

Law Enforcement Agencies'

Methods of Surveillance



LIBERATED FROM THE BUREAU OF NARCOTICS
AND DANGEROUS DRUGS

BY THE PEOPLE'S DREADNAUGHT

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This text is used by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs to train so-called law enforcement officers in methods of surveillance. Save and study it.

As these law enforcement agents aggress on the people in general and freedom fighters in particular, it becomes necessary for our survival to understand their methods so that we can deal with them.

by THE PEOPLE'S DREADNAUGHT, Issue #5, September 1969.

SURVEILLANCE

Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs

I. DEFINITION

Surveillance is the secretive and continuous watching of persons, vehicles, places or objects to obtain information concerning the activities and identities of individuals.

II. TYPES

A. Moving Surveillance - The investigator follows the subject on foot or in a vehicle.

B. Stationary surveillance - The continuous watching of a place, object or person from a fixed point.

III. OBJECTIVES

- A. To obtain evidence of a crime.
- B. To locate persons by watching his haunts and associates.
- C. To obtain detailed information about a subject's activities.
- D. To check on the reliability of informants.
- E. To locate hidden property or contraband.
- F. To obtain probable cause for obtaining search warrants.
- G. To prevent the commission of an act or to apprehend a subject in the commission of an act.
- H. To obtain information for later use in interrogation.
- I. To develop leads and information received from other sources.
- J. To know at all times the whereabouts of an individual.
- K. To obtain admissible legal evidence for use in court.

IV. NEEDED QUALITIES

- A. Ordinary appearance - Any outstanding physical characteristics may attract the subject's attention.
- B. Ability to act natural under all circumstances.
- C. Alertness.
- D. Resourcefulness.
- E. Good powers of observation and memory.
- F. Patience and endurance.

V. PREPARATION

- A. Study related files for information relating to:
 - a. Identities and descriptions of known or suspected contacts or associates of subject.
 - b. Habits and normal routines.
 - c. Subject's probable suspicions and estimated ability to elude surveillance.
 - d. All other background information on subject.
2. Type, scope and extent of crimes known or suspected to be involved in the case.
3. Type of neighborhood.
 - a. Type of inhabitants.
 - b. Dress of inhabitants.
 - c. Language and dialects.
4. Vehicles involved in case.
 - a. Descriptions and license numbers of vehicles.
 - b. Subject's driving habits.
 - c. Garage and repair facilities frequented.
 - d. Streets and routes frequented.
- B. Reconnaissance - Should be used to supplement file information.
 1. If practical, the subject should be pointed out to the surveillance officers by someone familiar with his identity.
 2. Make a physical survey to determine:
 - a. Geography.
 - b. Background information on neighborhoods and inhabitants not available in files.
 - c. Suitable vantage points.
 - d. Traffic conditions.
 - e. Become familiar with names and locations of streets in area, including locations of dead-end streets, etc.
- C. Appearance of surveillance officers.
 1. Must watch dress and demeanor of local people. Appear natural at all times.
 2. Avoid conspicuous jewelry or other distinctive articles.

3. Beware of bulging concealed weapons.

4. Carry cap and glasses to effect quick changes.

D. Funds

1. Always carry sufficient money to defray contemplated living, transportation, etc. expenses.

2. The denominations and Federal Reserve Bank issuing paper money should be in keeping with the local conditions.

E. If several officers are to engage in a surveillance, a system of tactics should be agreed upon to determine the duty of each officer in any eventuality.

F. Signals suitable for communicating information between the surveillance officers should be devised and thoroughly understood by all participants.

G. When more than one officer is engaged in a surveillance, one of the participants should be designated as "officer in charge".

H. If the surveillance is likely to be lengthy, arrangements should be made for suitable reliefs.

I. A secure system of communicating with headquarters or superiors should be prearranged and a central coordination point should be established to enable officers to keep in touch with each other.

J. Prepare explanations for being at a particular place at a particular time if accosted by the subject.

VI. SURVEILLANCE METHODS

A. One-man foot surveillance.

1. Surveillance is extremely difficult for one man and should be avoided if possible.

2. The subject must be kept in view at all times.

3. One-man surveillance will usually be very close and somewhat dependent on pedestrian traffic and physical characteristics of the area.

4. When walking on the opposite side of a street, the officer should keep almost abreast of the subject.

5. It is necessary at all times to be close enough to immediately observe the subject if he enters buildings, turns corners or similar sudden moves.

B. Two-man surveillance.

1. The use of two officers affords greater security against detection and reduces the risk of losing the subject.

2. On streets crowded with pedestrian and vehicular traffic, both surveillants should normally remain on the same side of the street as the subject.

a. The first officer trailing the subject fairly closely.

b. The second officer trailing the first agent some distance behind.

3. On less crowded streets, one officer should normally walk on the opposite side of the street nearly abreast of the subject.

C. Three-man surveillance (ABC) method.

1. The use of three officers reduces still further the risk of losing the subject and, under ordinary conditions, affords still greater security against detection.

2. The three-man method permits a greater variation in the position of the officers and also permits an officer who suspects he has been spotted by the subject to drop out.

3. Use of the ABC method under normal traffic conditions.

a. The "A" officer keeps a reasonable distance behind the subject.

b. The "B" officer follows "A" and concentrates on keeping "A" in view.

c. The "C" officer walks on the subject.

d. The "B" officer is also responsible for detecting any confederate of the subject being utilized to detect surveillance.

4. Use of the ABC method on streets with little or no traffic.

a. Two officers may be on the opposite side of the street or,

b. One officer may be in front of the subject.

5. Use of the ABC method on very crowded streets.

a. All three officers should generally be on the same side of the street.

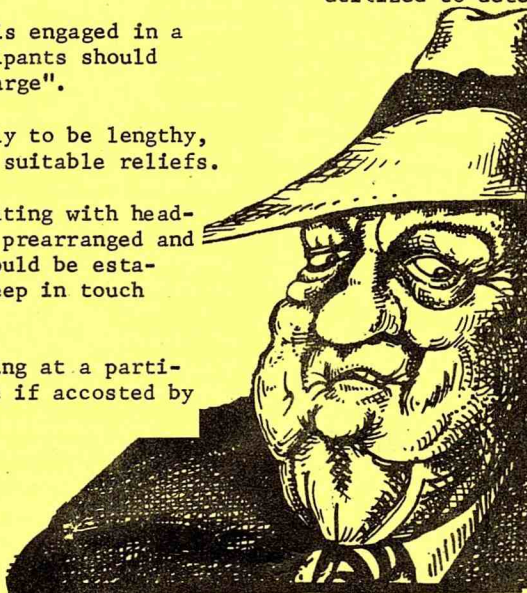
b. The leading officer should follow very close to the subject to observe his actions at intersections or if he enters buildings.

6. As in the two-man method, the officers should frequently alter their positions relative to the subject.

7. Under normal traffic conditions, when the subject approaches a street intersection, the "C" officer (across the street) should lead the subject and should reach the intersection first. By pausing at the corner, or crossing the street and turning in the same direction as the subject, the "C" officer can watch the subject and signal to "A" and "B" the subject's actions after he has passed from sight. If he signals that the subject has stopped, the "A" officer should cross the intersection before proceeding in the direction the subject did when he turned the corner. If the subject pauses several moments, both the "A" and "B" officers may have to proceed to a point out of his view and rely on the "C" officer to signal them when the subject continues on his way. Regardless of whether the subject stops or not, his turning a corner can be utilized for rotating the positions of the officers.

D. Progressive or "leap frog" method of surveillance.

1. Use of this method is not too common because of the time involved and the poor chances of obtaining good results.



2. It involves the observation of the route, with the officer stationing himself at a fixed point until the subject disappears from view.

3. If the subject follows the same route each day, his destination can be determined without following him, if the officer stations himself each day at the spot where the subject disappeared the previous day.

4. Disadvantages.

a. No assurance that subject will follow same route each day.

b. No assurance that subject will go to the same destination each day.

5. This method may be of value in locating hideouts or meeting places when the risk of actually trailing the subject is too great.

E. Combined foot-auto surveillance.

1. This method involves surveillance on foot by one, two or three officers, and additional surveillance at the same time by one or two officers in an automobile.

2. By use of this method, officers will always be assured of transportation if the subject should board a bus, streetcar or taxicab.

3. Several officers can also be carried in the car, and the officers on foot can be frequently changed to avoid compromise.

4. Caution must be exercised in the operation of the automobile as a slow moving car may become conspicuous.

VII. FOOT SURVEILLANCE PROBLEMS

A. Subject enters building.

1. Ordinarily, at least one officer should follow the subject unless the building is of such a type that the entry would expose the officer. (Private home, small shop, etc.)

2. In the case of large public buildings with many exits, all officers should follow the subject into the building.

3. In some buildings where the subject might be lost easily, it may be advisable for one officer to remain in the lobby or at a door to spot the subject as he leaves the building.

B. Subject enters an elevator.

1. If the subject is the lone passenger and has reason to suspect surveillance, it may be best not to accompany him into the elevator, but rather to watch the indicator for the floor stop, and then proceed to that floor to try to pick up the subject's route.

2. In other cases, one or two officers may accompany the subject, wait for him to announce his floor, and then ask for a higher or lower floor and use the stairs to get to the subject's floor and attempt to pick up his trail.

3. At all times, one officer should be left in the lobby since the subject may be using the elevator in an attempt to elude surveillance.

C. Subject enters restaurant.

1. At least one officer should enter behind the subject, order approximately the same amount of food and be alert to note any contacts made by the subject.

2. If possible, the officer should pay his check before the subject does so that he can be ready to leave with him.

3. In some cases, it may be desirable for the officer to leave shortly before the subject and wait for him outside.

D. Subject boards a streetcar, bus or subway.

1. At least one officer should board the same car or bus and sit behind or at least on the same side as the subject.

2. If an officer should miss the streetcar or bus, or should fear that by boarding it he might make the subject suspicious, he may hire a taxi to follow the car for the full distance, or follow by taxi for a few blocks, overtake, and then board the car.

3. The ideal practice is for one officer to board the car or bus and for the others to follow in a surveillance automobile.

E. Subject takes a taxicab.

1. If trailing by another taxi or by surveillance automobile is impossible or impractical, the officer should make a note of the time, the place, and name of the cab company and the license number or cab number.

2. The subject's destination can be determined later by checking with the driver or the company office.

F. Subject takes a train, boat, plane or long distance bus.

1. Whether an officer will follow his subject on any trip usually depends upon the indicated length of the trip and the instructions he has received from his superior.

2. The subject's destination may be learned by listening while he is buying his ticket, by questioning the ticket agent or by contacting the conductor of the train.

3. The possibility of examining the subject's luggage in the railroad station or on the train should not be overlooked. Such examination can only be made lawfully armed with a search warrant. Exception: Customs officers at the border.

G. Subject enters a theater, race track, or amusement park.

1. All officers should normally follow the subject.

2. The regular admission charges should be paid and credentials should be used only as a last resort.

3. Officers must follow the subject closely in order not to lose him in the crowd.

4. In darkened theaters, the subject must be closely watched and, if possible, one agent should sit directly behind subject to avoid losing him. The exits should also be covered to avoid losing him.

H. Subject meets a contact.

1. A complete detailed description of the contact should be noted, together with time and place of the meeting.

2. If possible, the contact should be photographed.

3. If practical, attempts should be made to overhear the conversation.

4. The subject's attitude toward the contact should be noted.

I. Subject registers at a hotel.

1. The subject's room number may be obtained from the manager, house detective or room clerk.
2. If the hotel management is cooperative, it may be possible to procure a room near the subject's which can be used as a base for surveillance.
3. All outgoing telephone calls made by the subject will normally be recorded by the hotel's switchboard operator and such records should be examined for leads.
4. Abandoned trash should not be overlooked; however, under no circumstances can trespass be made to retrieve it.

J. Officers lose subject.

1. The officer in charge should be immediately notified.
2. Known hangouts or addresses frequented by the subject should be placed under observation immediately in an effort to find him.
3. It is generally advisable to station an officer in the area where the subject was last seen, as he may reappear there after a short time.
4. Phone calls may be made to home or places frequented by the subject under a pretext and will often yield information of subject's whereabouts.

K. Subject discovers officer.

1. If an officer is recognized by the subject as a surveillance agent, he should normally drop out and be replaced by another officer.
2. In some cases where concealment of any investigative activity is paramount, surveillance should be stopped as soon as the subject is known to suspect surveillance.

L. Decoys.

1. A clever subject who has discovered that he is under surveillance may not reveal his discovery to his surveillants, but may attempt to "shake" them from his trail by means of false contacts or decoys.
2. For example, a subject may leave a brief case or package full of worthless papers or materials with a contact and thus cause unwary officers to redirect or discontinue their surveillance, thus leaving him free to make his real contacts unobserved.

M. Traps.

1. A subject may attempt to lure an officer into a trap.
2. A thorough knowledge of the locality, coupled with good judgment and the alertness to realize when trailing becomes suspiciously easy is good defense against traps.

VIII. DETECTION OF FOOT SURVEILLANCE

A. A subject who is suspicious of being under surveillance may resort to trickery in order to verify his suspicions.

B. When a subject resorts to such trickery, it is good policy to change officers, for the subject may have spotted one or more of his followers.

C. Common methods used by suspects to test for trailing:

1. Stopping abruptly and looking at people in the rear.
2. Casually looking around.
3. Reversing course and retracing steps.
4. Boarding buses and street cars and alighting just before they start.
5. Riding short distances on buses and street-cars.
6. Circling the block in a taxi.
7. Entering a building and leaving immediately via another exit.
8. Stopping abruptly after turning a corner.
9. Using convoys.
10. Watching reflections in shop windows.
11. Walking slowly and rapidly at alternate intervals.
12. Dropping a piece of paper to see if anyone retrieves it.
13. Stopping to tie shoestring, meanwhile looking around for surveillants.
14. Arranging with a friend in a shop, tavern or other places to watch for surveillants.
15. Observing from a window or roof across street with spy glasses to see if equipment or likely persons are visible in rooms adjacent to subject's room.
16. In hotel lobbies and similar places watching for persons peeking over or around newspapers and watching in wall mirrors to see who is unusually observant of persons coming and going through the lobby.
17. Starting to leave a hotel lobby or similar place quickly, then suddenly turning around to see if anyone has suddenly jumped up without any apparent reason or objective.
18. The subject or an associate may attempt to be near enough to the hall doors of rooms adjacent to his in order to get a quick look inside when someone happens to open the room door.
19. Subject may open and close his hotel room door to indicate that he has left the room, then wait inside the room with the door ajar. If anyone leaves an adjoining room, the subject then actually leaves his room in an ordinary manner and rides down the elevator with his neighbor while committing his appearance to memory.
20. Subject may pretend to leave his hotel room, then remain quiet to see if typewriting, talking or other noises begin to occur in an adjoining room, and then suddenly disappear or change to whispers upon evidence that subject is still in his room.

IX. ELUDING FOOT SURVEILLANCE

A. Common methods used by cunning subjects.

1. Jumping off a bus, streetcar or subway just as the doors are about to close.
2. Leaving a building through the rear or side exit.
3. Losing one-self in crowds.
4. Entering theaters and leaving immediately through an exit.
5. Pointing out one's surveillant to a policeman, who will generally require the officer to explain his actions.

6. Using decoys.
7. Using traps.
8. Taking the last taxi at a stand.
9. Changing clothing.

X. METHODS OF AUTOMOBILE SURVEILLANCE

A. One-car surveillance.

1. If only one car is available for surveillance, its position should be behind the subject's car, the distance varying with the amount of traffic in the area.
2. In city traffic, not more than two vehicles should be permitted to come between the subject's car and the surveillance vehicle.
3. The surveillance car should keep toward the right rear of the subject's car in order to minimize the chance of attracting the subject's attention.
4. In rural areas it is wise to give the subject a good lead and if intersections and road forks are few and far between, the lead can be extended to a point where the subject may even be lost from sight over hills or around curves. When practical, keep another car between the surveillance vehicle and the subject.
5. At night, the surveillant's car should not ordinarily have its headlights on high beam and all other unnecessary lights on the car should be extinguished.

B. Two-car surveillance.

1. In city areas during daylight hours, both cars should ordinarily be behind the subject's car.
2. Occasionally, one car may operate on a known parallel route, timing itself to arrive at intersections just before the subject in order to observe his route at the intersections.
3. This method is recommended for use at night and in suburban areas.

C. Three-car surveillance.

1. By the use of three surveillance cars, more use can be made of parallel routes, and the positions of the cars can be changed frequently enough to prevent discovery of the surveillance.
2. One car may be used to lead to subject and can observe the latter through the rear-view mirror.

D. Leap frog surveillance with cars.

1. Cars are stationed at intervals along a known route and after the subject's car has been observed to pass a surveillant's car the officer proceed and pass the subject's car at sufficient speed to permit them to take up a new position beyond the other official cars and thus keep progressively checking on the suspect without actually following his car.
2. This method has the disadvantage that the subject may not take the expected route or may turn off a route between the observation points of the surveillant cars.
3. May be useful in locating hideouts, stills, counterfeiting plants, etc., where tailing by car is not practical.

E. Use of radio equipment in car surveillance.

1. Two-way short wave radio communication between two surveillance cars affords an ideal means of conducting auto surveillance.

2. It facilitates the use of parallel routes by vehicles and the interchange of positions.

3. Surveillance cars with radios should be equipped with antennas that appear to be standard commercial automobile radio antennas.

XI. DETECTION OF AUTOMOBILE SURVEILLANCE

A. As in the case of foot surveillance, a subject who believes he is being followed may resort to trickery in order to verify his suspicions, as follows:

1. Alternate fast and slow driving.
2. Committing flagrant traffic violations, such as making U-turns, driving against traffic on one-way streets and running through red lights.
3. Frequent parking.
4. Driving into dead-end streets.
5. Stopping suddenly around curves or corners.
6. Pulling into driveways.
7. Speeding up a hill, then coasting slowly down.

XII. ELUDING AUTOMOBILE SURVEILLANCE

A. Common methods used by suspicious suspects.

1. Committing traffic violations.
2. Using double entrances to driveways - in one and out the other.
3. Cutting through parking lots.
4. Driving through congested areas.
5. Using decoys and traps.
6. Deserting the vehicle beyond a blind curve or corner, but permitting the driver to drive on as a decoy.

XIII. FIXED SURVEILLANCE

A. During observation from a "plant" surveillance agents must be extremely careful not to reveal their activity.

B. Binoculars are generally essential equipment in the plant, as they facilitate positive identification of persons entering or leaving a place under observation.

C. A still or motion picture camera with a telephoto lens can also be used effectively.

D. Notes.

1. Take careful notes of observations, including detailed descriptions of all individuals entering the target.
2. A chronological log is usually the best method of recording pertinent occurrences.

XIV. PREMISES

A. A surveillance of a premises usually entails the use of a base of operation or "plant", such as a room, apartment, house or camouflaged outdoor fixture located near the base of operation.

B. A fixed "plant" should afford a maximum observation of all entrances and exits of the premises under observation, and should have an exit to permit officers to enter or leave without coming under observation from the observed premises.

C. If the "plant" cannot be set up, a camouflaged outdoor fixture, such as a vendor's stand, may be set up, or officers with an appropriate "cover" may be sent into the area.