BACKGROUNDER

U.S. Should Assist Britain in Meeting Security Threats to the 2012 London Olympic Games

Ted R. Bromund, PhD, Steven Bucci, PhD, Luke Coffey, Robin Simcox, and Jessica Zuckerman

Abstract

The 2012 Summer Olympic Games and the Paralympics will be held from late July through early September in London. They are an obvious target for attacks by radical Islamist terrorists, as well as anti-capitalist anarchists, supporters of various national causes, and other groups. Britain is one of the world's most experienced and capable practitioners of counterterrorism, and though the threats to the Summer Games are serious, Britain is well placed to cope with them. But the scale of the threat and the strain that they will place on Britain's armed forces mean that the U.S. can and should provide supporting assistance to British authorities.

On July 6, 2005, after intensive lobbying by then-Prime Minister Tony Blair, London narrowly won the competition to host the 2012 Summer Olympics and the 2012 Paralympics. The Summer Games will open on July 27 and close on August 12, with the Paralympics following from August 29 through September 9. In 2010, Blair's Labour government was replaced by a coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, led by Prime Minister David Cameron, which is thus responsible for bringing this Labour legacy to fruition.

Hosting the Games is an enormous challenge on many levels, but the need to deal with the security threats that confront the Games is paramount. While Britain is well placed to cope with this challenge, the task is a large one, and the United States can and should go beyond its normal and close cooperation with Britain to assist it in securing the Games.

The Islamist Threat to the London Games

As a major world event, the Olympic Games are an obvious target for terrorists of all sorts. The recent history of the Games offers no reason

Key Points

- The 2012 Summer Olympics and Paralympics will be held from July through September in London.

- Hosting the Games is an enormous challenge on many levels, but the need to deal with the security threats that confront the Games is paramount.

- Past Olympics have been targeted by terrorists, and there is no reason to believe that the London Games will be immune.

- The threat to the Games comes preeminently from radical Islamists, but anarchists, supporters of various national causes, and hackers also pose threats.

- Britain has learned the applicable lessons from the 2004 Games and has the knowledge, the experience, and the assets to secure the 2012 Games.

- However, the challenge before Britain is immense, and the U.S. can and should go beyond its normal, close cooperation with Britain to assist it.

for optimism that the London Games will be immune.

Most infamously, in September 1972, members of the Israeli Olympic team were taken hostage by a militant Palestinian group at their team quarters during the Munich Summer Olympics. Less than 24 hours later, 11 Israeli athletes, one West German police officer, and five terrorists had been killed.

In 1996, Eric Rudolph planted a nail bomb at the Centennial Olympic Park during the Atlanta Summer Olympics. The attack killed one and injured over 100. Rudolph had originally aspired to derail the Olympics by bombing the Atlanta power grid, citing the U.S. government's supposedly pro-abortion policies as a motivation for his attack. He went on to bomb two abortion clinics and a nightclub before being apprehended in May 2003.

Not surprisingly, the British government believes that "terrorism poses the greatest security threat" to the Olympics and that the most potent and sustained terrorist threat facing Britain today comes from the radical Islamists in al-Qaeda and its affiliates.[1] Between 1999 and 2010, there were nine major al-Qaeda–related terrorist plots directed against Britain. The current threat level is "substantial" (meaning that an attack is a strong possibility), although Scotland Yard has stated that the risk of attack during the Olympics will increase to "severe" (meaning that an attack is highly likely).[2]

Jonathan Evans, Director General of the Security Service, better known as MI-5, warned in September 2010 that "we should not underestimate the challenge of mounting the Games securely in an environment with a high terrorist threat, the first time this has been attempted."[3] In a more recent speech, in June 2012, Evans sounded a more optimistic note. He described the Games as "an attractive target for our enemies" and said there was "no shortage of individuals talking about wanting to mount terrorist attacks" in Britain. But while he warned that "some terrorist networks have thought about whether they could pull off an attack" and noted that "there is no such thing as guaranteed security," he stated that "the Games are not an easy target.... I think that we shall see a successful and memorable Games this summer."[4]

British intelligence sources believe that a minimum of 200 potential terrorists are actively planning suicide attacks in the United Kingdom. Rather than targeting Olympic venues, where the security presence will be extremely high, it is thought that potential attackers will focus on less secure areas with large crowds, such as train stations and open-air television screenings.[5]

With the increase in passengers expected on the London Underground, the subway system is also an obvious target. That system has been targeted by Islamist terrorists in the past. On July 7, 2005, four British Muslims committed suicide attacks on the London public transport system, killing 52; and on July 21, 2005, four aspirant suicide attackers' bombs failed to detonate on the London Underground and on a London bus.

A further concern for the British authorities is the possibility of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack. In April 2005, an al-Qaeda operative named Kamel Bourgass was jailed in the U.K. for 17 years for an attempted biological attack using the toxic substance ricin. (In a separate trial, he was jailed for life for the murder of a police officer while resisting arrest.) In March 2012, an extremist website with 17,000 members posted instructions on how to launch a cyanide attack during the Olympics.[6]

Attacks might be made either by al-Qaeda's franchises, by so-called lone wolves, or both. Al-Qaeda in

1. U.K. Home Office, "CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism," July 2011, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/counter-terrorism-strategy/contest-summary?view=Binary (accessed June 22, 2012).

2. U.K. Home Office, "Current Threat Level," http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism/current-threat-level/, and "London Olympics Security Report Warns of Extremist Threat in Host Borough," *The Guardian*, February 12, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2012/feb/12/olympic-security-extremist-host-borough (accessed June 22, 2012).

3. "Jonathan Evans' Terrorism Speech," *The Telegraph*, September 17, 2010, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8008252/Jonathan-Evans-terrorism-speech.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

4. Jonathan Evans, Director General of the Security Service, "The Olympics and Beyond," Address at the Lord Mayor's Annual Defence and Security Lecture, June 25, 2012, https://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/the-olympics-and-beyond.html (accessed July 6, 2012).

5. "200 Suicide Bombers 'Planning Attacks in UK'," *The Telegraph*, October 8, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8815574/200-suicide-bombers-planning-attacks-in-UK.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

6. "London 2012 Olympics: Terrorists 'Plotting Cyanide Poison Hand Cream Attack'," *The Telegraph*, March 26, 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/news/9166546/London-2012-Olympics-terrorists-plotting-cyanide-poison-hand-cream-attack.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has consistently targeted the West. Their latest bomb plot, foiled in early May by an agent who had infiltrated AQAP, is a reminder of this threat.[7]

Even more worrying in the British context is al-Qaeda's franchise in Somalia, al-Shabaab. Evans is "concerned that it is only a matter of time before we see terrorism on our streets inspired by ... al-Shabaab." When a senior al-Qaeda figure based in Somalia was killed last June, his laptop contained proposals to attack London hotels and a British department store.[8] Additionally, dozens of British subjects are currently fighting alongside al-Shabaab in Somalia, and dozens are feared to have returned already to the United Kingdom. The large Somali population in the U.K. (estimates start at 250,000 individuals) allows al-Shabaab to recruit British Muslims, train them, and send them back into the West without causing excessive suspicion.

Evans's concern was justified when in July 2012, a suspected al-Shabaab fighter—a 24-year-old male known by a government-assigned pseudonym as "CF"—was caught crossing through the Olympic Park on the London Overground railway system on five occasions in April and May. This breached the conditions of his Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures, government legislation used to control the activities of suspected terrorists.

In 2008, CF is thought to have tried to enter Afghanistan for terrorist training and to take part in suicide operations. He was charged for this in Britain and subsequently fled to Somalia in June 2009 but was acquitted of any crime in his absence. During his time in Somalia, CF is believed to have received terrorist training and to have fought alongside al-Shabaab.[9] He was arrested in Somaliland in January 2011 and deported to Britain in March 2011.[10] In Britain, he is suspected of trying to recruit Britons to al-Shabaab. According to the Home Office, he is also linked to six British nationals who received terrorist training from the senior al-Qaeda leader, Saleh Nabhan, who was killed by U.S. Navy SEALs in 2009.[11]

The example of CF is particularly important because previous attacks by "lone wolf" terrorists have proven that individuals do not need instruction from al-Qaeda's central leadership in Pakistan to act. For example, AQAP's *Inspire* magazine encourages terrorist plots that may not kill on a mass scale but are harder for authorities to stop. Roshonara Choudhry, a 21-year-old British female, carried out an attack of this type by stabbing a British Member of Parliament during a constituency meeting in 2010. (Choudhry was subsequently jailed for life for attempted murder.) This type of incident proves that "lone wolves" can adopt simple, effective do-it-yourself approaches to terrorism. These attacks could come increasingly from radicalized individuals operating in the U.K. with only tenuous links—or even no links at all—to al-Qaeda.[12]

Britain's CONTEST counterterrorism strategy will underpin the security of the London Games. Developed by a Labour government in 2003 and subsequently adapted by the current Conservative-led coalition government, the CONTEST strategy, which aims to coordinate cross-government efforts to reduce the risk posed by terrorism to Britain and its overseas interests, has a specific subsection on the security of the London Games.[13]

The two strands of this strategy that are most relevant to the response to these multi-pronged threats will be *Pursue* (stopping terrorist attacks) and *Protect* (strengthening protections against terrorist attacks), but *Prevent*, which aims to

7.   BBC News, "U.S. 'Foils New Underwear Bomb Plot' by Al-Qaeda in Yemen, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-17985709 (accessed June 22, 2012).

8.   "Jonathan Evans' Terrorism Speech."

9.   David Barrett, "Al-Qaeda Terror Suspect Caught at Olympic Park," *The Telegraph*, July 7, 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9383976/Al-Qaeda-terror-suspect-caught-at-Olympic-Park.html (accessed July 12, 2012).

10.   Tom Whitehead, "'Olympic Breach' Terror Suspect Challenges Restrictions on Movement, *The Telegraph*, July 9, 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/news/9387572/Olympic-breach-terror-suspect-challenges-restrictions-on-movement.html (accessed July 12, 2012).

11.   "Al-Qaeda Terror Suspect Caught at Olympic Park."

12.   In June 2012, two Muslim converts based in London—including one 18-year-old—were arrested on suspicion of attacking the Olympic Games after being witnessed canoeing on the River Lee, a branch of which runs through the Olympics site in east London, but they were released days later without charge. See Duncan Gardham and Andrew Hough, "London 2012 Olympics: Muslim Converts Held Over 'Games Plot'," *The Telegraph*, June 29, 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9363829/London-2012-Olympics-Muslim-converts-held-over-Games-plot.html (accessed July 6, 2012).

13.   U.K. Home Office, "The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism," July 2011, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/counter-terrorism-strategy/strategy-contest?view=Binary (accessed May 9, 2012).

stop people from being drawn into terrorist-related activity, will also be relevant.[14] An Olympics-specific branch of *Prevent* has been established to "challenge extremist activity" in the build-up to the Games. This includes mosques being offered governance and leadership training, as well as dissemination of "counter-narrative" material.[15] The British government has also banned two terrorist suspects from flying into the country.[16]

One further development is particularly concerning. Most Islamism-inspired terrorist offenders in Britain are released, subject to conditions, after serving half of their sentences, meaning that they serve less than three-and-a-half years in prison. A number of convicted terrorists have recently been released, and given the imminence of the Games, the timing of these releases is obviously unfortunate.[17] Those recently freed include individuals directly linked to major al-Qaeda plots, such as the "liquid bomb" plot to blow up multiple transatlantic flights and a "dirty bomb" plot aimed at U.S. and British targets.[18]

It is a testament to the work done by the Security Service and the police that there has been only one successful al-Qaeda attack in Britain, the July 2005 bombing. But as an intelligence official recently warned, "The terrorists are learning all the time and adapting their tactics." The official added that there was little the authorities could do to prevent an attack by a terrorist cell that was properly organized and took suitable security precautions.[19]

Islamist Terrorism Not the Only Threat to the London Games

The London Olympics will also provide a global platform for a range of protesters to publicize their causes. Charles Farr, Director General of the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism at the Home Office, stated in May that the kind of crime and disorder that Britain experienced in the August 2011 riots would be of great concern during the Olympics.[20] These riots began after the police shot and killed a north London man who had an illegal firearm. For four days, the police struggled to bring the situation under control. Violence, arson, vandalism, and robbery were common, and violence spread to other parts of the country, with rioters communicating via Blackberry and Twitter to avoid police detection. Five people died, and the police made over 3,000 arrests.

It is important to remember that there have been a number of other violent outbursts in Britain over the past several years: The 2011 riots are not the only precedent. Militants within anarchist and anti-capitalism groups have consistently surfaced at recent protests in Britain.

These militants, for example, were responsible for "high levels" of violence around London's financial center in April 2009, when Britain hosted the G20 Summit.[21] Mobs broke into banking buildings, smashed windows, destroyed equipment, and sprayed graffiti. The police made 122 arrests. Anarchists were also involved in violent outbursts after thousands took to the streets at the end of 2010 to protest a rise in university tuition fees. Hundreds were arrested as militant activists attacked police, threw smoke bombs, destroyed public property, and stormed the headquarters of the Conservative Party.

British authorities will also need to prepare for protests against—or

14. U.K. Home Office, "Prevent Strategy," June 2011, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/prevent/prevent-strategy/prevent-strategy-review?view=Binary (accessed June 22, 2012).

15. "London Olympics Security Report Warns of Extremist Threat on Host Borough."

16. "'Terror Threat' to London Olympics," *The Sun*, January 12, 2012, http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/4055150/No-fly-ban-put-on-fanatic-Sami-Mohamed-Ali-al-Fadli-after-London-Olympic-Games-alert.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

17. "Games Fear Over Evil Fanatics," *The Sun*, June 13, 2011, http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/3633441/Olympic-Games-fear-over-evil-fanatics.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

18. See Robin Simcox, Hannah Stuart, Houriya Ahmed, and Douglas Murray, *Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections*, 2nd ed. (London: The Henry Jackson Society, 2011), http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/cms/harriercollectionitems/Islamist+Terrorism+2011+Preview.pdf (accessed July 10, 2012), and "Convicted Terrorists Released This Week Ahead of Olympics," *The Telegraph*, March 19 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/9151729/Convicted-terrorists-released-this-week-ahead-of-Olympics.html (accessed June 22, 2012).

19. "200 Suicide Bombers 'Planning Attacks in UK'."

20. Reuters, "UK Plans Olympic Security Steps to Tepid Welcome," May 1, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/01/britain-security-olympics-idUSL5E8G12BA20120501 (accessed June 22, 2012).

21. "G20 Protesters Pay Tribute After Demo Death," *Sky News*, April 2 2009, http://news.sky.com/home/uk-news/article/15254026 (accessed June 22, 2012).

even attacks on—athletes from individual nations. Obvious targets will include key democratic allies like Israel (even the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra has been targeted by pro-Palestinian groups), as well as dictatorial regimes like Ukraine, where President Viktor Yanukovych has detained and tortured members of his opposition; China, because of its actions in Tibet and its broader domestic repression; and Syria, whose President Bashar al-Assad has engaged in widespread massacres of civilians. British Prime Minister David Cameron has stated that Syrian officials who are subject to an EU travel ban will not be welcome in London.[22]

Finally, the fact that the 2012 London Olympics will have the most technologically advanced infrastructure in the history of the Games means that cyber security will be a significant concern. Authorities are preparing for attacks against the Olympics website, its electronic infrastructure, ticket fraud, e-crime, and London's communication and transport systems. A particularly sophisticated terrorist attack might well begin with or make use of attacks on one or more of these electronic targets in order to defeat security systems and thereby enable the perpetration of a physical attack.

International and U.S. Assistance to Greece for the 2004 Summer Olympics

Fortunately, the London Games are not the first Summer Olympics to face these challenges in the post-9/11 era. The 2004 Summer Olympic Games, hosted by Athens, were a first in more ways than one.[23] By establishing a seven-nation Olympic Advisory Group (OAG) in 2000, Greece set the precedent for international assistance during the Olympic Games.

As the Greek Minister of Public Order explained, "at the international level the main axis of [Greece's] planning, is the principle that international terrorism can only be faced effectively through international cooperation."[24] It was with this global outlook that the OAG was created. When it formed the OAG, the Greek government invited nations—the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Australia, France, Germany, and Spain—with experience in organizing large-scale events and counterterrorism to participate. Chaired by the United Kingdom, the OAG met monthly, providing advice and training to the Greek government on Olympic security.[25]

In addition to cooperation with OAG members, Greece signed 32 bilateral memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with neighboring countries throughout the Balkans, Mediterranean, and southeastern Europe.[26] Following the 2004 Madrid train bombings, Greece also requested assistance from NATO and the U.N. International Atomic Emergency Agency (IAEA) for aid with air and water policing, nuclear and biochemical detection and defense, and intelligence.[27]

While the host nation has the ultimate responsibility for Olympic security, the United States, like many other nations, views security assistance as a vital part of ensuring the safety and security of its citizens abroad. Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 62 states that:

> The first duty of government is the protection of its citizens. That duty extends to Americans abroad, whether they are traveling in an official or private capacity. The State Department, through its chiefs of mission, will be responsible ... for programs to preserve the safety of private

22. Reuters, "Syrians Don't Want to Take Part in London Games—Saroot," April 3, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/04/olympics-syria-idUSL3E8F39UK20120404 (accessed June 22, 2012).

23. In 2008, Beijing hosted the second post-9/11 Olympic Summer Games. Because China is an autocracy and has no meaningful limits on either the extent of its domestic policing powers or the amount of funding or manpower on which it can draw, the 2008 Games are of very limited relevance to the security challenges faced by Britain during the 2012 Games.

24. George A. Voulgarakis, "The Olympic Security Model as a Pattern of International Cooperation in Order to Confront New Threats," Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 11, 2005, http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/content/en/Article.aspx?office=3&folder=815&article=14973 (accessed May 22, 2012).

25. U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Olympic Security: U.S. Support to Athens Games Provides Lessons for Future Olympics*, GAO-05-547, May 2005, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05547.pdf (accessed May 22, 2012).

26. Michael Zekulin, "Olympic Security: Assessing the Risk of Terrorism at the 2010 Vancouver Games," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 12, Issue 1 (Fall 2009), http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CGMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jmss.org%2Fjmss%2Findex.php%2Fjmss%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F286%2F299&ei=nJe7T9_5OaT56QG47-nBDw&usg=AFQjCNHjfPk3kyRg66Bwl2pOTIYkHEJyXg&sig2=HjbsdBhzxPzx0PdzGl-HAA (accessed May 22, 2012).

27. Carol Migdalovitz, "Greece: Threat of Terrorism and Security at the Olympics," Congressional Research Service *Report for Congress* No. RS21833, April 30, 2004, http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RS21833.pdf (accessed May 22, 2012).

U.S. citizens abroad. U.S. citizens shall be adequately warned of the danger of terrorist attack, advised regarding precautionary measures and afforded appropriate assistance and protection.[28]

Similarly, PDD 39 states: "It is the policy of the United States to deter, defeat and respond vigorously to all terrorist attacks on our territory and against our citizens, or facilities, whether they occur domestically, in international waters or airspace, or on foreign territory."[29]

By authority of these PDDs, the U.S. responded to Greece's request for international assistance in 2001, offering U.S. participation in the OAG. Thanks to Greece's longstanding participation in the U.S. Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program and U.S. Department of Defense European Command exercises, the U.S. was also able to build on its existing security partnership with Greece. Following a 2001 interagency assessment of Greek security capabilities, the U.S. began coordinating with the Greek government to provide bilateral security assistance in addition to the assistance it was providing through the OAG.

In country, the U.S. Ambassador to Greece served as the lead in coordinating the interagency security process. Working with the Olympic Security Coordinator (a State Diplomatic Security agent assigned to the embassy in late 2001), the State Senior Regional Security Office, the Defense Attaché, and the Department of Justice/FBI Legal Attaché, the ambassador determined and coordinated each of the participating agencies' roles and responsibilities.[30] At the same time, the Washington-based International Athletic Events Security Coordination Group, chaired by the Department of State and including representatives from the intelligence community and the departments of Defense, Energy, Justice, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, facilitated domestic security and counterterrorism contributions. In total, approximately 20 U.S. agencies contributed to the security of the 2004 Summer Olympics, on which the U.S. government spent in total over $35 million in fiscal year (FY) 2003 and FY 2004.[31]

The 2004 Games offered lessons for international and U.S. security support for major overseas events, including but not limited to future Games. These lessons include the importance of:

- **Planning early.** Timely and advanced planning in Greece allowed for greater and more efficient security coordination in advance of the 2004 Summer Olympics. It also allowed for thorough needs assessments identifying Greek security gaps and requirements for U.S. assistance.

- **Building on existing relationships.** In Greece, the United States was able to build on nearly two decades of security cooperation between the U.S. and Greece through State's ATA program and joint participation in U.S. military exercises. These relationships helped to inform U.S. security assistance. Greece also focused further international outreach on key regional partners, signing MOAs with nations in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and southeastern Europe.

- **Designating U.S. government leads.** After the Olympic Games, U.S. officials indicated the efficacy of assigning the U.S. Ambassador to Greece as the in-country lead in terms of U.S. assistance. The coordination of U.S. government agency roles and requests also served to streamline efforts and minimize mission overlaps.

- **Working through formal multilateral groups.** Reflecting on the efforts of the Olympic Advisory Group, the U.S. Government Accountability Office recommended that similar efforts be used the future in order to help evaluate requests from host countries, provide coordinated assistance, and minimize duplication and overlap of security efforts.

- **Ensuring centralized support.** Because of space limitations in Athens, U.S. support was scattered at multiple locations throughout the city. One key lesson communicated by officials who participated

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28. GAO, *Olympic Security: U.S. Support to Athens Games.*

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

in the security efforts in Athens was the need to collocate U.S. government agency operations in the future.[32]

Most of these lessons are applicable to the 2012 Games, though because of the strength of the Anglo–American Special Relationship and Britain's close police, security, and intelligence ties with many other nations, there was less need for Britain to form new multilateral groups. Still, Britain's effort to date demonstrates that it has learned the applicable lessons of 2004.

Britain Will Take the Security Lead for 2012 Games

Over 200 nations will send athletes to London this July to compete in the Summer Games.[33] Like most major international special events, responsibility for the security of the Games falls primarily on the host nation. Yet while the United Kingdom will bear the bulk of the responsibility, all participating nations share an interest not only in the safety of the Games, but also in the security of the athletes, dignitaries, and spectators. As in 2004, international support and assistance to Britain in advance of and during the London Games will be significant.

The London Games, however, will be unlike the 2004 Games in one central respect. U.S. ties with Greece before 2004 were strong, but they are nothing compared to the extensive and pervasive bilateral relationships that the U.S. has with the United Kingdom. The U.S. military, intelligence, counterterrorism, and law enforcement communities all have deep connections with their British counterparts that have been built up over more than 50 years and that will be employed to the full. The U.S. should work to leverage and build on these already close relationships. For the 2012 Games, U.S. assistance will be important, but it will be assistance only, not an effort to take a centralized lead.

It was reported in the British media in November 2011 that the U.S. was unhappy with the security arrangements for the 2012 Games, an allegation that was quickly denied by both sides.[34] Little has been said publicly by American or British officials about the role the U.S. will play in Olympic security. This is in contrast to the public and overt U.S. contribution to the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. The reasons for this are simple: First, the U.K. does not require the same level of outside assistance that Greece did to keep the Games secure. Second, the U.S. and Britain have a mature defense, security, and intelligence relationship. Anglo–American security cooperation for the 2012 Olympic Games is thus a continuation of processes already in place.

Britain's Security Preparations for 2012 Games

Providing security for the 2012 Games will be one of the defining challenges for Prime Minister Cameron's government. The government has taken robust steps to prepare for, counter, and, if required, defeat any security threats to the 2012 Summer Games.

Ensuring a safe and secure 2012 Summer Games will be no easy task. It is expected that 120 heads of state will visit Britain during the Games.[35] Around 450,000 people are likely to be accredited to access the 46 Olympic and Paralympic sports venues, and all will need to be security vetted.[36] An estimated 10 million people—equivalent to the population of Michigan—will attend Olympic events throughout Britain, and approximately 10,000 athletes will participate in the Games.[37]

Most Olympic events will take place in two locations: in and around London and in the seaside town of Weymouth, in the southwest of the country. Other venues include stadiums in Newcastle, Coventry, Cardiff, and Manchester. London, which contains one-fifth of the U.K.'s population, will host more than 70 percent of the Games. Regular summer events such as the Notting Hill Carnival and ongoing celebrations to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee add to the security challenge.

32. Ibid.

33. BBC Sport: Olympics, "Countries," http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/olympics/2012/countries (accessed May 22, 2012).

34. Nick Hopkins and Richard Norton-Taylor, "U.S. Officials Worried About Security at London 2012 Olympics," *The Guardian*, November 13, 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2011/nov/13/us-worried-london-olympics-security-2012 (accessed June 11, 2012).

35. Owen Gibson, "Final London 2012 Checklist—Traffic, Tickets, Venues, Budget and Dow," *The Guardian*, March 27, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2012/mar/27/london-2012-checklist-olympics (accessed May 8, 2012).

36. U.K. Home Office, "London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Safety and Security Strategy," March 2011, p. 5, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/olympics/olympic-safety-security-strategy (accessed May 7, 2012).

37. G4S, "G4S and London 2012," http://www.g4s.uk.com/en GB/London%202012/G4S%20and%20London%202012/ (accessed May 9, 2012).

The U.K.'s 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review judged that over the next five years, the four biggest threats to Britain will come from international terrorism, a cyber attack, an international military crisis, and major accidents or natural hazards.[38] All of these are applicable to the Olympic Games, but the Home Office has focused on five major threats to the Games:

- Terrorism,

- Serious organized crime,

- Domestic extremism,

- Public disorder, and

- Major accidents and natural events.[39]

As noted above, Britain's CONTEST counterterrorism strategy will underpin the security of the London Games. While the Prime Minister is ultimately responsible for the success or failure of Olympic security, much of his authority has been delegated to the Home Secretary.[40] All agencies of the British government and both the local and national authorities will have to cooperate closely for the Games to be a security success. Security for the Games will be provided by civilian authorities, including police and civilian security contractors, as well as the intelligence services. This civilian effort will be augmented with support from the armed forces. In the armed forces, almost all annual leaves have been canceled or heavily restricted in order to provide the maximum number of security personnel, both civilian and military, for the Games. The venue guard force, including police, private contractors, and military personnel, will total 23,700.[41]

Britain's Civilian-Led Security and Intelligence Effort

The policing effort in Britain will be largely decentralized, with each police force running its own policing operation through its own local command structure. But due to the fact that the various Olympic sites are located across the nation, and in view of the complex nature of the security requirements across multiple policing jurisdictions, a National Olympic Security Coordinator (NOSC) has been appointed. The NOSC will coordinate with local police commanders across the country where and while Olympic events are taking place.

According to London's Metropolitan Police, "During Games time the NOSC will be the single informed voice on how the safety and security operation is running across the country, linking into key partners including Government."[42]

In order to support the NOSC, the National Olympic Coordination Centre (NOCC) has been created at New Scotland Yard. The NOCC will allow liaison offers from 20 police departments and other organizations such as fire, ambulance, military officials and members of the U.K. Border Agency to work together effectively. All of the organizations represented in the NOCC will bring their information to the table, and the NOCC will put it together to provide a complete national picture of the safety and security operation. The NOCC will be operational from the start of the Olympic Torch Relay and will be open continuously from July 18.[43]

At each sporting venue, the police will be represented in joint Emergency Services Forward Command Posts. The Emergency Services Forward Command Posts will facilitate coordination between the security actors on the ground. Augmenting the policing effort will be civilian contractors provided primarily by a private firm, G4S, which

38. U.K. Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, October 2010, p. 10, http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf (accessed April 17, 2012).

39. U.K. Home Office, "London 2012 Olympic Safety and Security Strategic Risk Assessment (OSSSRA) and Risk Mitigation Process: Summary Version 2," January 2011, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/olympics/osssra-summary?view=Binary (accessed July 10, 2012).

40. In Britain, the Home Office, which is roughly comparable to but more powerful than the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is one of the four primary Offices of State (the others being the Prime Minster, the Exchequer, and the Foreign Secretary). The Home Secretary is responsible for the internal affairs in England and Wales (in Scotland and Northern Ireland, power over internal affairs has been largely devolved to regional authorities), as well as for immigration, national security, and the security agency MI-5 for the United Kingdom as a whole.

41. U.K. Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, "Written Ministerial Statement: London 2012 Olympics," *Hansard,* December 15, 2012, Column 116WS, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111215/wmstext/111215m0001.htm#11121579000007 (accessed May 9, 2012).

42. The Metropolitan Police, "National Coordination," http://content.met.police.uk/Article/National-Coordination/1400005433905/1400005433905 (accessed May 9, 2012).

43. Ibid.

will be focused primary on static security and entry and access control.

The U.K.'s various intelligence services will also play an important role in providing Olympic security. The U.K. keeps MI-5, the Secret Intelligence Service (better known as MI-6) and the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) cloaked in secrecy, so publicly available information on what each will be doing to contribute to Olympic security is scarce, but all will play an important role.

- MI-6, which maintains the U.K.'s foreign intelligence-gathering capabilities, has cancelled all annual holiday and other leave until after the Games.[44]

- It is believed that MI-5, responsible for domestic intelligence and counterterrorism activity, has done the same and that almost all of its estimated 3,800 staff will be mobilized for the Games. In fact, MI-5's contribution to Olympic security has been described as "its biggest operation since the Second World War."[45]

- GCHQ, responsible for providing signals intelligence and contributing to the U.K.'s cyber defense capabilities, will also stay busy during the Olympic Games. Cabinet Minister Francis Maude, responsible for the U.K.'s

Office of Cyber Security, pointed out during a visit to Estonia that 12 million cyber security incidents occurred during the Beijing Olympics in 2008.[46] There is no reason to expect that 2012 will see a decrease in cyber-related activity.

British Defense Forces' Important Support Role

Britain's Ministry of Defence (MoD) has also stepped up to the challenge of Olympic security. While heavily engaged in counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan's Helmand Province, and shortly after engaging in combat operations in Libya, the MoD will be helping to meet Olympic security requirements.[47] As the Defence Secretary recently reminded the House of Commons, the safety and security operation for the Games will be led by the police,[48] but the armed forces will play an important supporting role.

- The Royal Navy will provide specialist support to maritime security in the Thames River with HMS *Ocean*, a Landing Platform Helicopter and its largest surface ship. In the Weymouth Bay, off the coast of Dorset, HMS *Bulwark*, a Landing Platform Dock, will be present. On board both ships will be quick-reaction forces and their required fast boat and helicopter

support. In addition to providing floating platforms, both ships will serve as command and control nodes.

- The Royal Air Force (RAF) will patrol the skies over the Olympics with Typhoon fast jets positioned at RAF Northolt in west London. This will enforce the airspace restrictions in southeast England during the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in order to protect key locations from potential airborne risks.[49] Supporting the air defense operation will be E-3D Sentry air surveillance planes and VC-10 air-to-air refuellers. The Army will position both Rapier and Starstreak surface-to-air missiles at various locations in and around London.

- The armed forces will provide 3,500 troops for venue security operations, a force that will surge to 7,500 for the 17 days of the Games. A further 1,000 troops will be on standby in case of any unforeseen Olympic-related emergency. Finally, the MoD will provide niche capabilities such as explosive ordnance disposal and military working dogs. Although details are not public, it is expected that units from the Special Air Services and Special Boat Services, and their required helicopter support, will be located close to the

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44. "MI6 Leave 'Restricted Until After Olympics'," *Sky News*, February 2, 2012, http://news.sky.com/home/uk-news/article/16161527 (accessed May 9, 2012).

45. Kim Sengupta, "MI5 Puts All 3,800 Agents on Olympic Watch," *Independent*, March 26, 2012, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/mi5-puts-all-3800-agents-on-olympic-watch-7584968.html (accessed May 9, 2012).

46. British Broadcasting Cooperation, "Olympic Games 'Not Immune' to Cyber-Attack," May 3, 2012, http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-17936050 (accessed May 8, 2012).

47. The armed forces rehearsed their contribution to Olympic security on May 2–10 in Exercise Olympic Garden, during which they reacted to various scenarios for security eventualities during the Games.

48. U.K. Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, "Written Ministerial Statement: London 2012 Olympics."

49. U.K. Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, "Written Ministerial Statement: Olympic Airspace," *Hansard*, July 19, 2011, Column 146WS, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110719/wmstext/110719m0001.htm (accessed May 9, 2012).

various Olympic venues in order to react to any unforeseen terrorist attack similar to the one mounted by Islamists in 2008 in Mumbai, India.

While this robust military presence presents manageable challenges for military planners inside the Ministry of Defence, it comes at a cost. With the exception of ongoing operations in Afghanistan, the armed forces will be focusing primarily on the Games for many weeks. With so many resources performing Olympic security duties, Britain has few contingency capabilities left. HMS *Ocean* and HMS *Bulwark* will be moored off the British coast, and most of Britain's Airborne Surveillance capability will be dedicated to the skies over Great Britain, as will many helicopter assets. If events in the Persian Gulf or tensions in the South Atlantic around the Falkland Islands required a military response, Britain would find it impossible to protect the Games while at the same time responding to the overseas crisis.

Britain is exceptionally competent in all areas relevant to the security of the Olympic Games and could likely do the job even if it stood alone. The U.S. has more resources than Britain, but it is fundamentally no better at doing what needs to be done. That said, however, the Games will be a huge and attractive target for domestic and international Islamist extremists, as well as terrorists and criminals of other varieties. Britain has some of the most well-developed domestic security defenses and legislation in the democratic world, but the fact that it is a small and densely populated island only makes the already Herculean job of securing the Games even harder.

A Checklist for the U.S. Contribution

The Anglo–American Special Relationship is the strongest and most robust partnership in history. It covers all relevant organizations, from law enforcement to intelligence to military to policy. British and American forces have fought side by side on many occasions. If the U.S. is to assist Britain in ensuring the security of the Summer Games, it should, by the time the Games begin, have done the following:

- Offer and provide high-level liaison officers, with associated staff, in any and all U.S. Operations Centers to ensure that Britain can access any U.S. asset that it needs quickly and effectively.

- The intelligence liaison between Britain and the U.S. is exceptionally close, but no nation shares everything. Before the Games, U.S. Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper, Jr., should personally emphasize to his staff that the U.S. must hold back absolutely no intelligence that is even slightly relevant, even if it is deemed sensitive by U.S. organizations. In other words, the U.S. should go beyond the "Five Eyes" protocol that governs Anglo–American intelligence sharing.

- Offer and preposition in Britain the following assets to provide backup for the superb British response forces:

  1. Two full operational elements of U.S. Tier One Special Missions Units (so the U.S. can assist Britain in responding to multiple simultaneous incidents);

  2. Several MC-22 Special Operations Ospreys (its ability to take off and land vertically and to fly at airplane speeds is unmatched, and would supplement British capabilities);

  3. At least one AWACS aircraft (to assist in air space control); and

  4. As many Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (both strategic and tactical) as the U.S. can spare and the British request.

- Offer all of these assets without caveats, including a willingness to place them under British command for the duration of the Olympic Games and their immediate aftermath. These steps will show the British that the U.S. trusts them to protect American nationals and is willing to do whatever is necessary to help Britain secure the Games.

Conclusion

Having bid successfully to host the 2012 Olympic Games, Britain must carry through on that commitment. While Britain has the knowledge, the experience, and the assets to do so successfully, the job is a big one, and the U.S. can and should assist it, both through the normal cooperative channels and by ensuring that it clears away all obstacles to a rapid emergency response in advance.

*—**Ted R. Bromund, PhD,** is Senior Research Fellow and **Luke Coffey** is Margaret Thatcher Fellow in the Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom, a division of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, at The Heritage Foundation. **Steven Bucci, PhD,** is Senior Research Fellow for Defense*

and Homeland Security and **Jessica Zuckerman** *is Research Associate in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies, also a division of the Davis Institute.* **Robin Simcox** *is a Research Fellow at The Henry Jackson Society.*