

Federal Transit Administration Transit Threat Level Response Recommendation

FTA Policy Statement

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has developed a National Transit Response Model that supports the initiatives of the Office of Homeland Security (OHS). The plan is a guide for the FTA's response to the OHS Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). The Transit Threat Level Response Recommendation, in turn, provides guidance to the U.S. transit industry in responding to the various OHS threat level designations.

Introduction and Background

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in response to the Office of Homeland Security (OHS), has defined the following plan to guide transit response to the HSAS as defined in Homeland Security Presidential Directive #3. The plan establishes a consistent and coordinated transit response to potential threats in order to protect transit passengers, employees, and infrastructure, and to support community emergency response efforts. Further, the plan is compatible with the way transit operates:

- Transit relies on an inherently open architecture, allowing free movement of passengers in public facilities and vehicles. This freedom of movement must be maintained to permit transit to perform its basic functions.
- Transit is geographically widespread, often operating on public infrastructure and requiring important interagency cooperation to ensure protection.
- There is great diversity in how police and security forces are provided and deployed at different transit systems. There is no national mandate to standardize this facet of transit operations and security force policies will remain a local agency decision.
- Transit functions include substantial differences in equipment, infrastructure, operations and security practices from agency to agency. While this plan provides general guidance for response to individual threat conditions, the details of specific implementation vary substantially throughout these agencies.
- Transit systems are routinely under surveillance by their operating staff (e.g., drivers, supervisors, station attendants, and controllers), security employees, and, with increasing frequency, transit passengers. This normal level of vigilance, supplemented by

appropriate awareness training and the protective measures identified under threat condition green/blue, may be sufficient vigilance for some systems.

Threat Level/Attack/Recovery Systems Approach

The FTA National Transit Response Model supplements the existing HSAS Threat Condition model with Black and Purple designations to further define appropriate transit industry activities when an attack is in progress and during the post-event recovery of transit services and facilities.

Color	Condition
Green	Low threat level
Blue	General threat level
Yellow	Elevated threat level
Orange	High threat level
Red	Severe threat level
Black	Actual Attack
Purple	Recovery

The Black and Purple designations are interpreted as follows.

- Black indicates that an attack is underway against a specific transit agency or within the agency’s immediate geographic area. The Black state is entered only when an attack has occurred. Black includes the immediate post-attack time period when the transit agency may be responding to casualties, assisting in evacuations, inspecting and securing transit facilities, or helping with other tasks directed by the local emergency management authority.

- Purple indicates the recovery of transit service after an attack has occurred. Purple includes restoration of levels of service, routes, and schedules, repairing or reopening facilities, adjustment of staff work schedules and duty assignments, responding to customer inquiries about services, and other activities necessary to restore transit service. The Purple state follows the Black state and may also exist for short time periods when the agency is transitioning from a higher threat condition to a lower threat condition (e.g., from Red to Orange). The Purple state will coexist with the prevailing threat condition. In other words, business recovery (Purple) will be accomplished while maintaining the prevailing readiness status (e.g., Orange protective measures).

Threat Level Information

The Attorney General makes the decision to change the OHS threat level. Changes in threat levels typically will be in sequential stepwise order. As conditions warrant, elevated threat levels will typically progress in order from lowest (green) to highest (red). Likewise, as conditions warrant, returning from higher to lower threat levels will typically progress sequentially.

Transit response posture may vary depending on the nature of the threat level. For example, threat guidance focused on the northeastern region may dictate that transit agencies in that region maintain a higher response posture than other regions of the country. If the guidance is modal-based, for example a threat to subways and transit agencies with subway modes may maintain a higher response posture than agencies without subways. In fact, large multi-modal transit agencies may operate their different modes with different response postures.

However, based on information and conditions, transit agencies should be prepared for the distinct possibility of a non-sequential threat level advisory. For example, if information and conditions warrant, a current threat advisory level of “Yellow” could be directly elevated to “Red.”

Transit agencies must work collaboratively with their local and regional emergency management organizations, joint terrorism task force, police agencies, and other organizations. Each transit agency is responsible for determining its own appropriate response posture, based on an assessment of the guidance received from all sources and the response posture of the communities where the agency provides service.

FTA Recommended Protective Measures/Activities for Transit Agencies

The FTA recommends the threat level protective measures and activities for transit agencies as suggested or recommended actions, not required actions. While each transit agency should implement measures/activities appropriate to its own operating environment, the following general guidelines apply:

- The threat/risk goes up with each successive level.
- Responses are additive; each level incorporates all activities from the previous levels.
- Threat information may be general or indicated for different geographical regions of the country, metro areas, cities, transit agencies, industries, facility types (e.g., subway, tunnel, bus, control center, etc.), or for a specific facility.
- Specific implementation must be determined by the transit agency in light of actual events; protective measures for a higher level than officially designated may be implemented by the transit agency. For example, if the threat advisory level is elevated from “Yellow” to “Orange” a transit agency may elect to implement not only “Orange” level suggested protective measures, but also some “Red” level protective measures.

The following table presents specific transit industry protective measures in response to the HSAS threat level conditions, as well as for the actual attack and post-attack/recovery phases.

FTA Recommended Transit Protective Measures: GREEN

Low Condition (Green). This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks.

- Measure 1.** Refining and exercising as appropriate preplanned Protective Measures.
- Measure 2.** Ensuring personnel receive proper training on the Homeland Security Advisory System and specific preplanned department or agency Protective Measures.
- Measure 3.** Institutionalizing a process to assure that all facilities and regulated sectors are regularly assessed for vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks, and all reasonable measures are taken to mitigate these vulnerabilities.
- Measure 4.** All contractors and visitors must check or sign in and out of designated facilities or areas within the facility that are considered key command, control or communications centers or areas.
- Measure 5.** Ensure existing security measures are in place and functioning such as fencing, locks, camera surveillance, intruder alarms, and lighting. Identify those additional security measures and resources that can enhance the security at the higher Threat Condition levels, e.g., increased surveillance.
- Measure 6.** Establish local, regional and system-wide threat and warning dissemination process, emergency communications capability, and contact information with law enforcement and security officials, including local FBI Field Offices, first responders, regional and district US DOT and FTA representatives. Emergency communications should have redundancy in both hardware and means to contact security officials, law enforcement agencies, and mobile field command centers.
- Measure 7.** Develop terrorist and security awareness and provide information and educate employees on security standards and procedures. Caution employees not to talk with outsiders concerning their facility or related issues.
- Measure 8.** Advise all personnel at each facility to report the presence of unknown personnel, unidentified vehicles, vehicles operated out of the ordinary, abandoned parcels or packages, and other suspicious activities.
- Measure 9.** Develop procedures for shutting down and evacuation of the facility. Facilities located near critical community assets should be especially vigilant of security measures.

- Measure 10.** Incorporate security awareness and information into public education programs and notifications to emergency response organizations.
- Measure 11.** Survey surrounding areas to determine those activities that might increase the security risks that could affect the facility, e.g., airports, government buildings, industrial facilities, pipelines, etc.
- Measure 12.** Ensure contingency and business continuity plans are current and include a response to terrorist threats.
- Measure 13.** Develop and implement hardware, software, and communications security for computer based operational systems.

FTA Recommended Transit Protective Measures: BLUE

Guarded Condition (Blue). This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks.

- Measure 14.** Establish liaison with each station or facility served to coordinate measures that may be necessary if the Threat Condition increases.
- Measure 15.** Ensure that a response can be mobilized and review facility security plans and procedures including bomb threat, chemical, biological or radiological threat and evacuation procedures. Ensure plans incorporate EOD and tactical teams as necessary, including accessibility to explosive detection capabilities such as K-9 teams or electronic sniffers.
- Measure 16.** Inspect perimeter fencing and repair all fence breakdowns. In addition, review all outstanding maintenance and capital project work that could affect the security of facilities.
- Measure 17.** Review all operations plans, personnel details, and logistics requirements that pertain to implementing higher Threat Condition levels.
- Measure 18.** Inspect all CCTV/Video Camera/VCR equipment and intercom systems where applicable to ensure equipment is operational.
- Measure 19.** Review and ensure adequacy of personnel and ID issuance and control procedures.
- Measure 20.** Require each visitor to check in at designated facilities or areas within the facility that are consider key command, control or communications centers or areas and verify their identification – be especially alert to repeat visitors or outsiders who have no apparent business at the facility and are asking questions about the facility or related issues including the facility’s personnel. Be familiar with vendors who service the facility and investigate changes in vendor personnel.
- Measure 21.** Inspect emergency supplies to ensure equipment is in good working order.
- Measure 22.** Provide the public with any information that would strengthen its ability to act appropriately.
- Measure 23.** At regular intervals, remind all personnel to be suspicious and inquisitive about strangers, particularly those carrying suitcases or other containers. Watch for unidentified vehicles on or in the vicinity of facilities. Watch for abandoned parcels or suitcases and any unusual activity.

FTA Recommended Transit Protective Measures: YELLOW

Elevated Condition (Yellow). An Elevated Condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks.

- Measure 24.** Inform all law enforcement and security officials with an operational need to know of the increased threat. Communicate this information to agency employees who have an operational need to know. Reinforce awareness of responsibilities with employees.
- Measure 25.** Test security and emergency communications procedures and protocols. Post Security Alert if appropriate. Check communications with designated emergency response or command locations.
- Measure 26.** Secure all buildings and storage areas not in regular use. Increase frequency of inspection and patrols within the facility including the interior of buildings and along the facility perimeter. Increase surveillance in areas considered key command, control or communications centers and areas such as truck docks, taxi lanes, parking lots, bridges, tunnels, and interlockings, as applicable.
- Measure 27.** Check designated unmanned and remote sites at more frequent intervals for signs of unauthorized entry, suspicious packages, or unusual activities.
- Measure 28.** Reduce the number of access points for vehicles and personnel to minimum levels and periodically spot check the contents of vehicles at the access points. Be alert to vehicles parked for an unusual length of time in or near a facility.
- Measure 29.** Inspect all mail and packages coming into a facility. Do not open suspicious packages. Review the USPS “Suspicious Mail Alert” and the “Bombs by Mail” publications with all personnel involved in receiving mail and packages.
- Measure 30.** Network with local law enforcement intelligence units, i.e. FBI field offices, and liaison, as appropriate, with other departments.
- Measure 31.** Ensure that personnel with access to building plans and area evacuation plans be available at all times. Personnel should be able to seal off an area immediately. The Director of Safety and Security and staff required to implement security plans should be on call and readily available.
- Measure 32.** Increase security spot checks of vehicles and persons entering facilities.

- Measure 33.** Review and implement security measures for high-risk personnel, as appropriate.
- Measure 34.** Increase the frequency of warnings by Low Condition (Green) and Guarded Condition (Blue) and inform personnel of additional threat information as available. Implement procedures to provide periodic updates on security measures being implemented.
- Measure 35.** Ensure that a company or facility response can be mobilized appropriate for the increased security level. Review communications procedures and back-up plans with all concerned.
- Measure 36.** Review with all facility employees the operations plans, personnel safety, security details, and logistics requirements that pertain to implementing increased security levels. Review notification/recall lists.
- Measure 37.** Confirm availability of security resources that can assist with 24/7 coverage as applicable.
- Measure 38.** Step up routine checks of unattended vehicles, scrutiny of packages and vehicles, and monitor critical facilities and key infrastructure (e.g., directed patrol checks of hatches, traction power substations, signal equipment, tracks, switches, rail yards and shops, rights-of-way, parking lots, etc.) are properly secured.
- Measure 39.** Limit visitor access to key security areas and confirm that the visitor has a need to be and is expected. All unknown visitors should be escorted while in these areas.
- Measure 40.** Advise local police agencies that the facility is at Elevated Condition (Yellow) and advise the measures being employed. Coordinate emergency plans as appropriate with nearby jurisdictions.
- Measure 41.** Resurvey the surrounding area to determine if activities near the facility could create emergencies and other incidents that could affect the facility, e.g., airports, government buildings, industrial facilities, railroads, other pipelines, etc.
- Measure 42.** Instruct employees working alone at remote locations or on the ROW to check-in on a periodic basis.
- Measure 43.** Check to ensure all emergency telephone, radio, intercom, and satellite communication devices are in place and they are operational.

- Measure 44.** Direct all personal, company, and contractor vehicles at the facility are secured by locking the vehicles. Remind Bus drivers to lock vehicles and check vehicles before entering or driving.
- Measure 45.** Interface with vendors and contractors to heighten awareness and report suspicious activity. Post signs or make routine public announcements that emphasize the need for all passengers to closely control baggage and packages to avoid transporting items without their knowledge.
- Measure 46.** Assign canines to visible patrols in stations where applicable.
- Measure 47.** Alert bus and helicopter units, if applicable.
- Measure 48.** Increase special foot patrols, bicycle patrol, and bus and train boardings as appropriate. Use canine patrols if available.
- Measure 49.** Develop and implement a schedule for increasing the frequency of inspection including specific areas and item such as: telephone booths, garbage containers, and all public areas.
- Measure 50.** Assessing whether the precise characteristics of the threat require that further refinement of preplanned Protective Measures.
- Measure 51.** Implementing, as appropriate, contingency and emergency response plans.
- Measure 52.** Keep all personnel involved in implementing antiterrorist contingency plans on call.
- Measure 53.** Secure and regularly inspect all buildings, rooms, and storage areas not in regular use.
- Measure 54.** At the beginning and end of each workday and at other regular and frequent intervals, inspect the interior and exterior of buildings in regular use for suspicious packages.
- Measure 55.** Examine mail (above the regular examination process) for letter or parcel bombs.
- Measure 56.** Check all deliveries to facility and loading docks.
- Measure 57.** Make staff and dependents aware of the general situation in order to stop rumors and prevent unnecessary alarm.
- Measure 58.** At an early stage, inform members of local security committees of actions being taken. Explain reasons for actions.

Measure 59. Operate random patrols to check vehicles, people, and buildings.

Measure 60. Implement additional security measures for high-risk personnel as appropriate.

FTA Recommended Transit Protective Measures: ORANGE

High Condition (Orange) A High condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks.

- Measure 61.** Move cars and objects (e.g., crates, trash containers) at least 25 meters from buildings (Where possible) particularly highly populated, mission related, or high profile buildings. Consider centralized parking. Move automobiles and other non-stationary items from station and terminal perimeters and other sensitive buildings or areas. Identify areas where explosive devices could be hidden.
- Measure 62.** Close and lock gates and barriers except those needed for immediate entry and egress. Inspect perimeter fences on a regular basis. Ensure that other security systems are functioning and are available.
- Measure 63.** Increase security manpower for additional surveillance, to act as a deterrent and prevent unauthorized access to secure areas, deploy specialty/technical resources, and enact local tactical plans, if applicable. The areas recommended for additional patrols should include railroad terminals, on trains and busses, at bus stops, parking areas, loading docks, ticket counters, secure areas, bridges, tunnels and interlockings. Increasing surveillance of critical locations.
- Measure 64.** Arrange for and deploy plainclothes law enforcement or security officials for surveillance in terminals, stations and other location as appropriate.
- Measure 65.** Physically inspect visitors and randomly inspect their suitcases, parcels, and other containers.
- Measure 66.** Continue Low, Guarded and Elevated measures or introduce those that have not already been implemented.
- Measure 67.** Activate emergency response plans.
- Measure 68.** Reduce facility access points to the absolute minimum necessary for continued operation. Restrict threatened facility access to essential personnel only.
- Measure 69.** Advise local police agencies that the facility is at a High Condition (Orange) and advise the measures being employed.

- Measure 70.** Consult with local authorities about control of public roads and accesses that might make the facility more vulnerable to terrorist attack if they were to remain open. Take additional precautions at public events and possibly consider alternative venues or even cancellation.
- Measure 71.** Erect barriers and obstacles to control direction of traffic flow and protect that terminal, station or other key area/facility from an attack by a parked or moving vehicle – company vehicles may be used for this purpose. Implement centralized parking and shuttle bus service where feasible.
- Measure 72.** Schedule more frequent visits to remote sites and other locations that are potentially impacted.
- Measure 73.** Increase the frequency of call-ins from remote locations. Employees should not work alone in remote areas.
- Measure 74.** Check all security systems such as lighting and intruder alarms to ensure they are functioning. Install additional, temporary lighting if necessary to adequately light all suspect areas or decrease lighting to detract from the area.
- Measure 75.** Identify the owner of all vehicles parked at key command, control, or communications areas or other critical areas/facilities/ and have all vehicles removed which are not identified.
- Measure 76.** Strictly enforce control of entry. Inspect all vehicles entering key areas/facilities including the vehicle’s cargo areas, undercarriage, glove boxes, and other areas where dangerous items could be concealed.
- Measure 77.** Limit access to designated facilities to those personnel who have a legitimate and verifiable need to enter the facility. Implement positive identification of all personnel – no exceptions. Evacuate all non-essential personnel.
- Measure 78.** Implement frequent inspection of key areas or facilities including the exterior and roof of all buildings and parking areas. Increase patrolling at night and ensure all vulnerable critical points are fully illuminated and secure.
- Measure 79.** If threat is region specific, alert connecting region(s) of potential need for additional manpower and/or equipment; commanding officers of connecting region(s).
- Measure 80.** Review procedures and make necessary preparations to establish Command Center(s) where applicable; make necessary preparations to

dispatch Mobile Command Centers and/or Air Wings in the event of an actual emergency; prepare to initiate an incident command system or similar incident management structure for organizing the response to emergencies. Prepare to execute contingency procedures, such as moving to an alternate site or dispersing the workforce.

- Measure 81.** Disable all baggage lockers where applicable.
- Measure 82.** Restrict access to boarding areas to ticketed passengers only.
- Measure 83.** Coordinate necessary security efforts with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies or any National Guard or other appropriate armed forces organizations.
- Measure 84.** Keep all personnel responsible for implementing antiterrorist plans on call.
- Measure 85.** Enforce centralized parking of vehicles away from buildings.
- Measure 86.** Increase patrolling of the facilities.
- Measure 87.** Protect all designated vulnerable points.

FTA Recommended Transit Protective Measures: RED

Severe Condition (Red). A Severe Condition reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks.

- Measure 88.** Increase security patrol activity to the maximum level sustainable. Increase perimeter patrols and inspections of facility.
- Measure 89.** Cancel or delay all non-vital facility work conducted by contractors, or continuously monitor their work with company personnel as applicable.
- Measure 90.** Continue all Low, Guarded, Elevated and High Condition measures or introduce those that have not already been implemented.
- Measure 91.** Implement emergency and continuity plans as appropriate. Reduce restricted area access points to an operational minimum.
- Measure 92.** Augment security forces to ensure absolute control of key command, control or communications centers or areas and other potential target areas. Establish surveillance points and reporting criteria and procedures.
- Measure 93.** Limit schedule or routing.
- Measure 94.** Remove unattended, unauthorized vehicles parked within 300 feet of a terminal building or station where passengers load or unload.
- Measure 95.** Increase or redirect personnel to address critical emergency needs.
- Measure 96.** Assign emergency response personnel and pre-position and mobilize specially trained teams or resources.
- Measure 97.** Monitor, redirect, or constrain transportation systems.
- Measure 98.** Close public and government facilities.
- Measure 99.** Identify all vehicles within operational or mission support areas.
- Measure 100.** Search all vehicles and their contents before allowing entrance to facilities.
- Measure 101.** Control access and implement positive identification of all personnel.
- Measure 102.** Search all suitcases, briefcases, packages, etc., brought into the facility.

Measure 103. Frequent checks of building exteriors and parking areas.

Measure 104. Minimize all administrative journeys and visits.

Measure 105. Coordinate the possible closing of public roads and facilities with local authorities.

FTA Recommended Transit Activities: BLACK

A Black (Attack) condition means that a terrorist attack has occurred.

Measure 106. Activate Immediate Action Drills (IAD) and Emergency Responses to a Terrorist Attack (there are 10 essential IAD's)

Measure 107. Report the attack immediately to all emergency response organizations

Measure 108. Provide for security of the site and other transit system assets during the emergency and be alert to possible secondary attacks.

Measure 109. Assist response to any Casualties

Measure 110. Activate measures to Mitigate the effects of the Attack

Measure 111. Assess immediately impact of the attack on transit service and facilities and adjust or terminate services as required.

Measure 112. Advise FTA and FBI immediately of all know information regarding the nature of the attack so that FTA, FBI and others may immediately disseminate that information to other transit properties nationwide.

Measure 113. Provide Internal and Public Information asap

Measure 114. Designate the Incident Commander and Activate Transit Emergency Response (or Operations) Center and/or dispatch representatives to appropriate Emergency Operations Centers

Measure 115. Mobilize and provide transit assets (communications links, equipment, facilities and personnel) in support of the overall incident response effort.

Measure 116. Identify Attackers for Responders if witnesses and/or surveillance can provide timely and relevant information

Measure 117. Activate "on-call" external contractors or other special support as required

FTA Recommended Transit Activities: PURPLE

A Purple condition designates business recovery activities after an attack.

Measure 118. Activate (or hastily develop) Business Recovery Plan

Measure 119. Restore Transit System capabilities

Measure 120. Restore the Scene of Attack to functionality

Measure 121. Guard against secondary Attacks

Measure 122. Evaluate why Attack succeeded and update Threat and Vulnerability Analysis

Measure 123. Identify and implement corrective measures

Measure 124. Restore Public confidence by announcing new measures

Measure 125. Return to an appropriate preventative level of GREEN thru RED

Measure 126. Coordinate funding and other needs for transit system restoration with FTA

Measure 127. Identify Short and Long Term Capital replacement needs, develop plans and detailed designs

Measure 128. Complete an After Action report