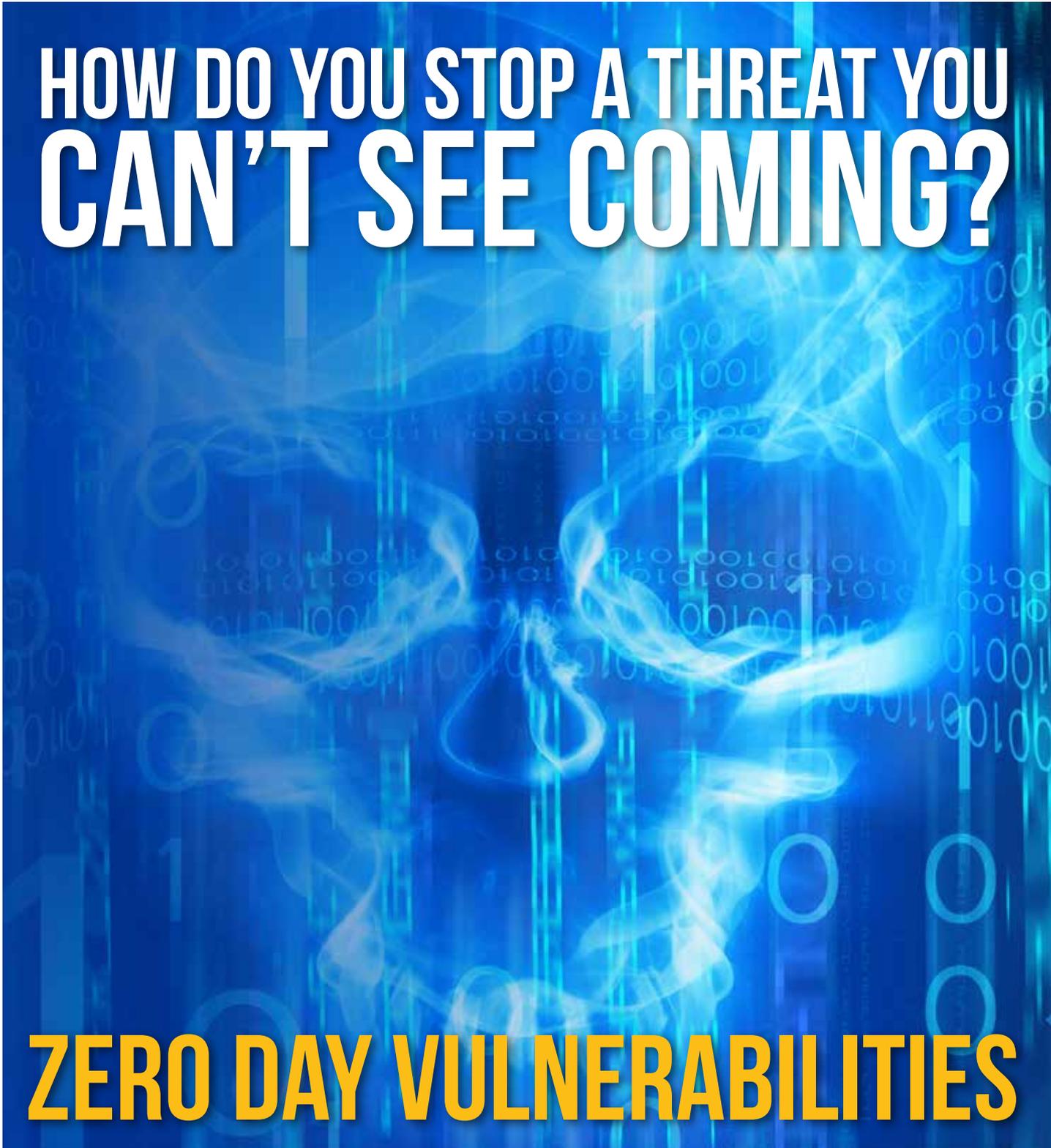


The **Circuit**

36

The Magazine for Security Professionals



**HOW DO YOU STOP A THREAT YOU
CAN'T SEE COMING?**

ZERO DAY VULNERABILITIES

London • Manchester • Russia

RUSSIA RISK OVERVIEW

By: Mark Deane

The 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup was held in Russia, from 17 June to 2 July 2017, as a prelude to the 2018 FIFA World Cup. It was held in four cities - Kazan, Moscow, St Petersburg and Sochi.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup consists of 64 matches, 32 teams and is played across 12 locations in Russia. The 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia takes part between the 14th June and the 15th July 2018.

Executive Summary
Corporate clients running

customer programs, VIP visitors, and High-net-worth individuals visiting Russia may wish to consider certain key aspects of this risk overview. Primarily, there appears to be a behavioral tolerance of the Russian nation which essentially allows hate crime within the law through

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lack of prosecution. This is complemented with a history and sub-culture of hooliganism in Russian football, as was witnessed in the 2016 Euro Football tournament,

There is a high threat from terrorism. Attacks have occurred most frequently in Moscow and in the North Caucasus. Most recently, St.Petersburg was the scene of a suicide attack on a Metro Train, killing 14 people. Previous attacks have targeted transport infrastructure, including airports, buses, trains and Metro systems. Further attacks are likely and could take place anywhere in Russia. Past performance in security terms of Russia at large events has been very strong, the Sochi Olympics

was well controlled with no terrorist incidents affecting fans.

Based on our assessment we continue to recommend that any attendance at large events, or corporate travel in Russia is supported by additional risk management measures. The addition of enhanced security to your plans enables your teams to focus on their goals and objectives with minimal constraints.

Football, Crime & Hooliganism

Hooliganism in Russian football is rife, and the largest contributor to this threat stream. As was witnessed in the 2016 Euro Football tournament, Russian hooligans are well

prepared, coordinated and armed. They have deliberately targeted British fans (or those perceived to be British), knowing the British fans had been drinking and were likely to respond. Condemnation fell upon both sets of fans from all over the sporting world and wider international community with one notable exception. Russian Ministers quoted 'keep up the good work' and Putin himself quipped at how the smaller numbers of Russian fans had quite literally beaten the English fans.

The fall-out from this is that the state essentially condones the battalions of Ultras in their efforts. The French kept a lid on the trouble (just) through co-operation with international police forces. This is unlikely to happen at the World Cup. Anti-social behavior is commonly associated with Rational Choice Theory. In this sense there appears little deterrent.

Racism, Homophobia & Social Intolerance

Racism remains of significant concern across large parts of Eastern Europe and Russia. It is not taboo to be a racist and in some places is still a

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social norm. Coupling the 'social norms' with a crowd mentality almost ensures the abuse of multicultural players from the stands. Visitors, certainly in the more remote rural locations, should be wary of local sentiment towards multicultural visitors. People of Asian or Afro-Caribbean descent may attract some unwanted attention in public places. Travelers should remain vigilant and take care, particularly when traveling late at night.

Watchdogs such as ILGA-Europe, the European section of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, rate Russia as one of the least protective Countries in Europe for LGBT citizens, ranking it 48th out of the 49 European countries rated in its annual survey.

Terrorism

There is a high threat from terrorism. Attacks have occurred most frequently in St. Petersburg, Moscow and in the North Caucasus. You should remain vigilant in all public places. On 14 November 2016, Russia's anti-terrorism committee

announced that all elements of the security system had been put on heightened alert. Security measures have been bolstered including at airports and transport hubs. On 3rd April 2017 a suicide bomber attacked a Metro Train in St.

Petersburg killing 14 people. On 31 October 2015, a flight from Sharm el Sheikh to St Petersburg crashed in North Sinai. Egyptian and Russian authorities are conducting an investigation.

Attacks on the Stade de France in Paris, November 2015 were assessed to have been authorized as legitimate targets by ISIS, and subsequently resourced. It is worth bearing in mind that sporting venues with international visitors remain viable targets for Islamic extremists.

The Chechen/ Russian war is now described as a lingering insurgency. However, concern has been raised regarding the apparent sympathies with ISIS from the Chechen region. Monitoring of IS and other extremist propaganda should be in place prior to the event. ▶



Political rallies can occur in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other places across Russia. Check media for the latest information, be vigilant, and avoid any demonstrations. At this time there is no indication that Western nationals or interests have been specific targets, attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by foreigners. Foreign visitors should remain vigilant in all public places, including tourist sites and crowded areas, particularly where access is not controlled

(eg open-air events and markets) and in major transport hubs. Previous attacks have targeted transport infrastructure, including airports, buses, trains and Metro systems. Further attacks are likely, and could take place anywhere in Russia.

Opportunistic and Petty Crime

Petty crime does happen in cities. Be alert to the possibility of mugging, pick-pocketing and theft from vehicles or hotel rooms. Be wary of groups

of women and children who beg. Drink-spiking leading to robbery, violence and/or abuse does happen. Unconscious victims are often left outside, which can be life-threatening in the winter months. Persons visiting Russia should buy their own drinks and keep sight of them at all times at venues serving alcohol.

There have been reports of street crime where tourists have been specifically targeted. These crimes are carried out by well-organized gangs. Be aware of pickpockets in the main tourist areas and around the main railway concourses. Bogus police officers have harassed and robbed tourists. If you are stopped always insist on seeing identification.

Avoid openly carrying expensive items, or anything that might easily identify you as a tourist. Avoid walking about late at night alone. Most incidents of violence in major cities

are usually linked to criminal/business activities and are not usually directed against foreign visitors but the risk of being mistaken and becoming unwittingly targeted should be considered.

Look after your passport at all times, especially in major transport hubs and busy areas. Passports have been reported stolen or lost from foreign nationals when in the airports in Moscow. Be particularly vigilant when passing through Russia's airports, especially in the baggage collection area and outside the arrivals hall.

Summary

Based on our assessment and in conjunction with increased uncertainty as to the impacts of Russia's foreign policy intentions and relations with a new U.S. administration we continue to recommend that any attendance at large events, or corporate travel is supported by additional security measures.

Mark Deane, the CEO of ETS Risk Management Inc. and ExecSecure™ Inc. Mark has managed the security for multiple Fortune 500 clients major event corporate packages, including tier one sponsors for the Olympics and Paralympics.



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