

## **Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Terrorism Color Advisory System**

This system is intended to create a common vocabulary, context, and structure for the ongoing threats that confront the United States, and in turn Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Each color change defines the appropriate measures that should be taken in response. It seeks to inform and facilitate decisions appropriate to different levels of concern raised each day by the possibility of a terrorist threat.

### **Homeland Security Advisory System:**

The Homeland Security Advisory System has five threat conditions, each identified by a description and corresponding color. From lowest to highest, the levels and colors are:

Low = Green;  
Guarded = Blue;  
Elevated = Yellow;  
High = Orange;  
Severe = Red.

The higher the threat condition, the greater the risk is of a terrorist attack. Risk includes both the probability of an attack occurring and its potential gravity. Threat conditions may be assigned for the entire nation, or they may be set for a particular geographic area or industrial sector. Assigned threat conditions will be reviewed at regular intervals to determine whether adjustments are warranted.

The assignment of a threat condition will prompt the implementation of an appropriate set of protective measures. Protective measures are the specific steps a campus should take to reduce its vulnerability and increase its ability to respond during a period of heightened alert. Each campus is responsible for developing their own protective measures and other counter terrorism or self-protection and continuity plan. All campuses need to take appropriate proactive steps to reduce the vulnerability of their personnel and facilities to terrorist attack.

The decision on which threat condition to assign integrates a variety of considerations. This integration will rely on qualitative assessment, not quantitative calculation. The evaluation of this threat information shall include, but not be limited to the following factors:

1. To what degree is the threat information credible?
2. To what degree is the threat information corroborated?
3. To what degree is the threat specific and/or imminent?
4. How grave are the potential consequences of the threat?

Despite best efforts, there can be no guarantee that, at any given threat condition, a terrorist attack will not occur.

## **Threat Conditions and Associated Protective Measures:**

The following threat conditions each represent an increasing risk of terrorist attacks. Beneath each threat condition are some suggested protective measures:

1. Low Condition (Green). This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks. Campuses should consider the following general measures:

1. Assessing campus vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks and make sure all reasonable measures are taken to mitigate these vulnerabilities.  
*(This should include student housing, places of assembly such as cafeterias, libraries, gymnasiums, theaters, etc. for life safety concerns. This should include but not limited to hidden locations where explosives could be placed, access to ventilation systems and entry/exit security. Critical infrastructure such as computer systems, HVAC, food services, water supplies and hazardous materials storage areas need to be evaluated for the same considerations listed above.)*
2. Refining and exercising as appropriate preplanned campus protective measures.  
*(This should include such things as security patrols, entry/exit controls, critical area inspections.)*
3. Ensuring campus faculty and staff receive proper training.

2. Guarded Condition (Blue). This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks. Campuses should consider the following protective measures:

1. Reviewing and updating campus emergency response procedures.  
*(This should include campus procedures to radiological “dirty bombs”, biological, chemical and explosive/incendiary devices.)*
2. Checking communications with designated campus emergency response and command locations and campus emergency response personnel.  
*(This should include radio, computer, and telephone communications, including cell phones.)*
3. Providing the students, faculty and campus staff with any information that would strengthen their ability to act appropriately.  
*(This should include such things as safe places of refuge, emergency notification procedures, self protective measures, etc.)*

3. Elevated Condition (Yellow). This condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks. Campuses should consider the following protective measures:

1. Increasing surveillance of critical locations on campus.  
*(This must include student housing, places of assembly and other identified critical infrastructures.)*
2. Coordinating campus emergency plans as appropriate with local public safety agencies.  
*(This should include a review of local resources available to assist campus*

*faculty and staff during the terrorist event. This needs to be done on a worst case scenario which may include other vulnerable sites in the community being targeted at the same time.)*

3. Assessing whether the characteristics of the threat requires more refinement of the campus pre-planned protective measures.  
*(Especially if the threat specifically targets college and university programs, i.e., ELF placing incendiary devices in the Forestry Building at Michigan Tech. University or starting the fires on the University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus.)*
4. Implementing, as appropriate, campus contingency plans.

4. High Condition (Orange). This condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks. Campuses should consider the following protective measures:

1. Coordinating necessary campus security efforts with local and/or state public safety agencies.  
*(This should include more patrols of identified campus life safety facilities by local or campus police, putting into effect entry/exit security plans to classrooms, the use of private security companies and/or lock down of critical infrastructure locations.)*
2. Taking additional precautions at public events on campus and possibly considering cancellation.  
*(This should include but not limited to hidden locations where explosives could be placed, access to ventilation systems and entry/exit security)*
3. Preparing to execute campus contingency procedures.
4. Restricting threatened campus facility access to essential personnel only.

5. Severe Condition (Red). This condition reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks. Under most circumstances, the protective measures for a severe condition are not intended to be sustained for substantial periods of time. Campuses should consider the following protective measures:

1. Increasing or redirecting campus personnel to address critical emergency needs.  
*(Critical areas will be the protection of life and critical infrastructure areas identified in the pre-plan.)*
2. Assigning campus emergency response personnel, pre-positioning and mobilizing campus resources.
3. Monitoring and/or constraining traffic on campus.
4. Closing vulnerable campus facilities.

Please use this as a guideline to help you plan for the changing terrorist threat. We strongly encourage each campus to work closely with their local law enforcement, fire and emergency management agencies as you refine your contingency and emergency response plans to terrorist activities.