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## Police learn new techniques in Israel

BY LISA BOLIVAR

Local law enforcement agencies are expanding ways of dealing with terrorism by signing up for training in Israel, thanks to a police sergeant who moonlights as an anti-terrorism instructor.

One group, which included officers from the Fort Lauderdale Police Department, left for Israel this month.

Sgt. James Gort, who lives in Plantation and works for the Pembroke Pines Police Department, also has taught counterterrorism classes at Broward Community College for certified officers. Now he is arranging connections with Israeli police for training missions through MK International Security Consulting, a security consulting company that offers training in several countries which is owned and directed by Marc Kahlberg.

"What we do with this is we bring law enforcement officers to Israel for a seven-day intensive, in-depth counterterrorism class where they work directly with the Israeli police and Israeli federal agencies," Gort said, adding that this is the second trip that has been offered to South Florida police agencies. Two more are scheduled next year.

The training "goes across the spectrum, from domestic terrorism, like a Timothy McVeigh or Virginia Tech attack, all the way to a 9/11-type attack," Gort said. "Terrorists come in so many different faces, colors and backgrounds you can't profile a person from their religion or background. You profile them by behavioral patterns."

Tommy Burgs, 37, a 12-year veteran of the Pembroke Pines Police Department, went on the first training mission to Israel earlier this year. He said it has changed the way he approaches policing forever.

"That was the best training I've ever had," Burgs said. "It was just overwhelming to me to see the awareness that everyone has over there. We pretty much walk around in a fog, we Americans. Everyone over there, from military personnel to police to civilians, was acutely aware of what is going on around them."

Burgs said his group was shown how officers scan for behavior out of the ordinary.

"We got to observe a roadblock when they had intelligence info that a terrorist group was on the move. They blocked off one or two lanes and the officers observed the traffic going by," he said, adding they were looking for "behaviors, dress out of the

norm, people in the cars who wouldn't make eye contact, subtle things that they keyed into that Americans would have missed.

"It was like the entire country had taken a stand and was doing something about it. You never saw anyone leaving a purse or a backpack lying around. If someone left a package or backpack in an open air market, it was reported and taken care of in minutes," Burgs said.

Sgt. Bill Schultz, coordinator of the Fort Lauderdale Police Homeland Security and Special Event Operations unit, sent three officers to Israel this month.

"The main thing we look at is the fact that local law enforcement is a part of the nation's effort to combat terrorism, and it means we need to take advantage of training," Schultz said. "We are looking at enhancing police-related preparation to man-made and natural disasters, any terrorism initiatives and the operational planning of special events in our city."

<http://www.miamiherald.com/471/story/284942.html>

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