SoBran INC.

SafeMail®

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE

2019 SAFEMAIL MAIL SECURITY SURVEY

MAIL: A SYMBOL OF TRUST
A TOOL OF TERROR

"Mail threats are so common today they don't make the news unless they reach a high-profile target. If you wait to screen until mail terrorism threatens your company, it's too late."

Amos-Leon' Otis, SoBran Founder and CEO

2018: A High Water Mark for Mail Threats

In February 2018, over a dozen people including U.S. Marines at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall fell ill after a white powder letter was opened. In Texas, the Austin Mail Bomber killed two people and injured five over a three-week serial attack. President Donald Trump, Defense Secretary James Mattis, and the Directors of the FBI, CIA, and several other high-ranking officials received Ricin letters through the mail. In October, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) were sent through the U.S. Postal Service to 16 high ranking officials including President Barack Obama, President Bill Clinton, Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and others. CNN was also targeted.

These high-profile incidents only begin to scratch the surface. For every mail threat that made the news, many others are handled discretely without national press coverage.

"This anonymity is the beating heart of mail crime, opening the door for anyone with enough motive to commit criminal acts at arm's length from the law."

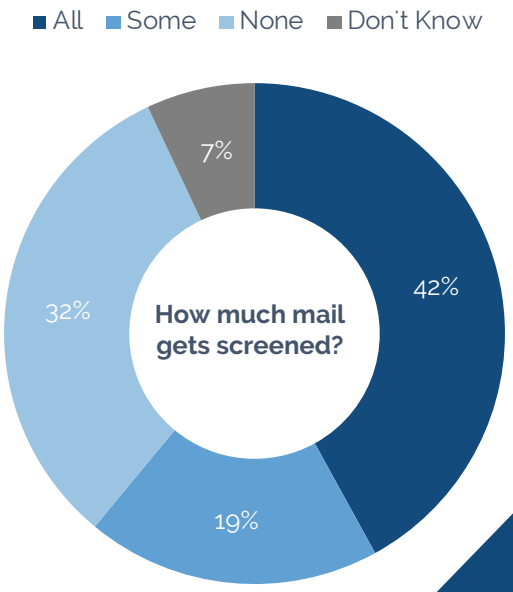
"…..It remains both a symbol of trust and a tool of terror…"

The Atlantic

Your mailroom or package delivery is the 'forgotten back door' that can be easy entry to do harm to your organization. If anything, 2018 demonstrated that while many threats are costly and harrowing hoaxes, it only takes one to prove deadly.

Mail threats can occur at any time, by a variety of means. According the U.S. Postal Service, revenge is the motivation that most often triggers a letter or package bomb, or a bomb threat. If your organization recently had layoffs, is involved in controversial issues, or even has a disgruntled employee, the risk of threat increases.

To assess how organizations are protecting themselves from mail terrorism, SoBran, Inc. conducts an annual survey of security and mailroom professionals responsible for the safety and security of their organization. In this year's survey approximately 37% of respondents work in government or as contractors and consultants to government agencies and the rest in private industry.



Less than Half of the Organizations Screen all their Mail

Less than half (42%) of survey respondents report that the organization they work for screens all of the mail they receive. The good news? The number of organizations that actively screen all their mail is on the rise!

The companies that do screen mail typically only conduct visual inspection (67%) and X-ray screening (73%). If a letter or package shows obvious signs of a mail threat, such as leakage, protruding wires, or unusual weight, smells or sounds, it may be caught with this type of light screening.

X-rays may flag bombs, sharp objects or other high-density materials such as metals found in IEDs.

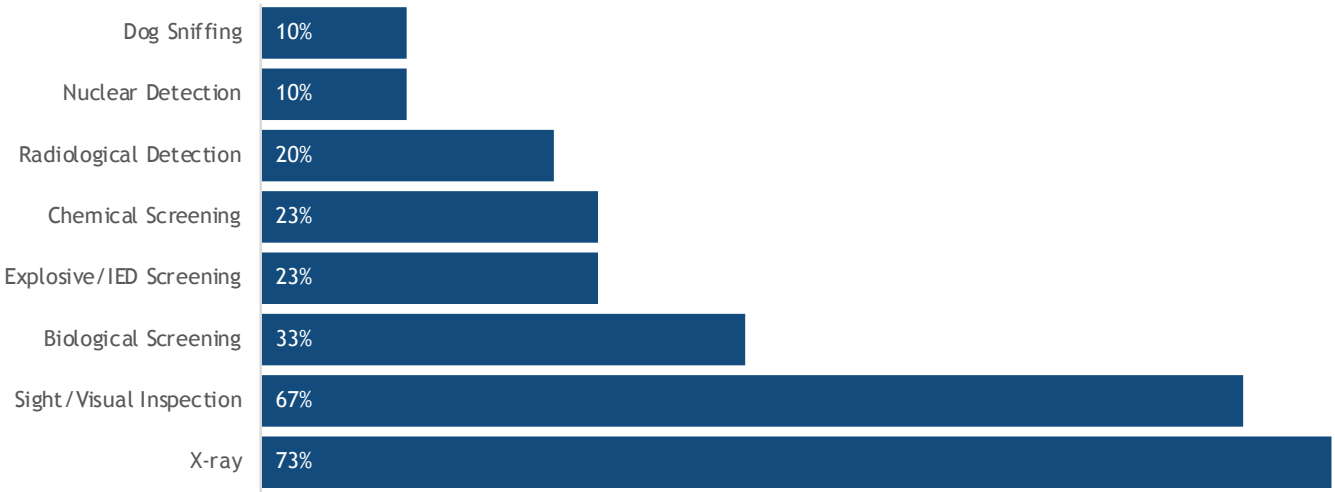
58%

of organizations are at risk

Critical Screening Techniques Increase

When we started this survey in 2016, sight screening was the dominant form of mail screening. This year, X-ray surpassed sight screening, and is used by 73% of organizations surveyed compared to 67% for sight. The number of respondents using more specialized screening techniques increased significantly from 2018. Biological screening almost doubled from 17% to 33%. Additionally, we saw chemical, radiological, x-ray, dog sniffing, and IED screening increase over an average of 9% each.

Organizations using...



Confidence in Mail Screening Effectiveness is Rising but so are the Threats

Offsite Mail Screening – On the Rise

The risky practice of screening mail in the same building in which most employees work has dropped from 60% in 2018 to 43% in 2019.

Offsite Mail Screening keeps employees safer and ensures:

- Risk of productivity downtime as the result of a threat or hoax is reduced
- Cleanup of any hazardous materials are contained in a purpose-built environment
- Any detected threats are not closely associated with the organization, reducing negative publicity.

53%

53% of organizations screen mail offsite (not in same building as most employees work)

It's Not If –But When

Evidence of the effectiveness and importance of mail screening is demonstrated by the fact that over a third of the companies surveyed had at least one mail threat detected in the past year and 16% had more than 3 threats in a year's time. Threatening letters more than doubled while drugs and Illegal substances quadrupled.

Mail Security Challenges

While the biggest hurdle for most organizations around mail screening remains budget, organizational apathy has increased by 10%, to almost a third of respondents. Organizations are unsuspecting and underprepared for this very real threat. Knowing when your organization might be a target is unpredictable.

Mail Screening Challenges

A terrorist or lone wolf's list could be long with many types of targets included. Why one public organization and not another? We won't know the reasoning, and that uncertainty leads to possible danger. There is no question that the best protection is planning for worst case scenarios.

1/3

are more concerned than they were this time last year.

Where Organizations are Looking to Improve

Over 65% of respondents indicated they are planning to increase training in the coming year and 28% said they are investing in more advanced screening equipment. It is imperative for organizations that handle mail screening themselves to increase the knowledge of mailroom staff and any employees who handle incoming mail.

Providing specialized training on equipment for advanced screening to a small team of employees enables them to prevent the most dangerous threats from spreading within your organization. Their training should be refreshed as risk factors change and as new employees enter the organization. It is also critical to continually train staff on the latest threats and screening techniques.

Planned Changes

Conclusion

The threat of dangerous attacks making it through the U.S. mail is real. Threatening letters and packages arrive at corporate and government offices daily. While many prove to be nothing more than a hoax, the real damage caused by one legitimate threat can be catastrophic. We know that mail screening works. As long as terrorists have low cost, easy access to mail, all organizations must consider comprehensive mail screening as an essential part of their security program.

SoBran SafeMail keeps your team safe and your operations running.

SoBran sets the standard for the design and operation of mail screening programs. We've been keeping clients safe from mail borne attacks since 2001, when we worked with the U.S. Army to develop and operate a facility to protect against Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) mail threats.

Our expert team provides you with:

Onsite Screening Services

The SoBran team provides technical and operational support for mail screening facilities. We work from your location to perform visual screens, operate all screening equipment, and keep your mail operations running smoothly.

Offsite Screening Services

You don't have to allocate space or expose your team to potential threats. We pick up your mail, screen it at one of our offsite facilities, and deliver it promptly to your door. You'll receive your mail fully screened – on your timeline, regardless of your location.

Additional Services

- Onsite risk analysis, system design, integration and implementation for mail screening programs
- Design of site-specific protocols for crisis communications, evacuation, and emergency action plans
- Compliance with 41 CFR, Department of Defense and OSHA safety programs

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