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An Analysis of the Influence of the Boston Marathon Bombing on Sports Venue Management in the Gulf Coast States

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Introduction

The Boston Marathon bombing is a prime example of recent terrorism in sports. Price (2013) speculated that the Boston Marathon bombing effectively joined Boston with the cities of New York, Washington D.C., London, and Madrid as iconic megalopolises which have worked to contain terrorism post-9/11. The city of London has fallen to victim to terrorist attacks in 2017 and 2005. At the Ariana Grande concert in 2017 at the Manchester Arena, a suicide bomb exploded and killed 22 people and injured 59 people (Smith & Chan, 2017). Bliss (2010) contended that the concerns has made sport event managers more proactive in reducing the threat of a latent terrorist attack and also attests that high profile sport mega events (SME) such as Super Bowls, World Cups, and Olympic Games make attractive targets for terrorists. Further in a post-9/11 world, SMEs represent an opportunity for terrorists to make a symbolic statement synced with the potential for mass casualties. Since the ultimate effects of the terrorist attack are to entice fear (Bliss, 2010), an attack on SMEs, for example, may be considered an attack on American freedom and capitalism (Piccarello, 2005).

In less than a year after 9/11, stadia officials were alerted by the FBI that terrorists had used the internet to gather information on stadia in the United States and Europe (Grace, 2002). In 2002, the FBI issued an alert concerning information found in Al Qaeda's Manual of Afghan Jihad, where football stadia were cited as possible terrorist targets (Hall et al., 2010). Security changes in New York and the tristate area illustrate how terrorism threats have changed the sport management industry. At the former Meadowlands Sports Complex, outside of New York City, federal and local agencies came together to focus on security. The direct influences of 9/11 could be seen in how the New Jersey State and Exposition Authority (NJSEA) reevaluated its operational procedures for the Meadowlands Sports Complex which included Giants Stadium. The increased security presence i.e. New Jersey State Police bomb sniffing dogs at the Sports Complex was the most dramatic effect of new security operations (Wade, 2002). The NJSEA decided to make sure that no potential terrorist perpetrators could access the stadium through their implementation of increased security procedures such as pat-downs for every patron (Wade, 2002).

Specifically, the purpose of this study is to explore the influence of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing on the safety and security operations at contemporary sporting events and venues in the gulf coast states. It specifically sought to determine how operations and security managers' positions have been altered since April 2013. This research may aid in the security preparation for sport management professionals and could serve to enhance the knowledge of students who study sport management.

Methodology

Design

This qualitative study used recorded semi-structured interviews to engage experts in the field. To be included in the study, experts were required to have supervisory and/or managerial experience in sport management. Potential participants included public safety and operations supervisors, managers, directors along with security chiefs at convention centers, exhibition halls, multi-purpose facilities, arenas, stadia, performing arts centers, theaters, and specific-use venues such as equestrian centers. Participants also included experts from local and state police departments, and local universities. Respondents were asked open-ended questions set forth by the researcher in 15 – 60 minute audio recorded interview sessions, by way of a convenient sample. Respondents also referred the researchers to other potential subjects.

Research Questions

The primary research question is to what extent has the Boston Marathon bombing changed security procedures in the sports management industry? The three guiding sub-questions were:

- What specific terrorist attacks have caused the greatest changes in sport security procedures?
- In regards to public safety at stadia, what scenarios do security managers foresee happening?
- What gaps, if any, exist in regards to facility and event management with current security procedures?

The researcher obtained written consent to conduct interviews with field experts. Those selected as experts were employed in a full time managerial, supervisory or director position at a sports venue. Researchers determined that 7-15 experts in the southern United States would be enough to identify themes. Interviews were recorded with a digital recorder and an Apple I-phone 5c, and later transcribed.

Data Collection

Since terrorism in sports is a highly sensitive topic, participants' privacy was respected. All names, likenesses, positions, agencies and locations of their work were not identified. Pseudonyms were used in place of their names. This study was also approved by the University Institutional Review Board.

All data were coded, analyzed and transcribed into ten individual documents. At the completion of the recorded individual interviews, sessions were transcribed and coded into themes for analyses. The total number of pages for all interview transcripts was 84 with 34,898 total words transcribed, amounting to 344 minutes of recording time. This was an average of 8.4 pages of transcribed data per interviewee, with an average of 3,490 words and a mean of 34 minutes for each interview. Interview text was condensed into paragraphs of information. Four main themes collectively coalesced during this process.

Findings

The study population consisted of ten respondents in the Gulf Coast region across three states. All individuals were employed by a sports venue i.e. stadium, arena, government agency, or academia. Respondent data (Table 1) indicated the type of facility or agency they worked at and the years of experience each respondent had in his/her respective profession. The average years of experience for all respondents was 21.5 years. Experience levels ranged from 5 to 32 years of experience.

Table 1. Respondent Background Data

Respondents	Type of Facility or Agency	Years of Experience
Respondent 1	National Football League (NFL) and National Basketball Association (NBA) Professional Stadium	18
Respondent 2	NFL and NBA Professional Stadium	30
Respondent 3	NFL and NBA Professional Stadium	30
Respondent 4	Police Agency	24

Respondent 5	Police Agency	32
Respondent 6	NFL Stadium	25
Respondent 7	College Stadium	12
Respondent 8	NFL and NBA Professional Stadium	5
Respondent 9	NFL and NBA Professional Stadium	29
Respondent 10	Academia	10

Four main themes emerged during analyses: “lone wolf,” “table top,” “perimeter,” and “are you threatening me?” Seven sub themes developed as well: “active shooter,” “cameras,” “vapor wake dogs,” “Tsarnaev brothers,” “ISIS / Al Qaeda,” and “fusion center.”

“Lone Wolf”

During analyses, the theme of “lone wolf” surfaced in that five out of ten respondents concurred that “lone wolf” terrorism is their foremost concern. In September of 2015, Police Commissioner Bratton of the New York Police Department (NYPD) testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security that “lone wolf” terrorism is committed by unaffiliated perpetrators who are aimed to inflict harm with whatever they had at their disposal (Bratton, 2015). The predictability level of this type of terrorism attack is either none or minimal, making the threat more substantial. Respondent 3 discussed the varying beliefs in terror threats throughout the years. The respondent described annual adjustments in public safety in stadia:

“Now the focus is on the lone wolf, the shooter, the active shooter, the homegrown violent extremist that comes here armed to the gills and just starts shooting people.”

Respondent 6 added his beliefs about lone wolf terror. From his perspective, he is most concerned with incidents such as the Garland, Texas incident which was the first time the terrorist organization, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) threatened and attacked this country. Cable News Network (CNN) reported that a terrorist attack was thwarted in Garland, Texas on March 3 outside a Drawing Mohamed Contest (Yan, 2015). In this incident north of Dallas, Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi wounded a security guard outside the venue before police shot and killed them by the perimeter of the event. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. Respondent 5 concurred with respondent 3 in his “lone wolf” threat assessment:

“My concern is the lone wolf terrorism—Garland incident in Texas.”

Along with this sentiment, respondent 1 stated apprehensions about “lone wolf” terrorism. He also mentioned anxiety towards a threat that is very arduous to forecast due to the nature of its unpredictability. This unpredictability is the prominent characteristic of a “lone wolf” terrorist:

“The greatest security concern is going to be, in my opinion, “lone wolf” terrorism.”

Respondent 5 expressed his concerns about security issues that are the most daunting threats in sport stadia. Because the nature of a “lone wolf” is often solitary, the offender would hypothetically not tell anybody else. Thus his/her plan would not be leaked to another person:

“I think for us the scariest thing is what you might classify as a lone wolf. A guy acting alone to cause some type of threat to a venue or an event.”

In summation, the majority of respondents agreed that “lone wolf” terrorism is the most cogent threat to sport management today. Post-9/11, respondents indicated that organized stereotypical terrorist threats have shifted to “lone wolf” types since the Boston Marathon bombings. The subtheme of “Tsarnaev brothers” surfaced under this heading for this was the first “lone wolf” attack in collective memory. One respondent indicated that it is important to anticipate potential unknown threats.

“Table Top”

This theme answers our research question, “To what extent has the Boston Marathon bombing changed security procedures in the Sport Management Industry?” To combat the unplanned terror threats of “lone wolves,” the next theme which surfaced was “table top” planning. A little less than half of the respondents indicated that table top planning is what is done as a preferred preventive security and operations measure. In this industry, table top planning is the preferred operational security preventive measure and is being used more often since the Boston Marathon bombing. To “table top” something means to plan a coordinated response to possible threat scenarios with all departments playing a role prior to the actual event. Bliss (2010) contends that the varying governmental climate has made sport practitioners more actively involved in reducing the threat of a hidden terrorist occurrence. Results from Bliss parallel the data from this study in that respondent 5 reflected on the Super Bowl where the table top method proved to be successful:

“It was a table top exercise. We planned for that... When you understand that when these things happen, you have a plan, and you’ve exercised that plan and you know that you have things to put in place to correct it, nobody panics”

To sum up the final elements of the theme of “table top” planning respondents indicated that “table top” responses to scenarios is an ideal method for coordinating responses to a threat and is an ideal training strategy in the field of sport management. Regular practice of table top exercises may help alleviate stress in a trying situation. “Table topping” is planning out the potential solutions for unknown situations that can happen during an event. It involves planning for all possible scenarios, such as evacuations, shelter-in-place situations, active shooters, electrical failure or massive water leaks etc.

The subtheme of “Fusion Center” developed under a table top theme. This is a strategic proactive procedure designed to assess threats. According to the latest “Marathon Safety and Security Best Practices Guide” by the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4), it is beneficial to establish a state Fusion Center (University of Southern Mississippi, 2015). The state Fusion Center monitors every social media and internet outlet in existence for potential terror threats. In summation, table top scenarios in sport management were useful in addressing the massive power outage that occurred during Super Bowl XLVII in New Orleans at the Mercedes Benz Superdome. Respondents indicated that table top preplanning for the worst case scenarios was beneficial to all, even when everything runs smoothly.

“Perimeter”

The next theme to have surfaced during data analyses was “perimeter.” In the sport management industry having a hardened perimeter is an important deterrent to potential strikes. This includes access control and specific screening procedures at all entry points at a stadium. This falls under the United States Department of Homeland Security’s objective to deter potential terrorists from attacking stadia (USDHS, 2008). Respondent 3 stated:

“I believe in having a secure perimeter, but you also have to take into consideration wherever you are queuing people, you are providing a mass group of people for someone to do something heinous.”

Respondent 1 said that a consistent hardened perimeter is key:

“Just physical security... Its hardening your target, putting up physical barriers and manning it, you man it today, like you man it tomorrow, like you man it the next day. And the consistency of that is going to make your target a little harder and hopefully that person (offender) would move on to something else a little softer. Don't be the softest target in town.”

Moreover, respondent 6 also stated the necessity of not just one perimeter but two perimeters. Secondary perimeters allow for extra screening areas outside the venue where venue safety/service staff and law enforcement officers observe the crowd for suspicious behavior and prohibited items. Also at large SMEs, visual checks are performed of every patron to make sure they have a physical ticket at the secondary perimeter. This visual check by public safety officers was done at the 2008 NBA All Star Game. If a patron is without a ticket, the security ascertains a reason. Respondent 6 also concurred with respondents 3 and 1 in recommending secondary perimeters.

Secondary perimeters are beyond the hardened perimeters of the venue. They are set up on roads/streets in the immediate area of the venue, subway stations, parking lots etc. For example, for Super Bowl XLVII in New Orleans, the surrounding blocks and interstate exits around the Mercedes Benz Superdome and Smoothie King Center were closed off and blocked for months prior to the game.

When addressing changes respondent 9 also mentioned how things have changed over the past 30 years regarding perimeters and access control in and around a stadium:

“And as things have progressed after September 11th, and you saw there was more screening processes as in place now... And then each year when there's some type of terrorist attack, the security measures grow.”

In conclusion, respondents indicated that an enhanced perimeter is an essential part of the recommended procedures to protect public safety. Perimeters provide a safe venue for all patrons and staff ensuring that the event will go on as scheduled. Respondents indicated that the numbers of enhanced security perimeters have increased over the past 30 years after each subsequent terrorist attack. These perimeters have become more fortified, and have served to restrict without denying access.

During analyses, the sub themes of “active shooter,” “cameras,” and “vapor wake dogs” surfaced. Concerns of active shooters at these perimeters exist and sport venue managers continue to keep that in the forefront of their concerns. Enhanced cameras and specially trained dogs are recommended to be in place at perimeters. Vapor wake dogs are specially trained in detecting bombs, or bomb making materials amongst a crowd of patrons. They can follow the vapors of threats and alert their handlers of a potential issue in a timely manner.

“Are You Threatening Me?”

Threat level assessment is crucial to security managers in a post-Boston Marathon bombing world. “Are you threatening me?” was the next theme to emerge. Assessing threat levels is a critical component prior to an event. According to the latest “Marathon Safety and Security Best Practices Guide” by the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4), it is essential to establish a liaison with the local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the state Fusion Center (University of Southern Mississippi, 2015). The state Fusion Center monitors every social media and internet outlet in existence for potential terror threats. Respondent 5 discusses how the Fusion Center works:

“Fusion Centers, I’m telling you, play a significant role in just the intelligence gathering piece across this country, and they can push information out to designated groups, whether we say we want information pushed out to local police agencies in this region, in this state, or other states.”

Determining and preparing for potential threats helps ensure the successful running of any event. Proper preparation establishes the perception of a safe environment for all patrons attending the event. A myriad of threats exist for security managers to address before, during and after their events. The theme of “are you threatening me?” addresses various threats including sub themes of “ISIS / Al Qaeda” and “drones.” The concern of the threat of ISIS and Al Qaeda are very much a part of the respondents’ threat assessments.

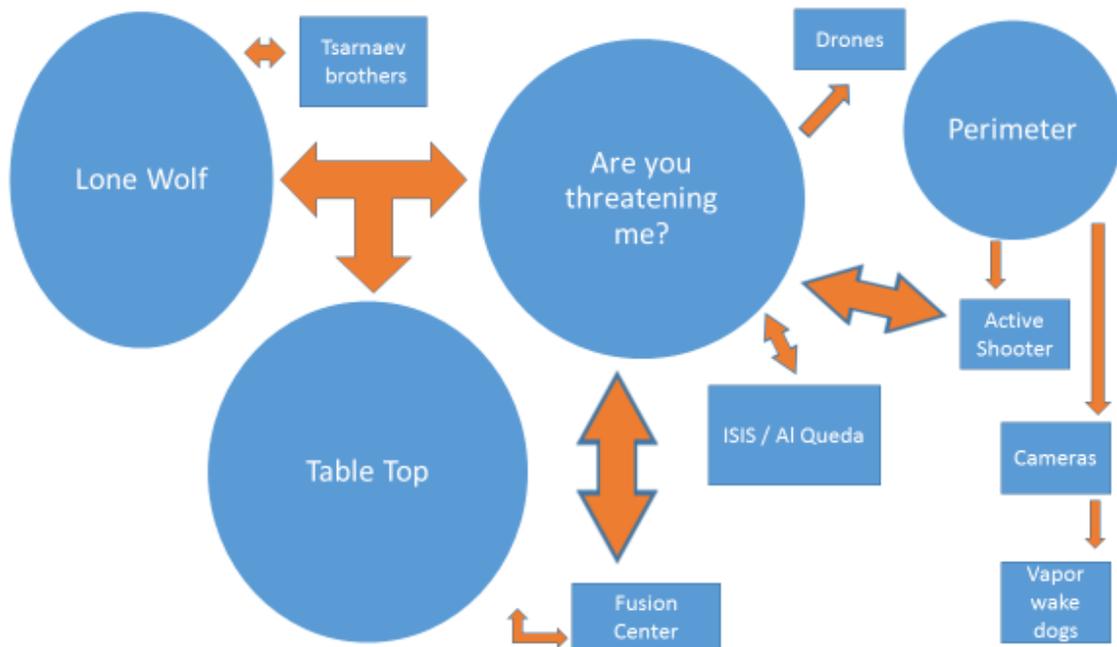
Coalescence of Themes

A coalescence of all themes is shown in Figure 1. Four main themes and seven sub themes made up the main findings of this study. The four main themes of “lone wolf,” “table top,” “perimeter,” and “are you threatening me?” developed through data analyses. The themes of “lone wolf” and “table top” are especially crucial to this study. Lone wolf attacks are the unplanned solo attacks, while “table top” strategies are the methods event managers use to plan and help prevent potential impending disasters.

Seven sub themes emerged in this qualitative study. Under the theme of “perimeter” were the sub themes of: “active shooter,” “cameras,” and “vapor wake dogs.” Respondents stated that cameras and vapor wake dogs are the preferred security and operation measures that should be used at the perimeter of the venue. “Cameras” were seen as the best technology for security and operations managers. “Tsarnaev brothers” are an example of “lone wolf” attacks, for they were the first lone wolf attack of mainstream media in collective memory and acted alone without state sponsored support.

“Fusion center” is a sub theme under “Are you threatening me?” as it is a way public safety and operations managers work to prevent probable threats by addressing them as they manifest. Fusion Centers are government run threat detection entities that utilize computer systems that address threats across the internet and social media. “ISIS / Al Qaeda” and “drones” were sub themes under the main theme of “are you threatening me?” Respondents were aware of the threats of ISIS and Al Qaeda because of the Garland Texas terrorist incident. “Drones” and “Fusion Center” can intersect if any potential offender discusses their use of drones over the internet with social media.

Figure 1. Interaction of Themes



Member Checks

Member checking was used to validate respondent accuracy and trustworthiness. Member checks consisted of the researcher reporting back to the respondents what was found to be the main themes of the study and interview accounts (Cresswell, 2005). For the purposes of this study, member checking involved emailing all ten respondents the coalescence and the interactions of themes (see Figure 1). It was the intention of the researcher to determine how the respondents felt about the accuracy of the themes. In sum, 10 emails were sent, with eight who replied in agreement with the themes. The following statements were offered by respondents during member checking:

- “Very well done!”
- “Looks good”
- “Thanks!”
- “Looks great!”
- “Everything looks good!”
- “Lone wolf” and “Are you threatening me” appear to be threat and risk assessment. Participants of the study clearly are concerned with lone wolf/active shooter incidents. Assessing threat/risk levels requires some type of risk analysis so likelihood/consequence can be evaluated and priorities identified for planning and training. The “table top” theme is a part of the security planning phase where the threats/risks identified are tested in a scenario-based forum with multiagency representatives present. Likewise “Perimeter” appears to be planning/prevention phase ensuring security measures are in place to detect threats. Information exchange is also critical among response agencies, as well as state/regional fusion centers.”

- “Themes look good.”

Respondents agreed with the themes indicating a favorable consensus with the findings of this study. This consensus supports the study’s trustworthiness. The respondents’ concerns were accurately depicted in the findings. Thus the concerns of security and operations managers since the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing were accurately depicted in this study.

Discussion

This study’s purpose was to assess the changes in safety protocol of sport management since the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013. First it sought to determine which specific attacks changed security procedures the greatest. Additionally, this study provided the recommendations from respondents who are concerned on a daily basis with public safety. Finally the study aimed to determine how the Boston Marathon bombing has changed the sport management industry and to assess the gaps that exist in current practices. The overall research question for this study was: “To what extent has the Boston Marathon bombing changed security procedures in the sport management industry?”

To address the main research question, “To what extent has the Boston Marathon bombing changed security procedures in the sport management industry?” sport security and operation managers in this study stated that security measures have increased considerably. These security measures cost more. Respondent 7 stated that his/her job has changed immensely since the Boston Marathon bombing:

“I think it's changed our profession significantly. I think any type of act of terrorism because they beat the system... They beat the initial security that was already in place, so by that happening it's going to create even more of an awareness and more proactive measures going forward.”

The first sub question was, “What terrorist attacks caused the most change?” The attacks on America on 9/11 were the catalyst to the greatest change in sport management. This belief is supported by Nadel (2004). In less than a year after 9/11, stadium officials were alerted by the FBI that terrorists had used the internet to gather information on stadia in the United States and Europe (Grace, 2002).

After 9/11, the focus shifted to address security and minimize the attractiveness of stadia to terrorists (Nadel, 2004). Moreover, respondent 3 stated that the innocence of America was lost on 9/11 thus affecting SMEs. The terrorist attacks on 9/11 changed the atmosphere of sports forever (Hall, Marciani, Cooper & Phillips, 2010). There is now a need for additional security measures post-9/11 which precipitates standard operating procedures (SOP) as a precaution (Hall et al., 2010; USDHS, 2008). These findings are in agreement with this study. With regards to what stadia managers prefer as security recommendations, a hard perimeter and access control was highly recommended when three respondents stated that a perimeter is important to preserve the integrity of the building and of the event. Respondent 6 stated:

“We’re more concerned in our perimeter security, keeping crowds safe and managed before they get into the ticketed perimeter.”

The theme of “lone wolf” terrorism addressed what security managers are most concerned about now, post Boston. Events of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing were significant as it was

the first time an improvised explosive device (IED) was set off on American soil by “lone wolves.” Our country’s armed services have become experienced in dealing with IED’s in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) in Afghanistan and Iraq (Jacoby, 2004). However, according to Meyer (2014), the Boston Marathon bombing was the first time an IED caused mass casualties inside the United States. The Boston Marathon bombers, Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, were accused of having used two pressure cookers packed with nails, ball bearings, and fireworks as an IED (Meyer, 2014). The Boston Marathon bombing is a contemporary example of “lone wolf” sport terrorism.

Results of Hall et al. (2010) concur with this study’s respondents since 72% of their respondents, stadia managers, ranked physical security as the most important standard in sport stadia security. Physical security includes hardened walls, barriers and fences which make a venue more difficult to access and enter. This study’s finding parallels Hall et al. (2010) in that security managers want a hardened perimeter for their venues. The New York area stadia implemented this type of security immediately post-9/11 (Wade, 2002).

To address the second sub question of, “What scenarios do public safety managers foresee happening?” this study found that stadia managers post Boston are forecasting a myriad of worst case scenarios. Multiple bombings and active shooter threats were among their biggest concerns.

Multiple attacks across the country like the recent attacks at the Bataclan Concert Hall in Paris is what respondent 10 believes could happen in this country if proper protective measures are not taken. This statement parallels the findings of Miller, Veltri, and Gillentine (2008) where a vast majority (96%) of their respondents (N=138) believed that there was a strong likelihood that a terrorist attack would be attempted or happen at a Super Bowl within five years.

Gaps post Boston Marathon Bombing

A majority of respondents stated that there were changes in sport management procedures following the Boston Marathon bombing. To address the third sub question of “What gaps, if any, exist in regards to facility and event management with current security procedures?” respondent 8 stated that there were no changes in sport management security procedures. This is an example of a respondent who deviated from the other respondents by stating: “I don’t know that anything has changed per se. I think stadium security on event day has probably been about the same.” In this statement, the respondent addresses that changes have been minimal post Boston. This respondent also had the fewest years of experience of all respondents. This individual goes against the consensus of respondents who indicated that substantial amounts of change has occurred.

Gaps in security measures included lack of financial reasons and human error. The respondents thought that since 9/11 was more than a decade ago, patrons do not take the potential threats of terrorism as seriously as they did immediately post-9/11. Respondent 3 stated:

“The challenges – I think (and this is strictly my personal opinion) the further we get away from 9/11, (and this is my personal opinion), I think people have a tendency to do two things. I think people kind of start to get their guard down. And then... Well nothing’s happened in fourteen years. 2001. Nothing’s happened in fourteen years. But then in turn, if you are really paying attention and you are watching what’s going on in the world, and you are watching the active shooters at these military bases and everywhere else, and you understand from a terrorist perspective from what they are trying to target. What is Al Qaeda – What is ISIS trying to get their people to target now? It’s military institutions, it’s law enforcement, it’s what your country stands for. It’s Wall Street right? It’s the whole

New York thing. It is the center of the world's financial market. But you also have to take into consideration, if I can go into a military base and maybe knock off ten or fifteen people. I can go into a sporting venue and knock off hundreds of 'em. And I think from a terrorist standpoint, they look at it what is the biggest (I hate to use this term) bang for the buck. What is gonna make that CNN news for a week - is what's gonna happen. And when it happens in the United States, on the homeland soil, that's when it changes again."

Respondent 10 also discussed the lack of financial resources and human error:

"Challenges of protecting a venue? There's always financial reasons. That's why security varies from college to college- division 1, division 2, division 3- from one conference to another conference. Because of resources available they have, those with budgets can do more. But I think the recruitment and retention of events security... Some colleges outsource security like (Contemporary Services Corporation) CSC, Whelan Security, and then it's their responsibility to get staff, right? They (third party security companies) found that it's difficult to retain their part time employees to begin with. They (the employees) pick and choose when they want to work. So it's difficult sometimes to get enough staff for certain games, especially from here in December, the holiday games- when they don't want to work. So that's a concern I heard of recently."

Respondent 3 further stated reservations about how the public currently views current terrorists incorrectly. Not every terrorist is from an Islamic country and speaks Arabic. This respondent stated that the thought process should change, regarding racial and cultural stereotypes. It is a common misconception that a terrorist will look like Osama bin Laden. Not every Muslim is affiliated with ISIS or Al Qaeda. Not every Arab person is a terrorist. Not every Muslim person wages jihad:

"I think that the prevalent view of most people was that terrorists are Middle Eastern- wearing a type of Middle Eastern garb, they're extremists, Islamic extremists. They make videos and they tell you what they are gonna do, and they do it, and they claim responsibility and all this... I think the Boston Bombings have changed the way outdoor public events such as marathons.... So you've got these two brothers, they are walking around with backpacks. Now they could have just been carrying regular duffel bags. They chose backpacks. They're blending in with the crowd. They got baseball hats on. They are not dressed as you "think an extremist would dress" right? Nice shoes, pants, shirts - They look like college kids, right? And then this happens. So, I think what's changed is that the mindset -the thought process of a lot of venue practitioners is - It can happen anywhere, anytime, by anybody."

Financial burdens as a result of terrorism have increased since 9/11. The need for addressing these rising costs is apparent. This parallels the cost of property and liability insurance that Major League Baseball's Milwaukee Brewers incurred from \$225,000 pre-9/11 to \$2.25 million post-9/11 (Fried, 2005). These financial demands are a challenge. Respondent 5 agreed with respondent 10 in that he/she stated financial reasons as a challenge to providing adequate safety measures since the Boston Marathon bombing:

“A couple of things – financially. There is a huge increase in the cost of an agency providing this level of security, whether it’s being picked up on the state level or being picked up by the private company itself. There is a huge cost associated with, an increased level of security. But you cannot afford not to have that.”

Methods for addressing the financial burden challenges must be addressed by operations and facility managers in a post Boston Marathon bombing world. Respondent 3 concurred with the financial challenges of securing stadia in a post Boston world:

“Because all that stuff is not cheap. Technology is not cheap. But in the end if you don’t have it, and you don’t put that money into it, you are leaving yourself vulnerable is what you wind up doing. And of course with that, that was a good idea actually. And you look at some places that do much more than that. You could be looking at a million plus dollars of infrastructure in improvements that you could make. Bollards... Hardening the bollards with K-12 Bollards are very expensive. But a speeding truck loaded with thousands of pounds of explosives traveling at 55 miles an hour, those bollards stops them in their tracks... The car is crushed. The guy is dead. But the tree is still living. So that is something to think about, but that would probably take more than an arena stepping out, or a stadium stepping out and saying, “No, we want to do this.” It may be one of those things from a financial standpoint, from legislation perhaps. State or federal legislation saying, as the federal budget begins to shrink with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that private venues have to start paying their own tab. And you may see a change there.”

Implications and Recommendations for Sport and Public Safety Practitioners

Post Boston, operations and public safety practitioners should be knowledgeable about how to make their respective venues safe and secure. Operations and public safety managers should enhance and enforce the recommendations set forth by the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4) at the University of Southern Mississippi. In this specific study, respondents from three gulf coast states mentioned frequently that NCS4 was the gold standard for protective measures in sport management and facility industry.

Additional safeguards that were recommended would ensure that convention centers, exhibition halls, multi-purpose facilities, arenas, stadia, performing arts centers, theaters, and other specific-use venues would be more secure for all patrons. These additional safeguards include: Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (VACIS), facial recognition software in conjunction with the local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), vapor wake dogs, and digital closed circuit television cameras with high pixilation capabilities. Good human resource management to prevent turnover in staffing should be considered a priority with managers. Budgeting time and adequate financial resources for training safety/security staff must also be addressed. Best practices set forth by NCS4 will help improve the safety of patrons and staff. Stadia managers should take advantage of such resources to ensure the safety and security of the venues and those who visit, work, and perform at the facility.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that respondents offered many concerns over the changes in sport security measures. One specific change is the concern over “lone wolf” terrorism where half of all respondents indicated this as the greatest concern. To address the unknown and unplanned “lone wolf” threats, table top planning was recommended by respondents. Further research is

recommended to compare the concerns between professional and collegiate stadia managers regarding the apprehension of terrorism at their respective venues.

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