses that ELF believes are harming the environment. Many individuals associated with ELF have been linked to the Animal Liberation Front. Images that create sympathy and compassion from supporters, while evoking emotions of strength and unity are common throughout animal and environmental extremist imagery.

Earth First! – Earth First! is an environmental group founded in 1980 known to advocate direct action in defense of the environment. Many individuals associated with Earth First! have been linked to the Earth Liberation Front, as they share similar ideology. Wrenches adopted into radical environmental imagery stem from throwing a "monkeywrench" into moving parts of a machine to prevent it from working.

Similar to animal and environmental extremist groups, other domestic extremist groups use imagery as a means of promoting radical ideology and group identity. There are many white supremacist groups in the United States that use various forms of imagery in their logos and flags. Two of the more common groups in the southern California region are the National Socialist Movement (NSM) and the United Society of Aryan Skinheads (USAS).

National Socialist Movement (NSM) – NSM is a neo-Nazi organization in the United States who promote their ideology through literature dispersals, conferences rallies, and internet forums. NSM logos include the swastika, which was the official emblem of the German Nazi Party beginning in 1920.

United Society of Aryan Skinheads (USAS) – USAS is a white supremacist group that originally formed in Portland, Oregon and later reorganized in California. The USAS has various chapters in California as well as a strong presence within California's prison system. Many USAS members have adopted the Valknut image (three interlocking triangles) in tattoos, which have roots in neo-paganism.

Foreign Terrorist Organizations

International terrorists commonly adopt flags and logos to identify their group affiliation. Although particular elements of radical imagery alone are not all associated with terrorism, many international terrorist organizations use common religious or cultural imagery in their flags, group logos, and internet propaganda.

Islamic Extremism

Many Islamic foreign terrorist organizations, such as al-Qa'ida and their affiliated movements, share the common ideology of establishing a global or regional Islamic caliphate and/or have a Palestinian nationalist agenda. Imagery used by these radical Islamic groups often includes the Shahada or images of the Quran in logos and flags.

Shahada – the Shahada is the first of the Five Pillars of Islam and when translated reads, "there is no god but God and Muhammad is the prophet of God." The Shahada itself is **NOT** radical or terrorist in nature, but has been adopted into the flags and logos of many designated foreign terrorist organizations or individuals affiliated with radical Islamist ideology.

Used by al-Qa'ida and affiliated movements

Al-Qa'ida in Iraq

Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Mahgreb (AQIM)

Al-Shabaab

Internet Imagery

Taken from an Al Mosul Media magazine

HAMAS

Al-Qa'ida in Iraq

Quran – Images of the Quran in graphic imagery do not symbolize terrorism or terrorist organizations alone, but like the Shahada, are used by many terrorist groups in printed propaganda or logos. Many radical Islamic groups often depict images of the Quran with forms of pre-modern and modern weaponry.

Armed Islamic Group (GIA)

Lashkar-e Tayyiba (LeT)

Taliban Code of Conduct

Crossed Swords/Weapons – Many designated foreign terrorist organizations (to include organizations other than Islamic), have adopted logos and imagery with crossed weapons (swords, rifles, etc.) Crossed weapons historically symbolize war and/or military force. Crossed weapons can be seen in emblems in almost every culture, and are prevalent in terrorist imagery.

HAMAS

Muslim Brotherhood

Muslim Brotherhood

Jamaat-ud-Dawa

Sada al-Malahim Magazine

Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab

Hizbul Islam

Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Mujahideen-e-Khalq

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

National Liberation Army (ELN)

Weapons (general) – The presence of weapons in logos, flags, and other graphic media generally represent the propensity of a group to use violence or offensive action.

Hizballah

Caucasus Mujahedeen

Al-Qa'ida "Manchester Manual"

Islamic Jihad Union

Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA)

Irish Republican Army (IRA)

Arabic Words/Terms – Graffiti, tattoos, or logos may contain words that are often associated with radical Islamic ideology. The following list of words in Arabic in print, tattoos, or logos may indicate involvement or support for extremist ideology or foreign terrorist organizations.

شهيد	- martyr	كافر	- infidel (non-believer)
جيش	- army	سيف الله	- sword of God
قنبلة	- bomb	مجاهدين	- fighters/combatants
القاعدة	- al-Qa'ida	مجاهد	- fighter/combatant
حزب الله	- Hizballah (The party of God)	الحرب	- war

Propaganda/Online Media

Domestic and international terrorist organizations and individuals use the internet extensively to promote radical ideology that can be easily posted to the internet or online social networking websites. Some groups have developed comprehensive websites such as Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front, and a few foreign terrorist organizations use certain media organizations to communicate their radical ideology. Media organizations that work on behalf of domestic or foreign terrorist organizations typically include their group logo in a place that is easily visible to the viewer.

As-Sahab Media
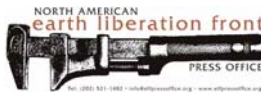
North American Earth Liberation Front

Al-Malahem Media "Inspire" Magazine

Animal Liberation Front

Al Mosul Media

Al-Kataib

For comments or questions on this product,
please contact the
**San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center
at (858) 503-5604** or
www.sd-lecc.org.

To report suspected terrorism-related incidents,
please visit
www.sdrttac.org and click "Submit a Tip or Lead"
or contact the **San Diego Joint Terrorism Task Force
(JTTF) at (858) 565-1255**.