

# The **Circuit**

The Magazine for Security Professionals



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## The Terrorist Next Door

### Hostile Termination

### WORKING ARMED Is it Worth the Risk?

the security specialist enters another phase. Safeguards must immediately be put into place to prevent any possible acts of retribution against management or co-workers. To begin with, the company's employees – especially those with a connection to any threat – should be notified of the termination. This will eliminate any guessing or speculation as to the removal of the employee.

Target hardening in the case of a potentially violent individual can be implemented in the form of increased security (both inside and outside of the building) and requested police patrols. The former employee's passwords and access codes should immediately be revoked and, if possible, any locks to which they had key access should be changed. In addition, safety measures to alter access to workspaces, networks, and equipment should be reviewed, updated, or implemented.

The Threat Management team should also reconvene to examine their response to the initial complaint, review the investigation process, and scrutinize the hostile termination itself. Any and all perceived gaps in the process should be quickly remedied, and suggestions for improvement discussed and undertaken. Efforts should also be made to monitor any future contact by the former employee.

## CONCLUSION

Receiving the call for a Hostile Termination

is the tip of a fairly large iceberg. Security professionals should make every attempt to gather as much information as possible prior to their involvement in order to ensure a smooth and legal process. From initial complaint through procedural review, the more integrated with the Threat Management team a security staffer is, the more likely they will achieve a safe resolution to a potentially violent situation

### RECOMMENDED READING:

Robert Fein, PhD., Bryan Vossekuil, and Gwen A. Holden, "Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence," National Institute of Justice, Research in Action

Mark A. Lies II, "Dealing With A Hostile Employee: Avoiding Workplace Violence". Professional Safety, Journal of the American Society of Safety Engineers. [www.asse.org/professionalsafety](http://www.asse.org/professionalsafety)

Eugene A. Rugala, Arnold Isaacs, "Workplace Violence: Issues in Response" Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004

ASIS International/Society for Human Resource Management, "Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention – American National Standard"

ASIS Commission on Standards and Guidelines, "Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guidelines"

1 Rai, S. (2002). "Preventing workplace aggression and violence—A role for occupational therapy". Journal of Prevention, Assessment, and Rehabilitation

2 Robert Fein, PhD., Bryan Vossekuil, and Gwen A. Holden, "Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence," National Institute of Justice, Research in Action, September 1995, p. 3

3 Eugene A. Rugala, Arnold Isaacs, "Workplace Violence: Issues in Response" Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004

4 Robert Fein, PhD., Bryan Vossekuil, and Gwen A. Holden, "Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence," National Institute of Justice, Research in Action, September 1995, p. 3

5 Eugene A. Rugala, Arnold Isaacs, "Workplace Violence: Issues in Response" Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004

# International Bodyguards and Working Armed!



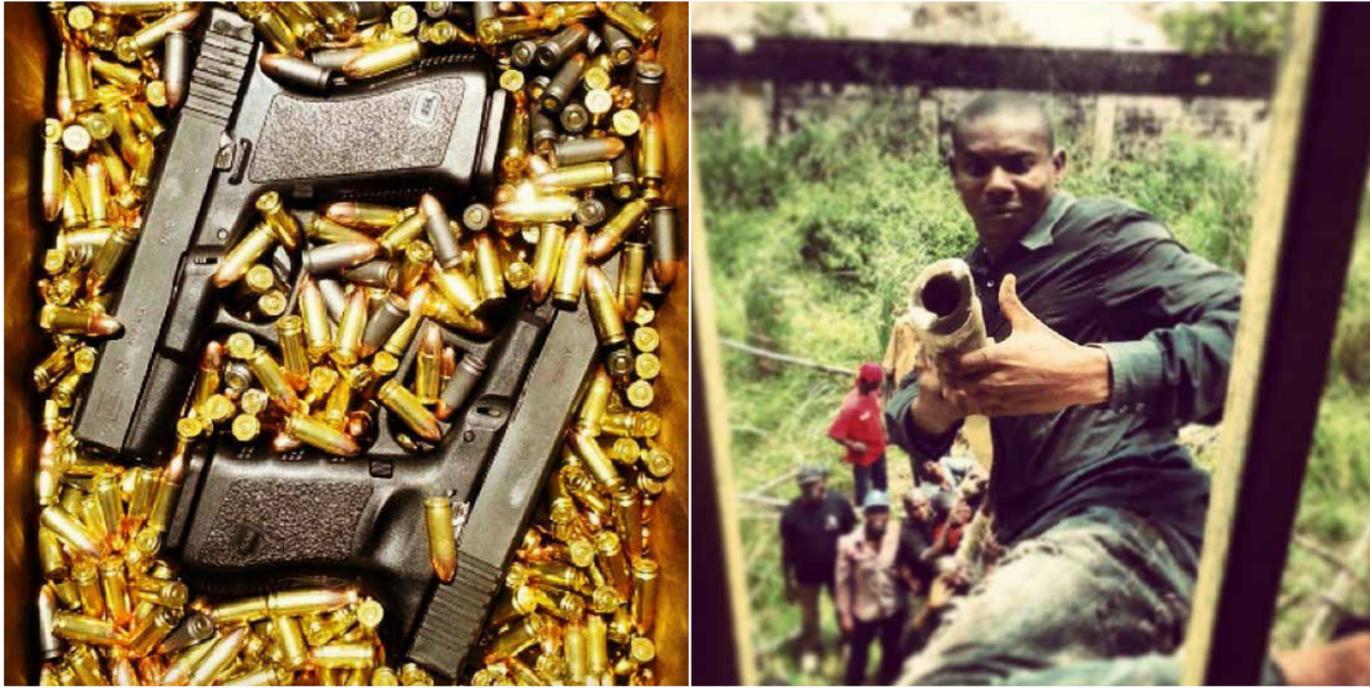
I am always being asked about which guns are best for close protection details and personal defense etc...

My answer is whatever you have access to and what hopefully goes bang when you pull the trigger!! In the U.S. people are spoiled as far as firearms are concerned, in most U.S. States they are freely available to those without criminal records and the 'use of force' laws are very lenient. This is not so in many other countries!

If you are traveling internationally the chances are you will not be able to take firearms with you due to the laws in the country you are visiting, which you need to check before travelling. In many countries you can take sporting/hunting guns if you manage to get a permit from the embassy of that country before you travel. This

can be a long and difficult process and will also put yourself and your project on the radar of the country you're visiting before you even get there. If you get permission to take a firearm with you into another country the chances are that it will not be a 'carry permit'. In most places citizens and legal residents of that country are the only ones who can get firearms ownership and carry permits, if they are available.

It is also very important know the laws on use of force and restrictions on any weapons such as knives and pepper spray that you may want to carry. In places such as England if you're caught with the same type of pepper spray, which can be >



bought at a gas station in most U.S. States, you're looking at being arrested and likely spending up to 2 years in prison.

Even in countries that have a reputation for high crime and violence the chances are that firearms will officially be regulated, usually strictly. I was recently asked to train a U.S. team who claimed to be going to Mexico, where firearms are very restricted, even for Mexican citizens – officially! When I asked these guys weather they wanted an armed or unarmed course they naturally said armed. When I asked them how they were going to carry in Mexico, they said 'they were working on it'. More like dreaming. Sure, if you're working for the Cartels you'll get guns no problems, I hung up, I don't waste my time on such people.

I regularly hear of people that have armed contracts in Mexico and are looking for bodyguards etc. 99.9% of the time these inquiries are just looking to build a database of resumes/

CV's or wanting to promote themselves. I also hear stories of people claiming to work armed in Mexico, claiming to run hostage rescue missions etc. Well, just recently a U.S. Marine, Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi, was released from 8 months in a Mexican jail for accidentally driving down a wrong border road and in to a Mexican police check point, with legal firearms (in the U.S.) in his vehicle. So, how do you think the Mexican Authorities would react to someone dressed in tactical gear with an AR-15 claiming to be there to do a hostage rescue mission? If they do not get shot right on the spot then they will be going straight to jail before being paraded for all the international news channels to see!

Reality check: In Mexico if you caught carrying a gun without the right paperwork, which is impossible to get for foreigners, non-Mexican military or police personnel you will have problems. If you are caught by the police or involved in a shooting then you're going to jail. And you better have plenty of \$\$ available if you

want to get out! If you're caught at a cartel road block and they find a gun... The best hope for you is that they kill you quickly! You may feel like a tough guy with a 9mm but up against half a dozen shooters with AK's and AR's you're going to have issues.

Another recent example was of the crew of the U.S. Salvage Vessel the "Aqua Quest" who were arrested in Honduras and held for two months in Jail. Honduras is one of the most dangerous countries going but they still strictly enforce gun laws. In this case it seem the crew took weapons, that were not legal, into the country; combine this with entrepreneurial police and you have a big problem. Both the crew of the "Aqua Quest" and "Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi" were very lucky to get released but they had family and supporters who pushed the case for their innocence. As a security contractor don't expect such niceties, you will be guilty until proven innocent. A good example of this is the four Blackwater guards that were recently convicted on multiple charges in the case of the Baghdad shooting in 2007.

Most international protection jobs are unarmed; Iraq and Afghanistan are unique situations that I doubt we'll see again. Close protection operators must know how to avoid problems, which is where the skill lies. I can teach someone to shoot in a day, to teach someone to be street wise and able to operate takes a lot longer.

When considering traveling with weapons you need to ask yourself some simple questions; as usual you're doing a threat assessment. You need to consider the following:

- 1) What are the Legalities of carrying weapons and use of force? Firstly, you need to know if it is legal to import or carry firearms or other weapons. This is where you need to do your research, contact the countries embassies or ask contacts within the country what the regulations are. You will also need to know what the laws are on the use of force as these vary greatly. In U.S. states such as Florida if someone threatens you with a knife and you are in fear for your safety you can shoot and kill them, no problems. In some South American countries a knife is not seen as being the same level of threat as a gun, so you would need to initially use impact weapons etc. to counter a knife attack! This may not seem logical to some but it's the law and you need to know it, especially if you have to deal with the police.
- 2) Do you actually need to be armed? The answer to this question most of the time in reality will be no! I have encountered numerous people over the years that consider anything outside of Western Europe or the U.S. as a war zone. I hear of people claiming to have turned down work in Africa and in places that are in relatively safe because they could not carry >

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a gun. I even had one wealthy student and new resident of Miami Beach wanting to buy a .50 sniper rifle to shoot anyone stealing his motor yacht from the bottom of his garden, I presume he watched "Scarface" a few to many times. Thankfully, he changed his mind upon realizing there was a very good chance of him doing life in prison if he ever tried sniping a Miami Beach pirate; better just to insure the boat! So, what if your assessment says yes, there is a requirement to be armed but it's not legal to do so? Are you going to risk it or turn the job down; that is something only you can answer!

3) What weapons are available? After deciding that it's necessary to be armed where will you get the weapons from and what will be available? As mentioned, in a lot of countries only citizens of that country can buy firearms and that itself can be a lengthy process. So, if you cannot take a firearm with you, can you borrow one from a local contact and will it be legal? Can you buy weapons on the street or through the black market and once again, is it legal? If you cannot get ahold of firearms then what other options are available to you? If you are properly trained you can turn most things into some sort of impact or edged weapon. Next question; if you can get firearms what are the best to have? My advice would be to

go with what is reliable and what has a good supply of ammo and parts. I was working in South Africa in 1994 and was initially given a 4 inch .357 Taurus revolver that was rusted and as dry as a nun's crotch. Don't expect people to give you their best weapons, you have to learn to use whatever you're given and to complain enough to ensure you get what you want. .357 revolvers are still a favored weapon of mine BTW!

4) What are the consequences if stopped by police or criminals? Now consider what the issues might be if you are stopped by the police and you have a pistol on you or your carrying a shotgun in the trunk of the car? Is your paperwork good, really good? Will it help if you pay a bribe or will that cause you more problems? Even in Florida, U.S. where you can legally carry pistols etc. I regularly hear of people getting a hard time from the police because they are armed. One guard that was working for me was stopped by the police when going home from a detail one morning. The cops had him sat on the sidewalk as they searched his truck, he knew he had nothing to hide and it was quicker to consent to a search than wait for a K-9 to be called out. The guard had 3 State licenses so, why do the police do this; why not? I expect they were bored, saw the Blackwater sticker on his truck and

wanted to mess with him. So, what if he was with a client... the same thing can happen. If the cops see there is an opportunity to drop a business card to the client they will mess with the guard; run a check on the serial number of the gun, unload and strip it before returning it etc. And this is in a supposed first world country. Now, imagine being stopped by a Cartel in Central America, would you want to be carrying the Glock 17 which is an excellent weapon but screams Government issued or a small nickel plated snub revolver which just says you're a bit wise and careful... Consider all angles, the bad guys do!

5) What are the consequences for the use of force? Without question, the biggest issue when carrying weapons is 'what will the ramifications be if I have to use them?'. Even if the use of force is justified you can initially be arrested and go to jail until the facts are sorted out. In countries where the police are entrepreneurial, foreigners killing locals means opportunity for a bonus pay day! One incident from South America, a businessman with a pistol carry permit was attack by a robber with a knife. The businessman flashed his gun and the criminal backed off, only to attack again as the businessman was entering his car. End result was that the criminal got killed; a 100% justified defensive shooting. That shooting cost

the businessman \$20,000.00 to avoid going to jail for an unspecified length of time. The police and the judge knew he had money and now had an opportunity to extort him, this is how things work; \$20K was a far better deal than going to a 3rd world jail! Another issue with killing people is that in a lot of places their families or fellow gang members will be coming after you or your family. I know of several cases where ex-pats had to leave Latin American/Caribbean countries because of personal safety reasons after they justifiably killed 'a bad guy'.

I always stress to my students and clients that 'guns can get you out of trouble, but they can get you into a lot more trouble also! If you're working armed you need to have done your homework and know how you're going to deal with all the potential problems that can occur from carrying a weapon and using force etc. For example, if you 'drop' someone are you going to hang around and possibly end up in a 3rd world jail or will you go straight to plan "Foxtrot Oscar"? Most people in the close protection business see themselves as reactionary; if they are attacked they'll save their client but there is a bit more to it than that! Here's a warning; if you are low profile and it gets to the stage where you're being attacked then you've already missed something and will most likely be the first to die, hopefully quickly!

