

NY Holds Largest Ever Counter Terror Exercise

Multiple Law Enforcement Agencies Put Choke Hold On New York Harbor As Part Of 'Operation Sentinel'

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NEW YORK (CBS) — On Friday, the largest counterterrorism exercise in New York history took place.

The NYPD and 10 other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies mounted a drill in New York Harbor to see if new high-tech equipment can detect terrorists with bombs on the high seas.

Along with the U.S. Coast Guard, there were law enforcement units from Westchester, Perth Amboy and Union County, the New York City Fire Department and the NYPD.

"The exercise is to find a reported nuclear device on a vessel coming into the harbor," NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly said of the event.

All told, 10 agencies and 17 vessels put a so-called choke hold on traffic coming into New York Harbor under the Verrazano Bridge. If you attempted to sail or boat through the area, you were searched.

"We're trying to further develop our concept of operations as a region in protecting the waterways and ports of NYC from any acts of terrorism," said Deputy Chief Joseph McKeever, the commanding officer of the counterterrorism division.

Lots of boats were boarded and searched, and the NYPD also got to test its two \$750,000 high-tech radiation tracking boats that have gear so top secret CBS 2 HD wasn't allowed to shoot pictures of some of it.

They are the only two like it in the country and they can detect radiation even before they board the boat.

When the NYPD "Tracs" boat pulled up to "The Last Dollar," a recreation speed boat, cops knew from their top secret devices that they would find a radiation device on board.

"It was a gamma-based source," McKeever said. "It could be used in what we term a dirty bomb today."

Friday's exercise was part of the larger "Operation Sentinel," which puts a 50-mile buffer around New York City.

The hope is that while working with cops in other jurisdictions, terrorists with bombs, whether on land or sea, will be stopped well before they reach New York City.

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