

Preface

This document is intended as a resource to inform U.S. military personnel of the nature and characteristics of the terrorist threat in the current operational environment. Its purpose is to provide unit leaders, planners and commanders with a tool for understanding the nature of the terrorism and identifying the threat of terrorism to their units. It provides information for leaders to conduct realistic evaluations of risk and vulnerability to their units, and details probable circumstances in which U.S. military units can expect terrorist operations against them and likely motivations for such operations. This document is not intended to be a counter-terrorism “how-to” manual, or to replace current training and intelligence products dealing with terrorism.

This document describes terrorism as an increasingly common method of conflict. It uses historical discussions and vignettes to familiarize the audience with the progressive development of terrorist thought and technique. The document is organized into six chapters and six appendices, with a glossary and bibliography included. It was compiled from open source research and materials.

The first three chapters examine key components of the phenomenon of terrorism and its practitioners. They include definitions and characteristics of terrorism in general, historical milestones, common features and key behaviors of terrorist groups and individuals, and models of terrorist organizations. Categories, descriptions, and classifications of terrorism and its associated aspects are introduced, simplified and rationalized.

The next three chapters examine the relation of terrorist threats to U.S. military forces in general, specific considerations for U.S. forces while deploying, preparing for deployment, or at home station, and the future evolution of terrorism. The first appendix contains details of specific terrorist groups relative to each combatant command with a geographical responsibility. The other appendices describe terrorist planning, operations, commonly used weapons, and weapons of mass destruction.

The proponent for this publication is HQ TRADOC. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 directly to the TRADOC Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence – Threats at the following address: Director, TRADOC ADCSINT – Threats, ATTN: ATIN-L-T (Bldg 53), 700 Scott Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-1323.

This document is Version 1.2 of the publication, effective 19 December 2003. The only major change from the previous version is identifying it as a TRADOC DCSINT Handbook.

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.