

# Local firm trains in Israeli security tactics

Behaviour-focused technique is gaining traction across North America and is being used in a pilot project at YVR this year

By Jenny Wagler

In a move to bring more proactive security services to an industry known for passive guarding, Vancouver-based **Commissionaires BC** is training its staff in a behaviour-monitoring security approach honed in Israel.

"Most security companies out there in the world are manpower companies. They'll put a person in a security uniform, pay whatever dollar amount and he's in front of the gate," said **Amotz Brandes**.

The managing partner with Los Angeles-based security consulting company **Chameleon Associates** led a security conference last month on predictive profiling for Commissionaires BC staff and clients.

Brandes said the passive brand of security generally seen in North America will never deter a "motivated adversary."

"The biggest deterrence to an adversary is never the passive security element; it's never the alarm system or the CCTV or a guard

with a blank look on his face," he said. "The biggest deterrence is when an officer or anybody interacts with a potential adversary, because when they do that there's a change in role: the adversary is put on the defensive."

Brandes added that predictive profiling teaches security personnel to play an active role: identifying suspicious behaviours and asking key questions to ferret out threats.

He noted that the approach is applicable to any kind of threat, from terrorism to criminality.

Brandes, who began his career in the **Israel Defence Forces**, learned the security methodology while working as a profiler for **El Al Israel Airlines Ltd.** in Los Angeles.

He noted that Israel switched from racial profiling to a behaviour-focused approach after an attack by Japanese terrorists on Tel Aviv's **Lod Airport** in 1972 highlighted the flaws in a race-targeted security approach.

"We found out that no matter what ethnic background you're



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**Bob Chapman**, Commissionaires BC manager of security services, brought Los Angeles-based security expert **Amotz Brandes** to town to train company security personnel in predictive profiling

part of, there's one common denominator for all adversaries and that's how they attack or how they go about attacking."

Commissionaires BC is the province's largest security organization. It has more than 1,600 security professionals protecting B.C.'s air and sea ports, border crossings, government facilities, schools, commercial enterprises and resi-

dential complexes.

**Bob Chapman**, the company's manager of security services and formerly a Vancouver police officer for 33 years, took the predictive profiling course last year and decided the company should train its employees in the more active approach to security.

"It's dumb obvious," he said. "We should have been doing this

years ago: asking people questions rather than X-raying them."

Chapman added that criminals are getting more sophisticated and security training needs to keep up.

"Crime and criminality is changing. It's more subtle now and, for a good criminal, more well-planned and the scores are much bigger for them. And in respect to some clients, the loss that they could suffer as the result of a well-planned event could be huge," he said. "Having security that's aware of this sort of behaviour or the planning or the rehearsal that these people go through - it's good for us, it's good for the client."

Brandes said a trend toward using predictive profiling is growing in North America, though he noted that most momentum is coming from the private sector.

In January, the **Canadian Air Transport Security Authority** launched a passenger behaviour observation program at **Vancouver International Airport**. ■  
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