

# PUBLIC SECURITY — A NATION'S PERSPECTIVE

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## Homeland Security: The Ministry's Concept

The aim of this article is to present a concise review of a number of significant changes which have been implemented or are in the planning stages, within the Ministry of Public Security itself and in the wide-ranging field of public security in Israel, including specific operations of the Ministry to put these changes into practice.

Homeland security is defined as the comprehensive protection provided within a country's boundaries to all individuals, communities, institutions and corporations, private and governmental, against all threats to their ability to exercise their fundamental rights, including their property, cultural and economic rights; and so, too, is the imperative for Israel.

Upon taking office, the current Minister of Public Security, Mr. Tzakhi Hanegbi, conducted a review of the responsibilities coming under his jurisdiction. He then charged his Chief of Staff for Operations to prepare a plan aimed at reinforcing and upgrading the Ministry in order to assume overall charge of all elements essential to homeland security. It had been decided earlier by the government that the Ministry's current authority over the Israel Police and the Israel Prisons Service would be expanded to include the military's Home Front Command, the Magen David Adom emergency medical service (Israel's equivalent to the EMS), and the fire service. These agencies contribute in an extensive manner to homeland security in Israel, while at the same time their contributions are vital to realizing the Ministry's conception of a comprehensive homeland security program. These are, of course, agencies that the Ministry and the Israel Police (IP) have been accustomed to working with all along, in times of both peace and emergency, so that the shift of official authority would cause no significant changes in the chain of command. For example, in major incidents involving forces from these agencies, overall field command and control responsibility is already in the hands of the regional police commander of the district in which the incident occurs.



## The Future Structure of the Ministry

Once these three additional agencies have come formally under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Security, a new National Security Authority will be established. This comes at the direct order of the Prime Minister, who so decided once he was convinced of the problems caused by the current fragmentation of governmental responsibility in this area. He saw the clear need to bring into a single authority the planning and fieldwork functions of all the agencies and bodies operating in the security arena, to establish an authority that can handle and manage 'the big picture', determine national policy, engage in comprehensive long-term planning, plan and coordinate all the facets of homeland security, draw up operational policies and procedures, issue regulations, identify technological needs, supervise, coordinate and ensure that things get done. In other words, the agency will act as an across-the-board director/regulator for homeland security, across all sectors, public and private, as

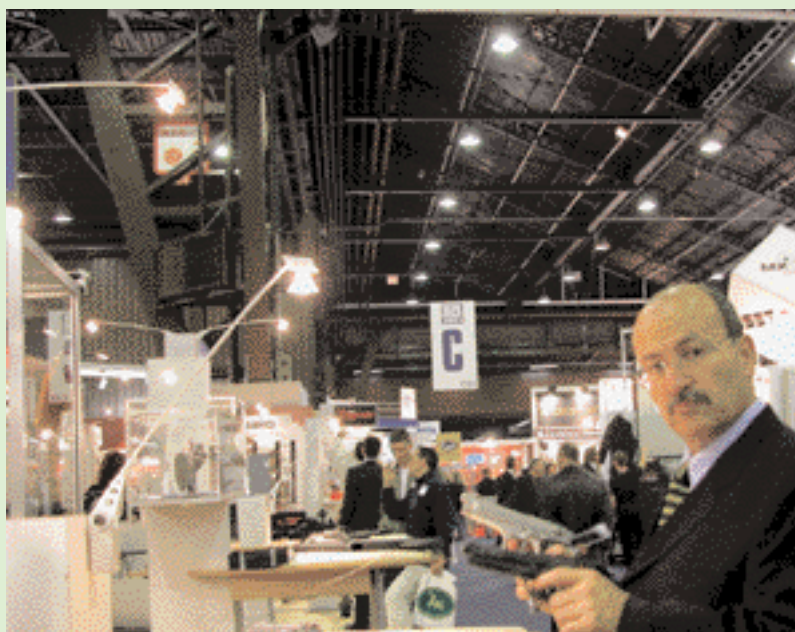
well as across governmental ministries.

A second new body to be established within the Ministry is the Construction Supervision and Enforcement Authority. Its charge will be to enforce laws and regulations governing planning and construction in open spaces and sparsely populated areas; the new body will combine under one official roof the Ministry of the Environment's Green Police (responsible for enforcement of environmental standards) and the monitoring units of the Israel Lands Administration and the Ministry of the Interior. The effect will be to unify the implementation of national policy in this realm and to multiply enforcement troops, thus putting a rapid end to illegal construction and other planning and construction offenses.

One beneficial effect of this restructuring in the Ministry of Public Security will be the transfer of some of the IP's administrative duties to the new bodies, thus freeing IP resources to be invested in the IP's main mission – crime-fighting.

### The IP's Security Department

Through its Security Department, the IP already provides guidance and instruction to the security units of public agencies and organizations with high protection requirements, among them government ministries, air and seaports, the national waterworks, power plants, communications and rail networks, cellular telephone companies, petroleum infrastructure industries and oil refineries. The Security Department also lays down security conditions for businesses requiring IP security approval under the Business Licensing Law. All told, the IP has indirect responsibility for numerous



security directors and thousands of premises requiring protection.

In today's security climate, it turns out that, in selecting their targets for attack, terrorists "do not follow current security gradings", so that to forestall and vitiate the terrorist threat a change of methodology is needed and also a central national agency. In consultation with the Ministry of Public Security, the Prime Minister has decided to entrust the development of the new approach to the National Security Authority (NSA), which is to take charge of all security operations not currently handled by the existing national security agencies – the General Security Service (Shabak), the Mossad, and the Israel Defense Force (IDF).

The main police stations of each police District and Sub-District now has a Security Officer, whose responsibility it is to provide expert advice and instruction on security methods, equipment and operations to all bodies and organizations requiring assistance, to make visits, and to exercise general security supervision. The IP also carries out regular spot-checks and training exercises to

promote public awareness. This is work that is demanding more and more attention and more and more resources, both human and capital. Although steadily accumulated experience has brought about a marked improvement in recent years in the securing of public places, the most significant upgrading will come with the imminent establishment of the NSA, as soon as the team headed by the director of the Counter-Terrorism HQ has completed its examination of the necessary arrangements.

### The Legal Foundations

Among the many laws currently providing the legal basis for security operations are the following:

1. **The Regulation of Security in Public Bodies Law** sets out the security procedures to be followed by the public bodies and institutions falling under the Law's authority, including their obligation to appoint a Director of Security and security guards.
2. **The Private Investigators and Security Guards Law** regulates the licensing of security firms and guards (in certain categories of places).



**3. The Powers of Search during Periods of Emergency Law** (Temporary Order) grants search and seizure powers — on a person, vehicle or ship — at a limited category of sites, to members of a defined group of occupations (e.g., security guards, soldiers). Further, the law enables the Minister of Public Security to extend authority to specific supervisors to grant these search and seizure powers to others. This law thus authorizes security officers and guards protecting educational institutions, public transportation, hotels, malls, ports, etc.

**4. The Business Licensing Law** requires licensing of businesses, and allows licensing to be made conditional upon meeting security regulations.

**5. The Local Authorities (Regulating Guarding) Law** enables local government in a specified list of communities necessitating intensive security to require residents to perform community guard duty and grants authorized civilians serving on such duty the powers to identify, stop, search and detain suspicious individuals. The criteria for this authorization are currently under review, before being

finalized by the Minister of Public Security.

### Standards and Training for Security Services

At the time of writing, the organizations receiving security advice and instruction from the IP employ altogether some 14,000 security guards via approximately 380 private security services companies. Fifty-nine companies are engaged in supplying school security guards, all of whom take their training from four IP-approved and supervised firms. All these guards and companies require clear standards under which to operate, and it will be one of the tasks of the future NSA to draw up these operating standards, plus minimum training requirements and qualifications for the jobs of Security Officer and Director of Security.

It is my opinion that the job of a Security Officer has to become a regulated profession like any other (a situation that is far from being met at present and one requiring improvement across the board), a profession requiring training in a recognized school, working according to a systematic curricula, including regular training exercises, and

Ministry (in the future — NSA) supervision and control.

An additional important provider of guarding and security patrols is Israel's Civil Guard, a civilian volunteer force working in conjunction with the Israel Police, now numbering some 75,000 volunteers, of whom 45,000 are actively engaged in neighborhood patrol duties. Of these 45,000, some 8,000 are uniformed in the Border Guard (they are known in Hebrew as the *Matmid*), performing operational and combat duties out of 65 Border Guard bases all over the country. A significant number of civilian security officers and guards also serve in the Civil Guard or the *Matmid* force.

Other significant contributions of the Civil Guard to homeland security are from its special units and projects — the stand-by security units for manufacturing plants, commercial premises, industrial parks, and the like; the stand-by security units for schools and other educational institutions; the introduction of 11th and 12th graders into volunteer security tasks; its jeep, horse and dog units, etc. A Civil Guard project deserving to be singled out is the establishment of special Civil Guard security units within large-scale state and governmental enterprises, such as the water and electricity supply networks.

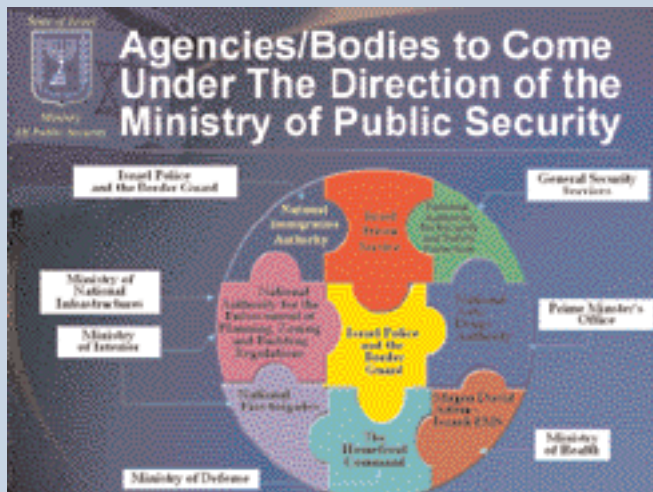
In my opinion, in spite of the undeniable importance of the above-mentioned volunteers, a senior Security Officer cannot work on a voluntary basis. His responsibilities require him to be on call and available day and night, seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. This level of commitment is incompatible with unpaid work.



## Suicide Terrorists

It is still beyond our power to compose the 'profile' or 'portrait' of a suicide bomber or suicide terrorist. They adapt themselves to the terrain, mingle in with the local population or local illegal residents, study their target in advance, and even adopt disguises (as soldiers or the ultra-Orthodox). They come in all shapes and forms, young and old, men and women (including married women), and are of all types and characters. Using people prepared to commit suicide is the simplest method of terrorist attack, because of its very ability to mold itself to the target location and meld into a crowd of victims.

All elements of Israel's security apparatus (IDF, Shabak, IP) are constantly seeking ways to cut down the effectiveness of suicide terrorists and have recently achieved a remarkable level of success. Now a separation fence is being erected – combining a physical barrier, equipped with sophisticated technological devices, with security operations of the IDF, the Border Guard and the IP – and once complete, it will have an immediate and dramatic effect on the number of suicide attacks. Already, in those areas where the fence is fully operational the number of suicide attacks has dramatically declined. Another vital contribution is provided by IDF and Shabak operations in the civilian centers despatching the terrorists, such as in Nablus, Ramallah, Jenin, and elsewhere. It is very clear that the most successful approach to combating the suicide bomber is one that combines operations by all types of security personnel with sophistication and creativity of thought and equipment.



Another example of a shift in approach to countering suicide bombers is the government's decision of February 2004 to expand the security on public transportation against the bombers and to approve the acceptance of a NIS 30 million (\$ 6,600,000) contribution from the Friendship Fund to enable the purchase of new protective devices, such as magnetometers and baggage screening technology to be used by security personnel, and for installing devices preventing the entry into buses through the rear doors. The Israeli government approved this plan having been convinced that the security strategy adopted by shopping malls and large department stores – using explosives detectors to examine every person entering – had proved itself more effective than the strategy in use for protecting the public transportation.

## Conclusion

The IP is now at peak readiness for dealing with a mega-terrorist attack, not excluding an attack by chemical or other non-conventional means. Just as, in the nature of things, police officers will always be the first to arrive at the site of a mass-casualty disaster, so the IP will always be the agency to take overall command of the response to a disaster, collaborating smoothly with other emergency and search & rescue forces. It is similarly ready to receive reinforcement from (and take command of) regular IDF forces and equipment, such as military search & rescue units, soldiers brought in to help with evacuation, helicopters, bulldozers and cranes. Joint exercises between the police and the military have made sure that the transfer of command from one to the other proceeds without a hitch.

In the case of an exceptionally large-scale incident (in terms of casualties and material destruction), command and control will only be passed to the IDF's Home Front Command if IP commanders request this and government ministers take a special decision to agree to such a transfer of command.

By implementing this new concept of Public Security and integrating these bodies within the authority of our Ministry, it is my hope and belief that the level, the operational accomplishments, and the sense of public security will improve appreciably.

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