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## Tampa Testing Terror Software

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Photo by: VICTOR JUNCO  
Tampa is a test site for the Site Profiler a software from a Virginia company helps assess a city's risk to different terroris scenarios. Photo of 3 dimensional image of the Forum.

**TAMPA** - Tampa police Capt. John Bennett looks over a representation of the city on a computer screen and tries to think like a terrorist.

With a few keystrokes, he can pretend to detonate a bomb inside Raymond James Stadium or outside a waterfront hotel.

`` There are infinite scenarios we can throw at this," said Bennett, who works in the department's Special Operations Division.

With a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness, Tampa has become a test site for security software that assesses a city's risk to various crises.

Site Profiler catalogs a city's infrastructure. Users can evaluate vulnerabilities and responses to potential threats.

Tampa is an ideal test site, Bennett said, because of its port, international airport, downtown area, theme parks and MacDill Air Force Base.

The nation's heightened focus on potential terrorist acts during the summer emphasizes the need for such tools.

`` We may be designing a template that may be used across the nation," Bennett said.

Digital Sandbox Inc. of Reston, Va., developed the software, which costs about \$250,000, company President Anthony Beverina said. The company, established in 1998, has received more than \$5 million in federal money.

Tampa and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey are Digital Sandbox's first clients outside the federal government, Beverina said.

Tampa police acquired the software in November. It links the police with the mayor's office and the city's Strategic Planning and Technology Department, officials said.

They first tested it while planning February's Gasparilla parade, analyzing what threats the city could expect, Bennett said.

Looking at a three-dimensional, computerized model of the city helps commanders make decisions about their weaknesses and where to distribute personnel, said Officer Doug Pasley, the program's project manager.

The model includes bridges, streets, waterways, parks and major public buildings, such as city hall, Tampa General Hospital and the St. Pete Times Forum.

"The ultimate goal is to have every building in the city in there," Pasley said.

Officers can have at their fingertips how many people work in individual buildings, who owns them, their structural design and their security measures.

Using those factors, they assess the risk to different threats communicated by the federal government, or to plan for events such as a presidential visit, Beverina said.

For example, if the Department of Homeland Security received a threat against local banks, police could pinpoint all the banks in Tampa, the number of workers in each bank, and which were at risk to attacks by air, land or water, Beverina said.

Certain scenarios can also be tested. "You can place weapons and detonate them and see what the damage would be," Beverina said.

The site does not offer live video or insert people into the model. However, officials can change the model by, for example, inserting metal detectors to see how security measures affect an outcome.

"It's kind of like an accounting system [of] where you're going to spend your money and where you're going to put your manpower," Beverina said.

He would like to connect the Tampa police with other agencies in the Bay area to make a larger model. "But that's very preliminary," he said.

The advanced technology enhances decision-making, Beverina said.

"Our system guides you to think about where you are vulnerable," Beverina said. "You're still making a judgment about whether something is likely to happen."

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