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Presentation Title: "Understanding Hate Crimes, Homegrown Violent Extremists, and Domestic Terrorists"

Presentation Description:

Homegrown violent extremism, domestic terrorism, and hate crimes all have similar definitions, yet each is distinctly different. It is critically important for public safety responders to understand the similarities and differences with each group. Often times, criminal investigation and prosecution varies significantly depending on the category. The difference between terrorism and hate groups is defined by actions. Without terror acts, one is simply a hate group. In addition, it is the nature of the crime, not the nature of the perpetrator that determines criminal charges. Public safety responders need to understand the difference between constitutionally protected actions and actions that cross the threshold into criminal conduct.

In this course, the presenter will describe the differences between the three groups. The homegrown violent extremist (HVE) will be explored in depth, including the different models of radicalization. Risk factors, protective factors, and commonalities of the HVE will also be discussed. The presenter will also discuss domestic terrorists, including motivating factors and common characteristics. The presenter will also discuss some of the active, violent hate groups currently operating in the United States.

The presenter will also discuss the "propaganda effect" that has resulted in the enabling of violent radicalization. The relationship of causation versus correlation will also be discussed regarding internet radicalization. Social media currently provides an extremely effective medium for people to seek confirmation of their particular hate or radical ideology.

The presenter will then discuss pre-attack surveillance. In the majority of hate crimes, HVE attacks, and domestic terrorist attacks, the perpetrator(s) conducted comprehensive pre-attack surveillance. The most common surveillance tactics will be discussed as well as common surveillance tactic errors. The correlation of surveillance over time and distance will be examined to help responders recognize if surveillance is ongoing.

Last, the presenter will discuss pre-attack indicators. In many cases, HVEs and domestics terrorists have exhibited common pre-attack indicators. By recognizing these indicators, public safety members can help to thwart an attack before it occurs. HVEs and domestic terrorists are most vulnerable in their planning and preparation stage. This course will give responders cues to look for to help thwart attacks.

Resources Needed: Classroom, computer, projector, audio

Time Needed: Two hours