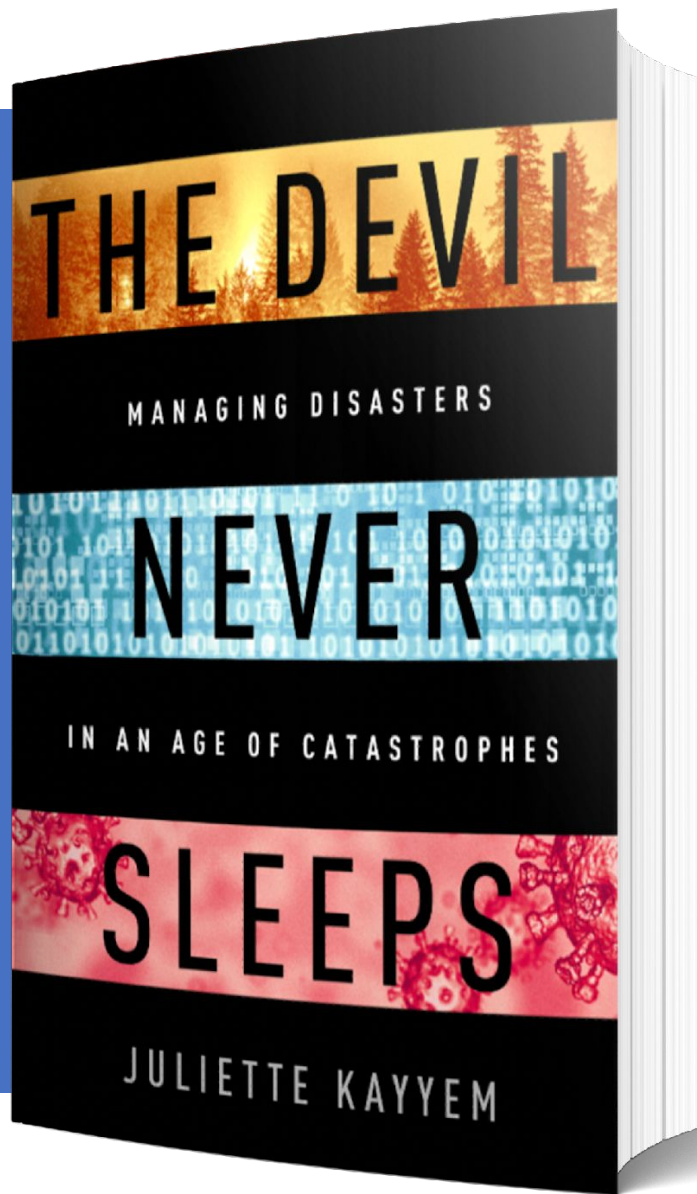




Securing the World's Biggest Moments: Major Strategies in Megaevent Safety Planning

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- CNN Senior National Security Analyst
- Former Assistant Secretary at the Department at Homeland Security

A Crisis is Unique: The Runway is Short



ABC 13

What Makes Megaevent Security Unique?

1. **Governance and Roles:** Establishing unified command across agencies and private stakeholders.
2. **Risk Assessment:** Identifying critical vulnerabilities (transportation, venues, communications).
3. **Integration of Technology:** Surveillance, AI analytics, crowd monitoring, and digital twins.
4. **Resilience over perfection:** Planning for disruption, not the illusion of total control.
5. **Communications Strategy:** Managing transparency and public trust before and during events.



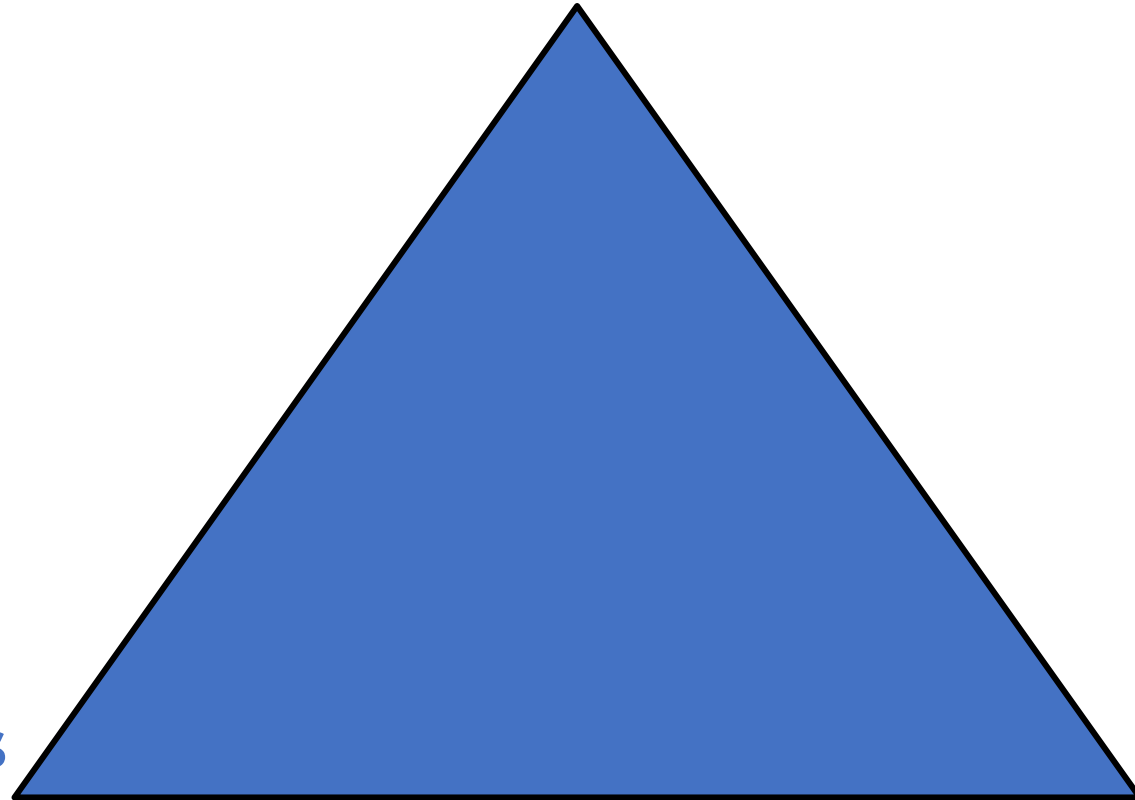
Formula 1,
The Conversation, 2024

Balancing Preparation

Have fun! (or travel or go to school)

Reduce all risks

**Manage unified
defenses**



How do you measure success?



Business Insider

Why Are Megaevents Challenging?

- **Temporary but high-risk:** Pop-up cities built for short durations.
- **Convergence of threats:** Terrorism, cyberattacks, drones, protests, crowd surges, disinformation, insider risk.
- **Public-private governance:** 80% of the security responsibility is outside of government — coordination is everything.
- **Narrative sensitivity:** Symbolic targets that project national competence or failure.
- **“No-fail” mission mindset:** Success measured by what *doesn't happen*.



Paris Olympics,
Paris Je T'aime, 2024

Traditional Threats Remain. New Ones Emerge

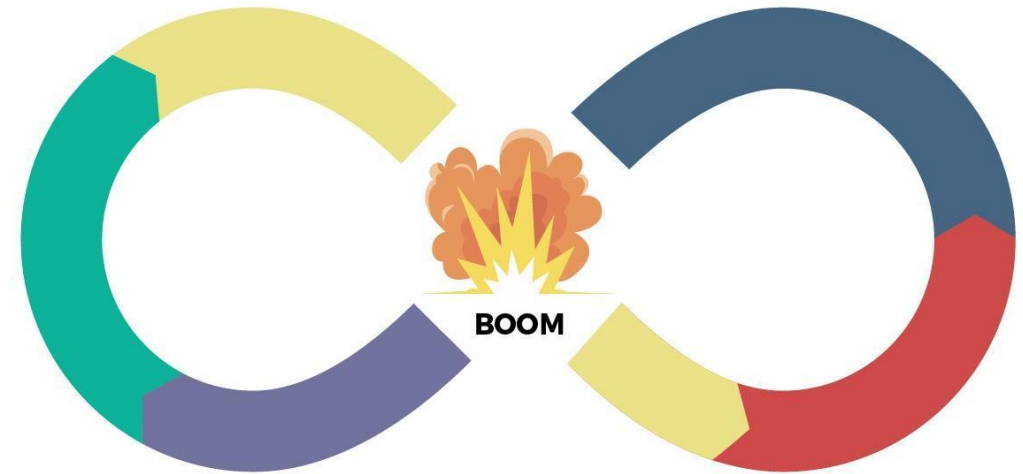
- **AI and misinformation:** Real-time deepfakes or false alerts undermining public confidence.
- **Drone swarms and autonomous threats.**
- **Climate and environmental disruptions** (heat, smoke, storms).
- **Cyber-physical convergence:** When digital disruptions have physical consequences.
- **Volunteer and workforce vetting at massive scale.**



The Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival,
Tennessee Municipal League, 2024

Learning to “Fail Safer”

Random and Rare vs.
Standard Operating Procedure



Takeaways for Practitioners

Key takeaways:

“Megaevents don’t invent new threats — they expose existing weaknesses.”

- Build trust before the crisis.
- The PLAYBOOK matters, from the beginning
- Think of security as part of the event’s brand.
- Plan for cascading impacts: cyber → transport → crowd.
- Measure success by preparedness, adaptability, and communication clarity.

Thank you!