



PENTAGON FORCE PROTECTION AGENCY
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Release No. 11-004

April 14, 2011
Page 1 of 4

PENTAGON ANTI-TERRORISM, FORCE PROTECTION: **Sometimes Training Ensures *Nothing* Happens**

Story and Photos by Paul Taylor, PFPA Public Affairs

“We succeed if nothing happens,” said Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA) Director of Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) Jim Pelkofski.

That might sound counter-intuitive, but, according to Pelkofski, it is not.

“AT/FP is all about prevention, and nothing happens if you’re doing all you can to deter, detect, prevent, and defeat a terrorist attack,” he said.

He said making sure nothing happens also requires the participation of every person who works in the facilities for which PFPA provides AT/FP support. That is why the directorate has a robust training program that touches tens of thousands of military and civilian personnel.

Pelkofski’s deputy Greg Shepard said that PFPA’s AT/FP training efforts start with level one antiterrorism training.

“AT level one is awareness and education training we provide to the DoD populace across the National Capital Region,” said Shepard. “We give them a low-down on what’s going on in the NCR. We give them historical events that have taken place here, and we provide insight about groups that operate in the area. We want people to realize that terrorism isn’t just a thing that’s overseas. We have to be aware of it here.”

“We need to raise the level of awareness so that if people are out and see something that’s out of the ordinary, they realize and recognize it for what it is. Then they’ll know to come back and present that information to us so we can act on it,” said Shepard. He said the reporting process is the most important aspect of the AT/FP business. It’s what enables the directorate to make sure “nothing happens.”

“A lot of people concerned with security invest millions of dollars in cameras,” said Shepard.

- more -

Training Ensures Nothing Happens

2-2-2-2-2

“Well, cameras are great if you want to know what happened after the fact. They don’t help you prevent anything. But people can! People who report things that are out of the ordinary may help prevent terrorism and help us to bring those guys to justice.”

Shepard says there’s a lot at stake for the leased facilities because, being located in an urban environment, they do not have the relative safety and security of being located on gated military installations. They rely heavily on the AT/FP services and expertise of PFPA’s AT officers (ATOs) who help them develop and implement AT/FP plans and programs specifically tailored to their individual facilities.

To ensure those services are as good as they can be, Shepard says the AT/FP directorate is developing a career training continuum for PFPA’s ATOs that includes a training master plan, job qualification standards, as well as formal and informal training sessions.

According to Shepard, the increased emphasis on the professional development of the ATOs is already paying dividends.

“One of the things I’m really proud of is that our ATOs stood up a process at the leased buildings to actively and methodically exercise their AT/FP plans. For instance, they go in and give the active shooter briefing, then follow up with a table top exercise, then follow up with a walk-through exercise. They’re able to show people how, in situations that have actually happened, they really can protect themselves if they are aware and if they have a plan and a process in place.”

The AT/FP directorate also oversees a relatively new innovation called AT/FP University. The facilities that PFPA supports are distributed across the region with overlapping local, state and federal jurisdictional lines. So Pelkofski says it only makes sense to embark on a collaborative, educational process through which knowledge and expertise are shared across the spectrum. To that end, AT/FP University brings together people from a variety of local, state and federal agencies to discuss AT/FP issues they share in common.

“What I really wanted was to create a forum for the exchange of ideas, for the discussion of topics of interest, and to try to delve into the provocative and academic,” said Pelkofski. “I want it to be truly information sharing – not controversial, but rather a thought-provoking type of event.”

“We chose the name AT/FP University carefully,” said Shepard. “We want people to understand that we constantly need to be out there in search of knowledge and, when you get that knowledge, to pass it on. Information is vital to what we do and timely information is even more vital!”

- more -

Training Ensures Nothing Happens

3-3-3-3-3-3

Another training evolution the directorate originally oversaw is the quarterly table top exercise in which the AT/FP directorate gathers all key PFPA directorates and offices around a table to walk through a scenario and discuss how they would respond to given situations. Responsibility for the ongoing series of exercises has now been transferred to PFPA's training directorate. Once the discussion gets going, the process can reveal what Shepard calls "gaps and seams" where the overall AT/FP plan can be improved.

The most recent table top exercise was a complex scenario that Shepard credits to Pelkofski.

"He came up with the concept of doing a Mumbai-style, combined arms attack," said Shepard. "The exercise looked at the tactics, techniques, and procedures of that attack then overlaid them here to see how they would work on us."

"The best way to find out is to test the process. We did that and I think it was really well-received by the directorates because they were able to see how a scenario could start off slowly some place else, then pick up steam as it ends up on the Pentagon reservation," said Shepard.

For many, training and work are sometimes viewed as two different things. According to Shepard, the AT/FP directorate considers training its work and he has a vivid example in the March 4, 2010 shooting at the Pentagon.

"We anticipated March fourth," he said. "We had talked about the lone wolf scenario, and we had exercises about it, and when it happened, everybody reacted the way they were supposed to."

"Planning and training is essential to what we do and we all believe that whole heartedly," said Shepard. "Because at the end of the day, I can go home and say I've done my job if nothing's gone boom and nobody's been injured by a terrorist event."

- PFPA -

NOTE TO MEDIA: Below thumbnail photos are available as high-resolution .jpg files upon request.

Contact Paul Taylor, Pentagon Force Protection Agency, paul.taylor@pfpa.mil, 703-695-4618



PFPA Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) Director Jim Pelkofski welcomes attendees during the AT/FP University seminar on Feb. 24.

- more -

Training Ensures Nothing Happens

4-4-4-4-4



Pentagon Police Department Assistant Chief Scott Joswiak participates in the discussion of how the agency would react in a Mumbai-style terrorist attack on the Pentagon Reservation during the last round of the AT/FP Tabletop Exercise on March 2.



The AT/FP Directorate hosted a series of table top exercises in which key players from PFFA discuss how they would react to certain scenarios. The objective is to build collaboration and understanding among stakeholders.



Lt. Derrick Wigglesworth of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority discussed the AT/FP measures WMATA has in place on the Metro System.

- PFFA -