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Protecting Events in Under-Resourced Areas

A resource deployment framework for
nimble event security



Las Vegas police release report on lessons from 2017 mass shooting that killed 58

The recommendations include planning with other agencies and allowing responding officers to remove reflective vests that could make them a target.





FBI chief to share concerns of organized attack in US after Russia massacre

BY SARAH FORTINSKY - 04/11/24 12:38 PM ET



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Allison Robbert

FBI Director Christopher Wray is seen at a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing to examine worldwide threats at the Capitol on Monday, March 11, 2024. (Allison Robbert)

Man Indicted For Plotting Bad Bunny Concert Mass Shooting in Bid To Spark 'Race War,' Feds Say

The 58-year-old Arizona man allegedly planned his attack at a May show in Atlanta to create chaos in lead-up to November's presidential election.

By Gil Kaufman +

06/14/2024



Unique challenges to event security implementation

Structure

- Inter-organizational, multi-team units
- Often mix of full-time, part-time, volunteer staff
- Membership inconsistency

Planning

- Limited budget for protective resources
- Requires planning coordination and shared team experiences
- “Designing” a temporary physical space, a footprint

Performance

- Few opportunities to stay “sharp” work as a group
- Monotony/distractions
- “Service” = onus of threat detection not on attendees
- Few success metrics

Toward a Framework for “Nimble” Event Security

- Goals
 - *Maximize protective capacity*
 - Ability to **deter, detect, delay, defend**
 - *Turn capacity → capability*
 - Effectively deploy personnel, practices, and protective tools to meet all security functions
- Effective resource deployment:
 - Economical use of resources for context and objectives
 - Enables development of individual *and* shared team-task competencies

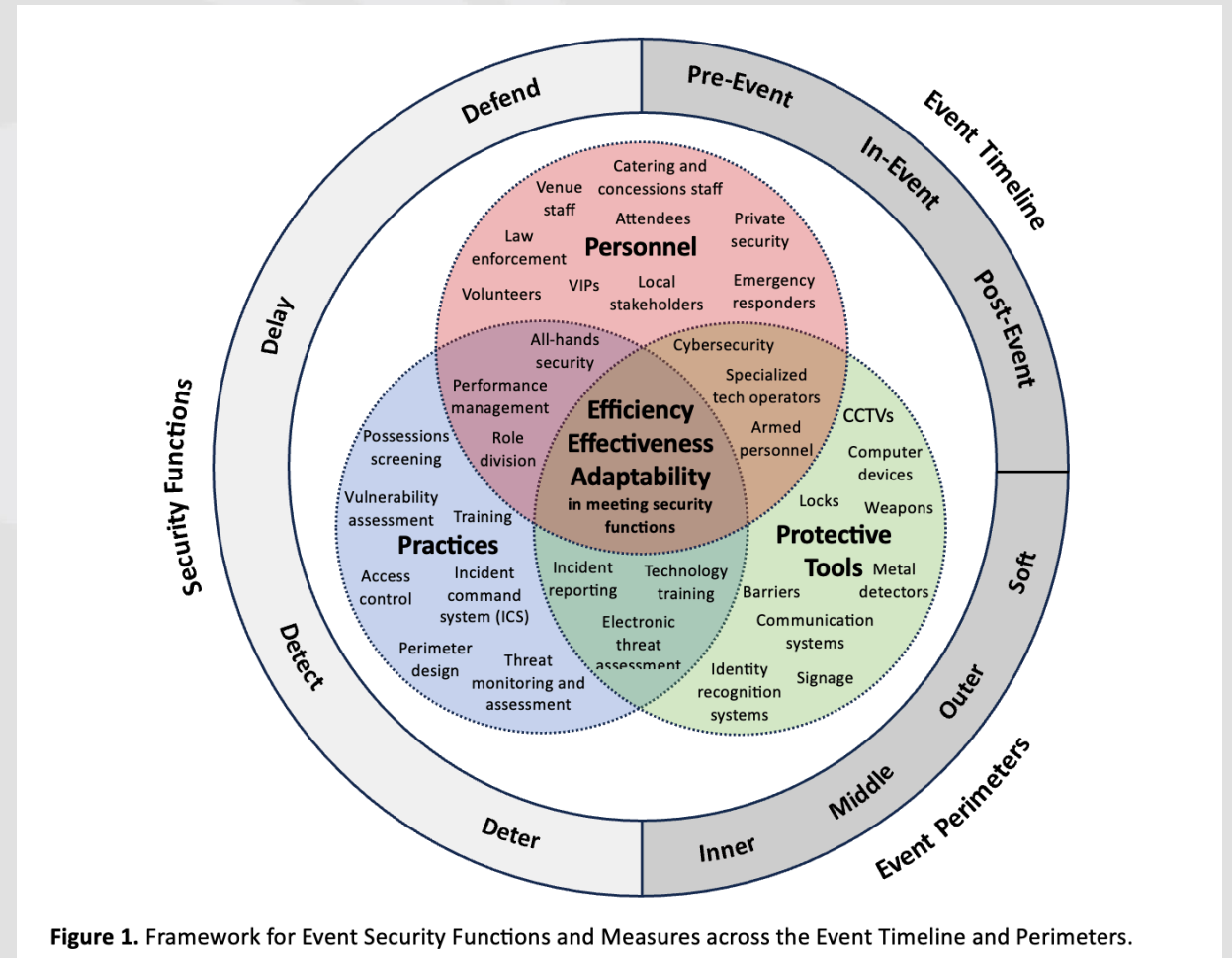


Figure 1. Framework for Event Security Functions and Measures across the Event Timeline and Perimeters.

How do we maximize resources to protect events?

- Research approach
 - Qualitative exploration of resource development, deployment, and teamwork
 - Reflexive thematic analysis and team task analysis
- Method:
 - In-depth interviews (N = 23, ~1-2 hrs each) and survey-based “team” task analysis with event security personnel (in progress)

Resource **planning** for event security

- Security units may form before or after event plans
 - “Sometimes the police will show up as they might not be aware of an event, but sometimes it gets missed. It doesn’t look good with police out front, we had some push back by event personnel as it is a bad look. We do have police at events, but we usually keep them inside not really around the perimeter. (#18)
 - “What should’ve happened is people like us should be brought into the planning process even earlier and they should’ve convened a meeting of all stakeholders and hotel owners, put us in front of them and say, here are potential issues, whether you are aware or not, how will you deal with it, and we can advise you.” (#10)
- Institutional knowledge (of threats, risk, operations) aids next-event cycle risk planning
 - “Sometimes there is a hesitancy to report crime. Sometimes late reported stuff...sometimes people leave, they never took a report, new staff across depts. So sometimes poor documentation, institutional knowledge (lack of) doesn’t help. Barrier for cursory forecast for what threat will look like.” (#8)
 - “Record keeping unfortunately is difficult. Incident reporting is key too. Near miss registers. Doesn’t have to be complicated. But that database informs your risk in a data driven way.” (#12)

Resource **acquisition** for event security

- “Security on a silver platter” strategy for plan adoption (when *risk* is under-appreciated)
 - “The vulnerability assessment – we get relevant internal team and representatives from law enforcement, fire, weather, EMS, we do a Zoom call, up to 2 hours, to run through a spreadsheet and put a number scale 1 – 5 rating system (1 – non-issue, 5 – deadly if not fixed), and we run through 35 topics or so and run down the path. What is your take, what’s your sense from your view...now when we go back to the places we’ve been the hesitation on the front end is completely gone. We designed the tabletops in house.” (#6)
- Flexible thinking and partnerships help conquer resource/functional constraints
 - “Keep enhancing the private-public partnerships. It is important to take this [security] information and actually do something with it. There is no sport marketing without sport security.” (#23)
 - On deterrence: “There is a cop car that is right in front of the gate. The gates cannot be locked, they have panic bars on them. We can’t block those legally.” (#13)
 - “How do we fence this off to create a perimeter so we can control access? Fence? Buses? What can we use to build a perimeter?...Just because rural doesn’t mean we can’t bring in resources from the county and state, national guard, there *are* answers to these questions.” (#6)

Resource **deployment** for event security

- Context-based training and role clarity needed between organizations and teams
 - “Everyone thinks that they are in charge. Like at a football game, we have university leadership, athletics leadership, fire department, police department, university police department, chiefs of all the lesser security teams, any contractors...sometimes there are pointed words that people need to hear that they need to be in charge of something. Sometimes people need to be reminded. That ties back to practice and having plans in place. It helps to go back to the books and open page four and say this is how we are going to do.” (#21)
- Caring to keep alert: Non-vocational staff need empowerment and engagement
 - “This is my challenge: to empower the staff and give them the tools to succeed. Making them see that there is a career path there for them. The stadium would give out free tickets and free food but that doesn’t build culture. It is super important to pay people fairly. We want them to work, not be a spectator. If there is one bad event, they do end up in court...they can be liable. There is high turn over, and the venue is only as good as the staff.” (#23)
 - “People need to focus on the crowd not just the artists or events...check in protocols and communication is key, radio is helpful in larger event. I will make rounds tonight and see if they are okay to keep them on the ball and if they are not doing what they are supposed to I will talk to the security manager and ask him to be moved or placed in a different area.” (#18)

Concluding remarks: what can resource-constrained areas do?

- Recommendation 1: Build public-private partnerships and use unconventional resources to enhance security functions.
- Recommendation 2: Bring security players to the table from the start.
- Recommendation 3: Create robust security plans based on reliable documentation of past local events (or similar events elsewhere).
- Recommendation 4: Deploy available resources strategically – which resources can be used to meet all security functions (before, during, after event across all perimeters) in absence of *other* resources?