

# Terrorist How-To Manual Shows US Homeland in ISIS Crosshairs

From [told US intelligence officials last month](#) that the Bureau has approximately **900 ongoing Islamic State-related inquiries, most of which involve homegrown suspects.**

The manual, "Safety and Security Guidelines for Lone Wolf Mujahideen," provides detailed instructions on successfully carrying out terror attacks.

"I think the manual format gives them sort of a how-to process and therefore it's another indication of the danger we face in dealing with these self-motivated jihadists," said former FBI Associate Deputy Director Oliver "Buck" Revell. "I think it shows a great deal of critical analysis at the heart of the movement and that they are certainly knowledgeable, and they are not ignorant of our methodologies and even our technical capabilities, and we would be wise not to underestimate their capabilities."

A former high-ranking EU intelligence source tells the Investigative Project on Terrorism that three former members of Saddam Hussein's intelligence service who currently are in Raqqa, Syria, wrote the English-language manual, which was derived from earlier Arabic lectures.

## **Manual Tells Jihadists to Conceal Their True Identities**

It notably instructs lone jihadists and members of terrorist cells to conceal their Muslim identities in the West.

*You should make sure to not look particularly attached to religion. A man who works on a secret operation should*

*meddle in the general population. If you can avoid having a beard, wearing qamis (Islamic clothes), using miswak (a sort of toothbrush recommended in the hadiths), and have a booklet of dhikr (Islamic devotional booklet) with you, it's better. Also, you shouldn't be going to often to places like mosques, Islamic institutes or Islamic libraries. You should also wear western-style cloths to appear neutral and not draw attention to yourself.*

The manual also directs jihadists to have plausible cover stories such as posing as engineers, doctors, or tourists, and instructs them not to rush their attacks.

**“The advantage of the lone wolf here is that he is already established in the West, his entire life is a cover story – and a very strong one at that. So use that to your advantage. Be patient, don't rush anything, put your trust in Allah,”** it says.

Mubin Shaikh, a former jihadist who became a confidential informant and infiltrated [“How to Survive in The West”](#) and [recovered](#) from an al-Qaeda member's home in Manchester in [Ali Mohamed](#), who infiltrated the US Army and CIA in the 1980s, [using information](#) he gathered from US government sources.

Shaikh describes the recent Islamic State guide as a new edition of Mohamed's guide.

“Surprise is half of victory, and to surprise the enemy in both the time and location where you will hit maximizes your chance of success,” the manual says.

### **Instructions for Operational Security**

It notes that the 9/11 attacks highlighted this principle because Americans became complacent that terrorists would not hit the US homeland. Hence, they focused on fortifying

their embassies abroad, hiring guards, and increasing security and defending their naval vessels across the Muslim world.

“The US never thought we would hit them at home,” it says.

It includes case studies of successful operations such as the 9/11 attacks, and failures from the jihadist perspective such as the capture of Abu Zubayda in Pakistan. It makes recommendations based on plots foiled by the FBI or other agencies.

It instructs jihadists to avoid drawing attention to themselves and advises that each jihadist cell “be entirely independent of each other.” This way no one can connect jihadist operations with each other.

It also suggests that cell leaders inform their subordinates about planned terror operations on a need-to-know basis to lessen chances of compromising plots if a cell member gets captured.

The manual repeats instructions found in other jihadist literature instructing jihadists to encrypt their online communications while on the Internet to escape detection. While providing instructions for conventional surveillance operations, the manual suggests that jihadists also use Google Earth as a surveillance tool before an attack because other conventional methods risk their capture.

“That’s tradecraft we employ with our own – both our intelligence services and military and investigative services,” Revell said. “They employ [this] sort of tradecraft to identify, penetrate, and neutralize operations. The fact that they do learn even from failures I think is an even more menacing circumstance than we’ve had in the past. These are not ignorant peasants off the field; these are people who have both education and technical skills that are commensurate with our

capabilities.”

Jihadists operating in the West are warned to avoid purchasing weapons from dealers, lest they turn out to be informants for the FBI or other agencies engaging in sting operations. The manual relates a case in which jihadists operating in the US bought weapons from someone they did not know was an undercover FBI agent to make a point.

“So what was the result? When they wanted to launch the attack they got arrested,” the manual says.

It specifically names Shaikh as the type of person to look out for, noting that he convinced the Toronto 18 that he was one of them. At the same time, he actively worked with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to provide it with intelligence.

Shaikh suspects the author named him due to his efforts online and elsewhere to counter the Islamic State narrative and deter Muslims from joining.

“They could have named others, as well, such as