



# **BROCHURE FOR STAFF OF RELIGIOUS SITES**

*"Better education is better prevention, protection and response  
to various types of terrorist threats and incidents that may occur in religious places,  
including attacks with chemical biological and radiological materials."*



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## Preamble

Religious sites are considered to be especially vulnerable to attacks due to their accessibility and the fact that there are usually limited security measures applied.

ProSPeReS project is aimed at increasing the level of protection in places of worship (PWs) by keeping the balance between security measures and preservation of the open nature of PWs. This can be achieved through cooperation between operators of religious sites, public services and security experts, the site's risk assessment, raising public awareness (especially key beneficiaries – clergy and worshippers), as well as developing and validating a comprehensive protection system.

The system involves tools and templates (inc. a tool that has been based on the by DG HOME developed EU Vulnerability Assessment Tool), training (inc. eLearning with virtual reality), educational materials and security measures covering the entire cycle of an emergency and,

finally, a model security system for indoor and outdoor religious gatherings with a set of recommendations. The model includes the most effective methods of cooperation between public authorities and services, faith-based leaders, various religious institutions, security experts and practitioners. Efficient communication is a key element for building a solid platform to exchange needs, expectations and best practices, sharing knowledge and experiences on using technological and non-technological solutions, as well as existing and potential new innovations in the field of public safety and security.

Good organization of reception areas at places of worship and the timely and effective responses of staff, can provide better protection and potentially save lives.

This guide is a part of an awareness raising campaign of the EU Project ProSPeReS with the motto:

*"Better to know."*

### WARNING

This brochure is not intended to replace the regulations in force. Its purpose is to provide practical advice. The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

**The development of effective common security rests on 5 pillars:**

- prevention which relies on comprehensive preparation and holistic organization,
- protection to reduce vulnerabilities,
- detection of threats,
- response to threats,
- mitigation of the results of terroristic attacks.

The process of protecting people at religious sites and large gatherings is part of an institutional mechanism which can be strengthened at the local level by mutual cooperation to improve the effectiveness of security measures and services.

*"We are all actors in our own safety and that of others."*

**When are religious events and ceremonies organized?**

Religious events and ceremonies may be organised on during holidays or leisure activities and are generally permitted as a matter of principle.

Relevant local authorities may support, adapt or limit the organisation of a religious events and ceremonies depending on the security conditions.

In the context of a localised attack or very high risk, religious events and large gatherings may be prohibited by relevant authorities.



*10 things to help protect Places of Worship*

## 1. How to organise a Vulnerability and Threat Assessment

### Definition

Vulnerability and Risk Assessment contains the process of defining, identifying, classifying, and prioritising vulnerabilities to attacks, which stem from several factors such as for example a high concentration of people combined with a lack of security measures.

### Aim

The use of the Vulnerability and Risk Assessments aims to introduce a solid methodological approach in order to support the later identified common needs and requirements to raise the level of protection in PW. A comprehensive vulnerability and/or risk assessment, along with a risk management program (such as the ISO 31000:2018 guidelines on risk management provide), can help stakeholders to improve the protection of their (public) spaces by adopting focused and justified security measures and policies, thus making informed decisions.

### What to do

- Identify all stakeholders who can be involved in the protection of the PW.
- Organise a Vulnerability Assessment workshop, forming a working group of experts. An indicative example of participants could be formed by LEAs, First Responders, Municipal staff, Citizen Representative Organisations, Local Commerce, Urban Planners, Security Solution providers etc.

It is crucial that before the workshop, all the background information about the Place of Worship and its operations is collected and made available to the participants prior to the workshop. The information may include:

- Description of the PW's background (access roads, means of transport, emergency services, neighbourhood) and its purpose.
- Description of daily activities at the PW.
- Description of activities and the area of interest during large events.
- Description of the PW's infrastructure, including its critical operations. Know the configuration of your reception area: layout of buildings, development of spaces, routes and emergency exits.
- Provision of maps, layouts or architectural drawings of the critical buildings (e.g., a Church).
- Applied security measures and procedures daily and on occasion, including the presence of LEAs and first responders.
- Indication of crowd concentration points ("hot areas" with highest crowd density).
- Report of past security and safety incidents at the PW.

## Vulnerability assessment tool

ProSPeReS Vulnerability assessment tool- lite version (VAT Lite) can be used as a quick scan for Places of Worship to determine the overall risk level (and to come up with risk treatments such as better security measures or social innovative solutions to counter possible risks) with regards to the following types of risks. In some cases, performing risk assessments may seem like a very difficult task when we talk about security. The ProSPeReS VAT Lite aims at helping local Places of Worship by making the risk assessment process a little lighter and easier to conduct. If the VAT Lite indicates that there is an above medium level of risk, it is advised to contact local authorities to discuss a more in-depth risk assessment, carried out by experts.

## Sneak preview of the VAT Lite – the guidelines



## An example of the “Record template B” of VAT Lite

**MAIN SITE INFORMATION - COUNT THE MP'S**

Name of the place / address  
Description, date & time of activity  
When to call in case of emergency  
Date of assessment

**SECURITY**

Do you have access control measures for the visitors in place (e.g. x-ray machines, metal detector gates etc.)? **Difficulty:2**

Are the main door and windows or main access point locked during closing hours? **Difficulty:1**

Are there locking mechanisms, bars, or other materials (e.g. impact resistant window films or reinforced glass) installed in the windows to prevent break-ins or dangerous items from being thrown into the building? **Difficulty:1**

Do you have a CCTV system installed for monitoring the areas within the building where people gather? **Difficulty:2**

Do you have a security system with a silent alarm that is connected to the police or a private security provider? **Difficulty:2**

Do you have a fire alarm in place? **Difficulty:2**

Do you have signage in front of the place of worship indicating the existence of security measures inside the facility (e.g. CCTV or security officer's warning)? **Difficulty:1**

Does the main building have emergency exits? **Difficulty:1**

Does your place of worship have a procedure for the staff to monitor people or items received at the place of worship? If you don't receive people at the place of worship please don't answer this question. **Difficulty:3**

Do you have measures or a policy for unattended suspicious items at your place of worship? **Difficulty:2**

**EMERGENCY**

Are there measures in place (e.g. barriers, ropes, barriers) preventing (speeding) cars from entering the area outside the main building where people gather? **Difficulty:1**

Is there a parking lot at your place of worship, does it have access control measures for the cars entering it? If not, don't answer this question. **Difficulty:2**

Is there a parking lot at your place of worship, does it have sufficient lighting? If there is not a parking lot in this building where people gather? If you don't have a CCTV system in place don't answer this question. **Difficulty:2**

Do you have sufficient lighting in the area around the main building to eliminate dark areas and hiding spots? **Difficulty:2**

Is there a parking lot adjacent to your place of worship, does it have access control measures for the cars entering in this area? If there is not a parking lot in this area, don't answer this question. **Difficulty:3**

Do you have sufficient lighting in the area to enhance monitoring and eliminate dark secluded areas? **Difficulty:1**

Are there any streets around the site that allow speeding vehicles to have direct access to the premises of your place of worship? (area of people gathering) **Difficulty:3**

Is there usually a high number of parked vehicles around the place of worship (e.g. for bible placement)? **Difficulty:1**

Are the staff members supporting the activities of the place of worship trained to carry out the emergency procedures? **Difficulty:2**

Have you in the past conducted any type of emergency response trials to see how your facility staff will perform in a crisis situation? **Difficulty:3**

Are there any designated evacuation routes? **Difficulty:2**

Are the evacuation routes clear and unobstructed to facilitate an emergency evacuation / invasion? **Difficulty:1**

**POINTS**

\* The scores of the questions reflect the implementation complexity/difficulty of possible security measures.

*10 things to help protect Places of Worship*

## 2. How to identify indicators of terrorism

### What to pay attention to?

- Behaviours suggesting 'hostile reconnaissance' - this could involve unusual curiosity relating to security measures and the organisation of the PW the prolonged observations of people and vehicles coming and going, taking photos and videos, suspicious vehicles (with or without occupants) or a person remaining in the same place for a prolonged time. Other indicators could be verbal threats, threatening tags or anonymous calls.
- Unusual dress code for the season – this could involve the wearing of clothing to conceal a person's identity or what they may be carrying.
- Vehicles parked near the building at an inappropriate location – this could involve being in a restricted area or parking in breach of local regulations.
- Subcontractors, delivery persons / couriers or others with a legitimate link to the PW acting outside their normal role and responsibilities – this could involve unexpected deliveries, their presence outside their normal working hours or being seen in an area of the site they would not normally be expected to visit.
- Abandoned bags and suspicious items or packages.

### Abandoned bag (Rafał Kowalczyk based on © pigprox, Adobe Stock)



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### 3. How to identify potential signs of individual vulnerability to radicalisation

Risk factors can be formed by the physical and social environment in which crime occurs, but they can also arise at the level of an individual. Individual risk factors entail the internal processes that take place in the radicalization of an individual.

Risks to the public safety of PW can also come from radicalized individuals. Within our European borders, we have also seen severe attacks by lone actor terrorists.

When an individual starts to: **dive very deep into the 'us against them' type of thinking**, radicalisation processes can start occurring.

Especially when this type of antagonism arises (considering society as 'us against them'), the other in their mind can be considered as the enemy. In the case of religion, when an individual is not able to separate the individual beings from the religious ideology, they then deindividualize human beings and see them as a representation of that religion.

These individual risk factors are often factors such as:

- **lack of social competence,**
- **narcissistic personality disorder,**
- **suicidal intent and others.**

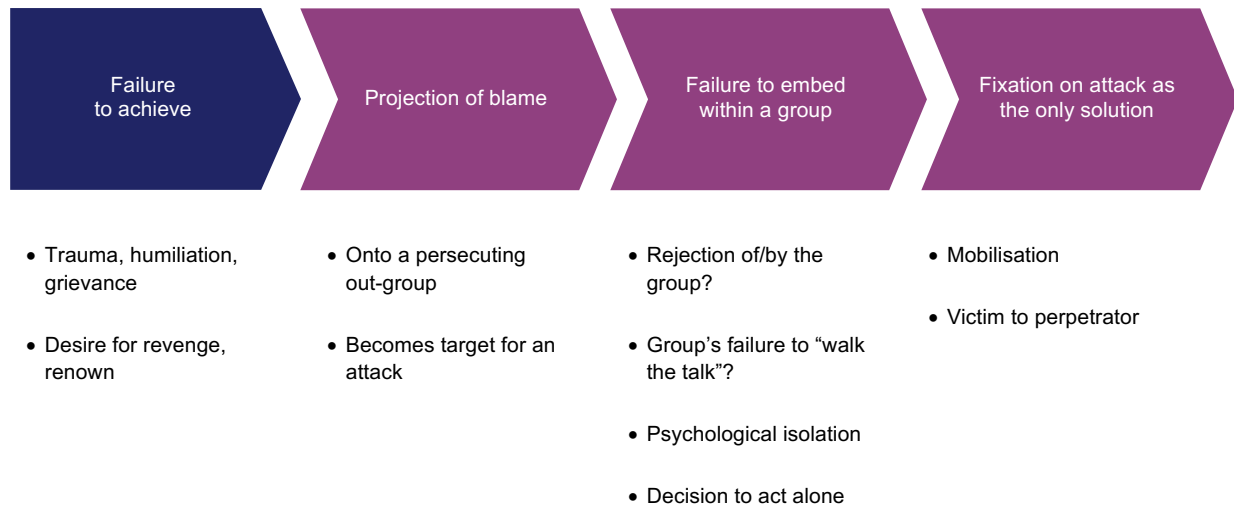
But not every individual with extremist views and certain personality traits will act on these views.

The EU Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) describes in its report on lone actors that assessing the risk of a lone actor preparing for an attack, requires the identification of the presence or absence of threshold behaviours that mark the position they are on the 'lone actor pathway' to an attack<sup>1</sup>. Sharing this information, according to the EU Commission RAN, enables patterns of behaviours to be identified.

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<sup>1</sup> European Union (2021). *Lone Actors as a Challenge for P/CVE*. Retrieved on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022. URL: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-10/ran\\_lone\\_actors\\_as\\_challenge\\_for\\_pcve\\_july\\_2021\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-10/ran_lone_actors_as_challenge_for_pcve_july_2021_en.pdf)

## Lone actor pathway



## The mindset of intent

- Shift from victim to perpetrator
- Stridency of belief
- Links severed with family and friends
- Dialogue overtaken by preaching
- Compassion and humour lost
- Attack planning begins

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## **4. How to recognize signs of extremism**

Our emotions are sometimes subjected to extreme tests. For some, when anger grows too strong, it can slowly lead to isolation, to a change in attitude and sometimes even rejection of others whomever they may be. That is when the worst can happen!

If you notice that someone isolates themselves more and more:

- loses contact with family;
- speaks about conspiracy theories;
- becomes radicalized.

You may be able to help them:

- make an effort to keep in touch with them;
- talk to their friends;
- inform their parents or family;
- in extreme cases contact the local phone number for the prevention of radicalization.

Then all of this may become just a bad memory.

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## 5. How to understand indications of preparation for an attack using hazardous materials

It is characteristic of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incidents (CBRN) that it is difficult to detect or recognise they have been released during the initial stages. Hazardous materials used in an attack could be odourless, colourless and tasteless, thus exposure may not be evident immediately. There are some indicators which could point to a possible CBRN incident:

- Suspicious devices or packages (especially showing wiring, air cylinders, containers with powders or liquids);
- Oily coating, powder or gel-like substance on exposed surfaces;
- Unexplained, unauthorised overhead spraying in the area (from small planes or drones);
- Unexplained odours (bitter almonds, peach kernels, mown hay, cut grass);
- Cases of nausea, breathing difficulties, disorientation;
- Unexplained medical symptoms (sore eyes, headache, vomiting, fitting, non-thermal burns, skin irritation);
- Sick or dead animals in the area;
- Low-lying clouds or fog unrelated to current weather;
- Unexplained clouds of dust;
- Withered plants.

CBRN incidents can also be recognised when there are people who have collapsed without an obvious explanation by the 1-2-3 protocol:

- **1 casualty** – proceed to give first aid as usual.
- **2 casualties** – show caution and look for other indicators of CBRN materials.
- **3 or more casualties** – suspect the involvement of CBRN materials and look for other indicators and seek specialist advice and support.



**Sudden death of animals or plants should definitely worry you (Rafał Kowalczyk based on © Anatoliy Gleb, © Iakov Kalinin, © Mitand73, © humbak, © InputUX Adobe Stock)**





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## 6. Checking the venue for suspicious items

### Search Considerations

Regular searches of your place of worship will enhance a good security culture and reduce the risk of a suspicious item being placed or remaining unnoticed for long periods. Additionally, if you receive a threat and depending upon how credible it is, you may decide to conduct a 'search' for suspicious items.

In such cases:

- **Ensure plans are in place** to carry out an effective search in response to a threat.
- **Identify who in your venue** will coordinate and take responsibility for conducting searches.
- **Initiate a search** by messaging over a public address system (using a coded messages avoids unnecessary disruption and alarm), by text message, personal radio or by a telephone cascade.
- **Divide your venue** into areas of a manageable size for 1 or 2 searchers. Ideally staff should follow a search plan and search in pairs to ensure nothing is missed.
- **Ensure those conducting** searches are familiar with their areas of responsibility. Those who regularly work in an area are best placed to spot unusual or suspicious items.
- **Focus on areas that are open to the public;** enclosed areas (e.g., cloakrooms, stairs, corridors, lifts etc.) evacuation routes and assembly points, car parks, other external areas such as loading bays.
- **Develop appropriate techniques for staff** to be able to routinely search public areas without alarming any visitors present. If more specialised techniques are considered (such as bag searches on entry) then specialised training, equipment and policies may be needed (such as what items should not be allowed inside the place of worship).
- **Ensure all visitors know** who to report a suspicious item to and have the confidence to report any suspicious behaviour.

### IMPORTANT

Do not touch or move anything assessed as a suspicious item  
– immediately start evacuation and dial 112.

**Plan your actions (© sutadimages Adobe Stock)****Focus on areas that are open to the public  
(Rafał Kowalczyk based on © Олег Фадеев Adobe Stock)**

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## 7. Actions to take when a suspicious item is discovered



**CONFIRM: if it has recognizable suspicious characteristics.**  
Use 'hot' assessment.

Is it hidden?	Yes / No
Is it obviously suspicious?	Yes / No
Has the item been deliberately concealed or is it obviously hidden from view?	Yes / No
Does it have wires, circuit boards, batteries, tape, liquids or putty-like seances visible?	Yes / No
Do you think the item poses an immediate threat to life?	Yes / No
Is it <b>typical</b> of what you would expect to find in this location?	Yes / No

Most lost property is found where people congregate, ask if anyone has left the item.

**If the item is assessed to be unattended rather than suspicious, examine it further before using the lost property procedure BUT if the 'HOT' assessment leads you to believe the item is suspicious you should...**



**CLEAR: the immediate area.**

- Do not touch it.
- Take charge and move people away to a safe distance. Even for a small item such as a briefcase move at least 100m away from the item starting from the centre and moving out (emergency may recommend at least 200m distance for a car sized explosive threat and 400m for a truck sized explosive threat).
- Keep yourself and other people out of line of sight of the item. It is a broad rule, but generally if you cannot see the item then you are better protected from it.
- Think about what you can hide behind. Pick something substantial and keep away from glass such as windows and skylights.
- Cordon off the area.

**COMMUNICATE: call the emergency services.**

- Inform [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] (insert name / internal role of person in charge)
- Do not use mobile phones or radios within fifteen metres of the suspicious item.

**CONTROL: access to cordoned area.**

- The public should not be able to approach the area until it is considered safe.
- Try and keep eyewitnesses nearby so they can tell the emergency services what they saw try to get contact details before witnesses move away.

## 10 things to help protect Places of Worship

# 8. How to react to an attack

React in the event of a terrorist attack! These behaviours can save your life, before help arrives:

RUN	HIDE	TELL
<p><b>Escape, if you can</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the safest options;</li> <li>Is there a safe route? RUN, if not HIDE;</li> <li>Can you get there without exposing yourself to greater danger?</li> </ul> <p><b>Help other people to escape, but don't let their indecision slow you down</b></p>  <p><b>Leave belongings behind</b></p>  <p><b>Do not attempt to film the incident – RUN!</b></p>  <p><b>Alert people around you and deter them from entering the danger zone</b></p> 	<p><b>If you cannot run, HIDE</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find cover from gunfire e.g., substantial brickwork / heavy reinforced walls;</li> <li>If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you. Cover from view does not mean you are safe. Bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal.</li> </ul> <p><b>You must still hide, even if you are behind a locked door</b></p>  <p><b>Turn off light and mute the devices</b></p>  <p><b>Be quiet, silence your phone and turn off vibrate</b></p>  <p><b>Lock / barricade yourself in and move away from the door</b></p> 	<p><b>Call 112</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you cannot speak or make a noise, listen to the instructions given to you by the call taker.</li> </ul> <p><b>What do the police need to know?</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What's happening?</li> <li>Where exactly?</li> <li>Where are the suspects?</li> <li>Description of suspects;</li> <li>Info about casualties / hostages;</li> <li>Info about the building / surroundings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Follow police instructions</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain calm;</li> <li>Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat;</li> <li>Keep your hands open and in view.</li> </ul> <p><b>Police may...</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point guns at you;</li> <li>Treat you firmly;</li> <li>Question you;</li> <li>Be unable to distinguish you from the attacker;</li> <li>Officers will evacuate you when it is safe to do so.</li> </ul>

## 10 things to help protect Places of Worship

# 9. How to react to an incident involving hazardous materials

React if you are exposed to hazardous materials! These behaviors can save your life, before help arrives:

### 1. Remove yourself



- **REMOVE** yourself from the area and get away from anything that may be dangerous like: unusual smells, unexplained vapor or mist clouds, dead or unwell people or animals, oily droplets or films on surfaces or water, unusual materials or equipment;
- Choose perpendicular way to the wind direction.

### 2. Don't sit or lie



- Even if you feel unwell, **DON'T** sit or lie down, you might not be able to get up again.

### 3. Go outside



- If inside, try to go outside into fresh air if possible.

### 4. Help other people



- If you see people who are unwell or passing out, help them leave the area without retracing your steps.

### 5. Carefully remove



- As soon as you get to a safer area, carefully **REMOVE** your outer clothing – it may be contaminated;
- **DON'T** touch the outside surface of the clothing with your hands;
- **DON'T** let the outside surface make contact with your face when you take off clothing;
- **IF POSSIBLE** try to isolate clothing in a plastic bag – like a garbage bag – or leave them on the ground and keep away;
- **IF POSSIBLE**, **REMOVE** any hazardous substance from your skin using a dry absorbent material to soak it up or brush it off;
- **RINSE** continually with water if the skin is itchy or painful.

### 6. Call 112



- Use your mobile phone to alert the emergency services on 112 about:
  - The location of the incident;
  - Your location (if different);
  - That hazardous materials might be involved.

### 7. Wait for emergency services



- **WAIT** for emergency services and follow their instructions;
- Tell emergency responders where they are when they arrive to help;
- **DON'T** go home because you may contaminate your family.

### 8. Don't visit medical facilities



- **DON'T** visit a medical facility, you may contaminate other people and emergency workers;
- The emergency services will organize a place nearby where you can receive medical treatment.

### 9. Don't touch



- **DON'T** touch your face;
- **DON'T** touch anyone;
- **DON'T** drink, eat or smoke.

### 10 things to help protect Places of Worship

## 10. How to report any potentially relevant information or concerns

For any type of threat, it is necessary to pass information to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible. In an emergency, it is likely that many witnesses will try to inform the emergency services using the EU emergency number 112 (or by different localised emergency numbers).

However, every organiser of religious events should have an emergency response plan agreed upon and, ideally, should have trained with local emergency services. The plan should identify who is responsible for providing timely and accurate information to the emergency services (e.g., priest/imam/rabbi, security manager, or a nominated 'incident manager'). The plan should also describe the communication methods and channels for transferring information between the organiser and responders at the place of worship in an emergency situation. The plan should outline how staff and/or volunteers provide information about perceived threats and any developing or actual emergency situation.

An ETHANE report structure may be used to provide the best available information about an emergency:

<b>E</b>	<b>Exact location</b> – precisely where the threat/attack is, what part of the site/building(s) are affected, reporting where any attackers were last seen and where they were going
<b>T</b>	<b>Type of incident</b> – what type of incident/threat/attack (suspicious package, bomb threat, active shooter, attack with a bladed weapon etc.)
<b>H</b>	<b>Hazards present or suspected</b> – what hazards/potential hazards are involved (possible explosives, weapons seen/used, suspected release of CBRN materials etc.), report description(s) of the attacker(s)
<b>A</b>	<b>Access</b> – routes that are safe to use (what are the best routes for emergency access and exit (consider options from any plans previously agreed/held by emergency services)
<b>N</b>	<b>Number, type, severity casualties</b> – how many and what type of injuries
<b>E</b>	<b>Emergency services present and those required</b> – which ones and how many are there, specify any others needed and how many for the specific threat(s), hazard(s) and impacts of the emergency situation



When the involvement of CBRN materials is suspected, it will also be important to inform the emergency services:

- Why the release of CBRN materials is suspected?
- Who discovered any suspicious package, mail or substance and how they have been managed and supported?
- What are local weather conditions that might affect the emergency (like rain, wind direction, temperature)?
- If the place/building/event is a likely target for an attack?
- If there have been any messages or intelligence about an attack or possible use of CBRN materials?

**Weather conditions might affect the emergency (© mhp Adobe Stock)**



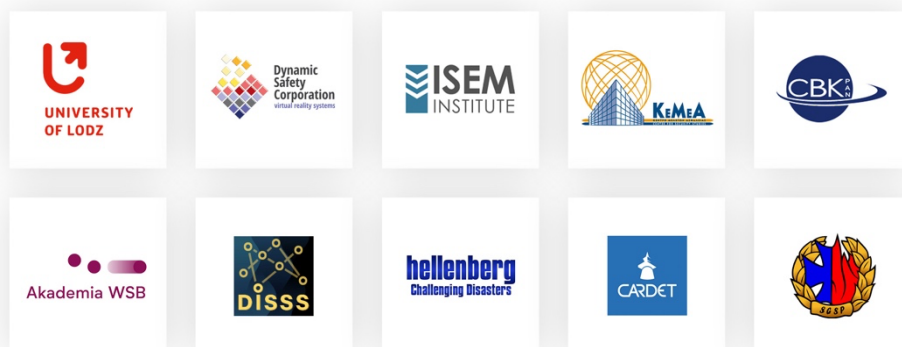


A threat or emergency can cause stress and an emotional response; informants should be encouraged to stay calm when making their reports to the emergency services (or incident manager). They should give accurate and precise information when communicating and to answer any questions to the best of their ability and knowledge (and say if they are uncertain about something). If they are making a report on their phone (or radio) they should stay connected until they receive a clear message they can hang up and end the conversation; they should then carry out any instructions they have been given and remain attentive in case the emergency services or incident manager recontacts them for more information or an update.

If the situation changes, they should use recontact the emergency services to update them so they can organise more/other responses and update their responders so they can adapt to the changing circumstances.

## The ProSPeReS Consortium

Security experts, security research and academic institutions,  
providers of technical solutions and services



### Law enforcement agencies (LEAs)



### Faith-based organizations







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