

The background of the entire page is a large, faint, and slightly blurred seal of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The seal features a central shield with a scale of justice, flanked by two olive branches. Above the shield is a banner with the words "FIDELITY BRAVERY INTEGRITY". The outer ring of the seal contains the text "DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE" and "FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION" separated by stars.

THE FBI'S STRATEGY TO COMBAT GLOBAL TERRORISM

TERRORISM · NOVEMBER 2018

The FBI's Strategy to Combat Global Terrorism

In many respects, the FBI, in its capacity of countering terrorism, is targeting the same groups that it did prior to and immediately after September 11th. There have, however, been new additions to their surveillance and target list such as the Al Qaeda offshoot Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State (ISIS). That said, while September 11th and subsequent attacks in the United Kingdom and Spain were largely planned by cells in at least some degree of coordination with central organization that advises, trains, and possibly funds the activities of an individual cell. The existence of a central hub for a terrorist organization – while allowing for scaling to occur – leads to the creation of a central point of failure that can put the group's goals at risk should the central infrastructure be neutralized.

Contemporary threats, however, are much more distributed and, therefore, more difficult to shut down. Michael McGarrity, the Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Operations, acknowledges that the threat has migrated from such coordinated groups to individual lone wolves who – rather than be directed – are inspired and radicalized by pro-terrorist propaganda that is – more often than not – on the internet especially on the multitude of social media sites. Additionally, many of these individuals are residents or citizens of the countries where their attacks occur. According to the FBI, such Homegrown Violent Extremists often attack with very little elaborate planning and instead act on their inspiration. Such low complexity

attacks are difficult to prevent as there are fewer clues to the attack to alert authorities.

The FBI has needed to develop new strategies and partnerships – not only with other public sector entities but also with the private sector – to better overcome the disparate threat raised by decentralized terrorism. Many public-private partnerships center around enterprise engagement with Chief Security Officers (CSOs) and implementing controls that allow the organization to first identify suspicious behavior and then report such behavior to the authorities. The financial industry is a prime example of such partnerships where the FBI and financial companies have been able to leverage Know Your Customer or KYC laws to identify activity that may be terrorist related (or, at least, possibly criminal in some other manner) and report such information to the authorities for investigation. This “See Something, Say Something” has even moved to the general public where the FBI receives over 15,000 tips a year on their public reporting line.

The FBI also works to bridge the delicate balance between security and privacy in determining how best to mitigate the threat posed on social media/networking platforms by supporters of terrorism seeking to inspire and encourage individuals susceptible to radicalization. To further that effort, the United States has, indeed, partnered with Israel and received training from them and both countries collaborate extensively on investigations to both share intelligence and to jointly mitigate threats. While the FBI cannot order posts to be taken down, it does work extensively to educate platform owners about risks which helps the companies themselves police their platform.

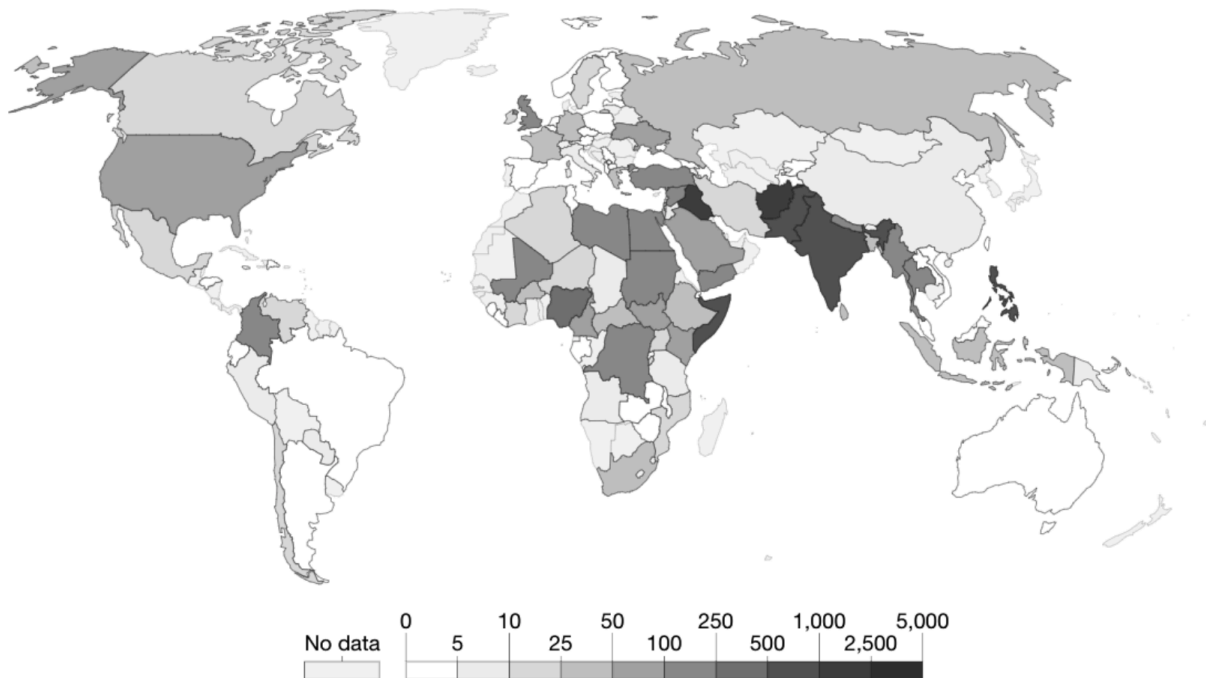
Collaborating with other countries such as Israel, working with social media companies, and partnering with enterprises has allowed the FBI to best leverage its resources in combating a new terrorist threat

that has - in the years since September 11th - evolved into a decentralized and more durable threat.

Number of terrorist incidents, 2017

The total number of terrorism-related incidents per year. The source defines a terrorist attack as: "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation." The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors; data does not include acts of state terrorism.

Our World
in Data



Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism>

Soundbite analytics

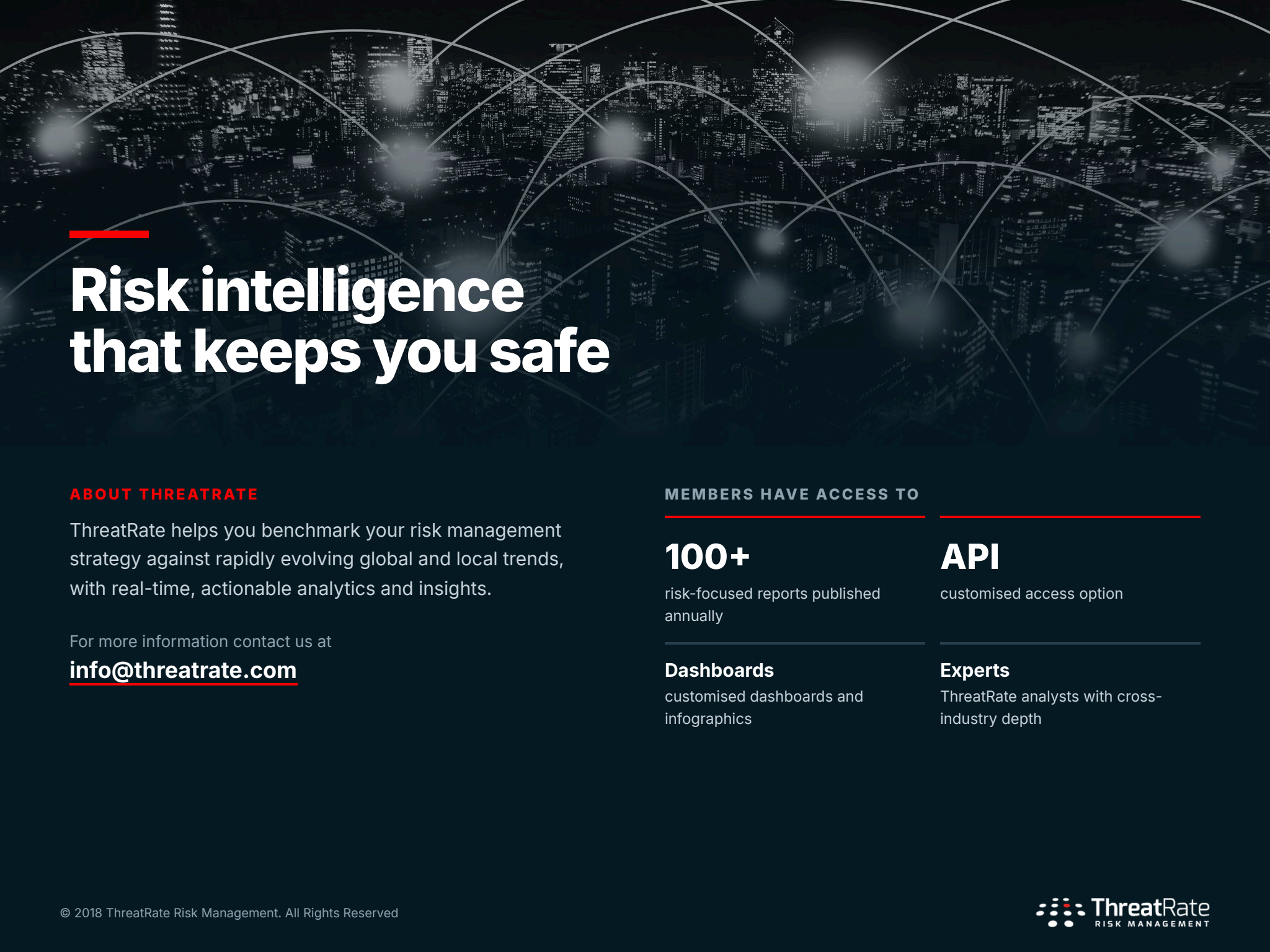
- The average age of a terrorist is 19-25.
- There are over 100 Joint Terrorism Task Forces in the United States. These are groups that work across organizations to rapidly respond to threats.

SOURCES

- 1 <https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/89451-public-private-partnerships-and-the-fight-against-terrorism>
- 2 <https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/89451-public-private-partnerships-and-the-fight-against-terrorism>

- Facebook claims that its Artificial Intelligence caught 99 percent of ISIS and Al Qaeda propaganda before individuals flagged it.
- In the first half of 2017, Twitter shuttered 300,00 accounts for promoting extremism.
- Of those accounts deleted, Twitter stated that 95% were flagged by an automated system.

- 3 <https://www.jpost.com/International/Exclusive-Top-FBI-counter-terror-official-on-global-terror-challenges-566805>



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