

Security Management Book Review

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Police Analysis and Planning for Homicide Bombings, 2nd Edition

By John W. Ellis; Reviewed by Terry V. Cochran, CPP

******* Police Analysis and Planning for Homicide Bombings, 2nd Edition.**

By John W. Ellis; published by Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd., www.ccthomas.com, (Web); 358 pages; \$49.95.

In *Police Analysis and Planning for Homicide Bombings*, author John W. Ellis provides a superior foundation for security professionals of any stripe who seek to prevent, or prepare to respond to, terrorist bombings.

A common term in counterterrorism circles is “homicide bombing,” describing a terrorist bombing that is meant to cause casualties whether or not the attacker commits suicide. The term, which Ellis uses throughout, is viewed as more accurate than suicide bomber.

Ellis first addresses the legal issues of concern to many first responders, discussing U.S. Constitutional law and United Nations resolutions regarding acts of terrorism, rights, use of force, and professionalism. Notably, Ellis defines the term “freedom fighter” and examines the grey area between acts of war and acts of terrorism.

Ellis moves on to address what a security professional needs to know about preparing for and responding to homicide bombings. Of greatest interest are the types of bombs used, trends, dynamics of blasts, and the effects of bomb placement. This information could benefit security plans at existing facilities, and it should be incorporated in the design of new buildings. Highly technical material is presented in an easy-to-understand manner.

The text is not only exhaustively researched, it is also written from the perspective of someone who has “been there” and “done that.” Ellis, a veteran police officer, retired in 2004 as a major in the U.S. Army Reserve, after a 29-year career as a military police officer, including tours in operations Desert Storm and Enduring Freedom. He has also been a deputy U.S. Marshal and private investigator.

After reading this book, a security professional should be able to plan for a homicide bombing and avoid or mitigate damage through planning. This book is highly recommended as an instructional text for law enforcement, first responders, and other security professionals.

Reviewer: Terry V. Cochran, CPP, is an independent security consultant providing full spectrum security analysis and management, training, and services to government and industry. Cochran is based in the Atlanta, Georgia, area. She is a member of ASIS International.