

## Vehicle Surveillance: Basic Tactics, Part 1

by Lee Adams

Wheel artist – that's spy-talk for an outdoor surveillance specialist operating in a vehicle. The FBI has lots of them – agents and bucars (bureau cars). Together they're called vehicle surveillance teams.

Know your adversary. Make no mistake about it, FBI vehicle surveillance teams are deadly. They get results. Consistently. FBI agents receive the best training and the best equipment.

They don't just follow you – they surround you. They become part of your environment. You never see the same vehicle twice. They blend in with traffic. Up to twenty FBI agents at any one time. Even more if the investigation involves national security.

Every agent on the surveillance team has just one thing on his mind – to get you. And they will.

Unless you read this article. Carefully.

What you'll learn

This is the first article in a five-part series that teaches you how to respond when you're confronted by an FBI vehicle surveillance team.

Article #1 – In the first tutorial (the article you're reading now) you'll learn the fundamentals of how vehicle surveillance teams operate.

Article #2 – In the second tutorial you'll learn about the tactics, diversions, and decoys that an FBI surveillance team uses – including how they support the foot surveillance team.

Article #3 – In the third tutorial you'll learn about advanced methods like setups, traps, ambushes, and attacks – as well as the FBI's psychological operations against you while you're driving.

Article #4 – In the fourth tutorial you'll see how to use antisurveillance and countersurveillance. You'll learn how to detect and obstruct the FBI.

Article #5 – In the fifth and final article you'll receive step-by-step instructions for breaking out of FBI surveillance. You'll learn how to give them the slip.

How you'll benefit. This five-part series of articles provides practical training in professional countersurveillance and antisurveillance techniques. If you are the target of FBI surveillance, this article will give you the edge you need to outwit the goon squads of

government tyranny and repression.

The FBI: A dangerous adversary...

The FBI is mainly interested in activity that occurs while you are out of your vehicle. The goal of an FBI vehicle surveillance team, therefore, is to track you to that location – and then help the foot surveillance team establish contact on you.

Background.

The FBI's vehicle surveillance system is the result of six decades of experience. From rudimentary beginnings during Prohibition, the FBI system as it exists today is built in large part from techniques originally developed from 1938 to 1943 by the Gestapo to monitor and suppress resistance in Nazi-occupied countries. With the addition of more than 50 years of modifications and improvements, the FBI today possesses a surveillance apparatus that has led to the ruin of many suspects.

Triple threat

Depending on the situation, FBI agents can choose from three different methods of vehicle surveillance. These methods are floating-box surveillance, hand-off surveillance, and static surveillance.

Floating-box surveillance.

Floating-box surveillance is based on continuous coverage by the same team. FBI agents create a box of surveillance vehicles around you. The box floats with you as you travel along your route. Hence the name floating-box. It is very effective in urban and suburban locations. Very few suspects break out of a properly-run floating-box.

Hand-off surveillance.

Hand-off surveillance involves more than one team. At key intersections or other decision points along your route, surveillance control is passed from one floating-box team to another. This is called phased coverage. It is very effective when large distances are involved – freeways, expressways, long commutes, highways, and so on. It is also used in city situations when lengthy periods of time are involved.

Static surveillance.

Static surveillance is also based on phased coverage, but it uses fixed observation posts instead of a floating-box. Each observation post is located at a decision point (major intersection, etc.) along the target's route. Although this method of surveillance leaves many gaps in coverage, it is very difficult to detect this type of surveillance. The FBI uses this method when they first begin coverage on a hard target (such as a trained intelligence agent who is likely to be on the lookout for surveillance). The FBI switches to floating-

box surveillance after they have identified general locations where coverage is required.

The FBI's floating box system...

The FBI's floating-box is a powerful system. The wheel artists don't follow you – they surround you. They blend in. They become part of your ecosystem.

An FBI floating-box can be run with as few as three vehicles – or as many as 20. A team consisting of seven to ten vehicles is typical. It is not unheard-of for 50 vehicles to be involved, especially in a major case where arrest is imminent.

The FBI has for many years managed to keep secret the size of their vehicle surveillance teams. Even in court proceedings, the most they'll admit to is 20 vehicles. In some surveillance situations, FBI wheel artists don't just blend in with your environment, they become your environment.

Surveillance vehicles in the real world are never the identical make, model, and color. FBI teams use sedans, coupes, stationwagons, pickup trucks, vans, minivans, sport utility vehicles, taxis, motorcycles, commercial trucks, ambulances, 18-wheelers, and others.

### Specialized roles

Each of the surveillance vehicles in the above illustration is charged with carrying out a specific assignment.

**Command vehicle:** The command vehicle is tasked with maintaining visual contact with the target. The agent is said to have command of the target. This is a pivotal role. This agent keeps the other team members informed of the target's direction, speed, intentions, etc.

**Backup vehicle:** The backup vehicle provides a fill-in function. Because the command vehicle is the vehicle most likely to be detected by the target, the FBI has devised a number of strategies that let the backup vehicle take over the command role, thereby allowing the previous command vehicle to exit the surveillance box. Many suspects have been duped by this strategy, as you'll learn later in this article.

**Advance vehicle:** The advance vehicle is like an early warning system. The agent provides advance warning of obstacles, hazards, or traffic conditions that would otherwise catch the surveillance team unaware. The advance vehicle also fulfills another important function. If the FBI has bugged your telephone or your office or your residence, they're likely to already know your destination. Naturally, the advance vehicle arrives before you do. Many suspects have been completely fooled by the undercover FBI agent who is already seated at the restaurant when the suspect arrives.

**Outrider vehicle:** The outrider vehicles patrol the perimeter of the floating-box. Their assignment is to make certain that the target does not get outside the containment of the

box. They also play a key role when the target makes a turn at an intersection, as you'll learn later in this article.

### Surveillance advantages

The floating-box is a very powerful and flexible system. It allows the FBI to successfully respond to a variety of situations. The FBI is almost never caught off-guard.

### Recovery from mistakes.

If visual contact with the target is lost, the box can be collapsed inward, enabling the agents to quickly re-acquire command of the target. (Whenever the FBI loses visual contact with the target, the surveillance team immediately executes a lost-command drill. The FBI has a number of strategies they use to re-acquire command of the target.)

### Quick response.

The floating-box also allows the FBI to react quickly to a target who is attempting to evade surveillance. If the target unexpectedly makes a left turn, for example, the left outrider vehicle turns left and becomes the new advance vehicle. The other elements in the team shift roles as appropriate. More on this later.

### Signature shift.

The floating-box makes it possible to quickly alter the signature of the team, making them more difficult to detect. In the previous illustration of the floating-box system, there are five surveillance vehicles. At first glance one might assume they can be reconfigured five different ways if they switch roles. In actual practise, a team of five vehicles can be reconfigured  $5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 120$  different ways. Not all of these configurations are useful in the field, especially when the command vehicle's role is unchanged. In practise, about two dozen configurations are practical – more than enough to deceive most targets.

### The FBI's stakeout box...

A vehicle surveillance operation begins with a stakeout box. The FBI watches your office or residence, waiting for you to get in your vehicle and drive away. At that moment the stakeout box becomes a floating-box.

### Assignments

Note how vehicles Alpha, Brava, Charlie, and Delta are prepositioned. They are pointed away from the parked target vehicle. Each of these four layup vehicles is ready to initiate a follow, no matter which direction the target takes.

### Trigger vehicle.

The trigger vehicle is responsible for maintaining visual contact with the parked target vehicle. When the target begins to drive away, the agent in the trigger vehicle alerts the other members of the stakeout box. The agent is triggering the rest of the team into action – hence the name, trigger vehicle.

Layup vehicle. After being alerted by the trigger vehicle, the appropriate layup vehicle – Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, or Delta – picks up the follow and becomes the command vehicle. The other vehicles assume roles as outriders and backup until the team can be augmented with other FBI vehicles being held in reserve.

Picking up the follow. In a smoothly-run stakeout box, the layup vehicle that is initiating the follow will often pull out in front of the target vehicle, as shown in the illustration above. The layup vehicle becomes the command vehicle, with command of the target. When the command vehicle is in front of the moving target vehicle, it is called cheating. A cheating command vehicle is more difficult to detect than a command vehicle that is following the target.

#### Command of the target

The phrase command of the target refers to visual contact with the target of the surveillance operation. The surveillance vehicle having command of the target is called the command vehicle.

The name is appropriate, for the command vehicle also has virtual command of the entire surveillance team. The agent in the command vehicle informs the rest of the team whenever the target vehicle changes direction, adjusts speed, or stops. The surveillance team follows the guidance of the command vehicle.

The control and power that is provided by this approach is offset by the vulnerability of the command vehicle. In many surveillance operations, it is the command vehicle that is first detected by the target. In order to overcome this vulnerability, the FBI has developed a number of tactics to dupe the target of the surveillance operation.

Hand-off. The image shown below provides an example of how the FBI often reacts to a turn by the target vehicle.

After watching the target make a right turn at the intersection, the command vehicle continues straight through the intersection. The agent has, however, alerted one of the layup vehicles that the FBI has prepositioned at major decision points along the target's route.

As you can see from the illustration above, this is a very potent maneuver. The target sees the car that has been following him continue straight through the intersection. He starts to question whether or not he was actually under surveillance – perhaps he was just "imagining things". As a result, the layup vehicle is often able to pick up the follow

without attracting any suspicion.

Cheating.

The image shown below shows a variation on this maneuver. Instead of pulling in behind the target, the layup vehicle acquires command of the target by pulling out ahead of the target. This is called a cheating command. It has fooled a lot of suspects of FBI investigations.

A hard target, however, will eventually notice a telltale pattern of vehicles on side streets who pull away from the curb and turn the corner in front of him. (This is how you detect surveillance teams – by watching for patterns of behavior around you.)

Commit vehicle.

In order to further disguise their activities, the FBI often utilizes a commit vehicle, as shown in the illustration below.

The commit vehicle is prepositioned at a major decision point along the target's route. The FBI agent in the commit vehicle is charged with watching the approaching target vehicle. His assignment is to observe when the target has committed himself to a specific route. Hence the name commit vehicle. Because he is parked in a parking lot, driveway, or side street, his presence is difficult to detect by the target.

Using a tactic like this allows the layup vehicle to be parked out of sight, as shown in the image above.

At the appropriate moment the commit vehicle cues the layup vehicle to begin moving. This permits the layup vehicle to smoothly enter the situation and acquire command of the target without attracting the attention of the target. The target does not see the layup vehicle pull away from the curb – he only sees what appears to be just another vehicle in the normal flow of traffic. **BACKGROUND** – A significant portion of the FBI's training program is devoted to timing. Agents must become proficient at judging distance and time during surveillance operations. If the agent in the commit vehicle does her job properly, she can cue the layup vehicle to enter the situation in a manner that is invisible to the target. FBI recruits spend weeks learning these skills and an entire career perfecting them. The FBI denies that Seattle, Atlanta, New York, and Philadelphia are key training areas for their vehicle surveillance teams.

End of article #1

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Coming up in Article #2

In the next tutorial in this five-part series you'll learn about the tactics, diversions, and

decoys that an FBI vehicle surveillance team uses to keep you from detecting them. You'll see how the FBI modifies its vehicles. You'll find out about the basic driving skills of FBI wheel artists. You'll learn why you never see them communicating with each other. You'll see how the vehicle surveillance team supports the foot surveillance team.

Coming up in Article #3

In the third tutorial you'll learn about advanced methods of vehicle surveillance, like setups, traps, ambushes, and attacks. You'll also find out about psychological operations that the FBI can run against you while you're driving. You'll discover how they can use operant conditioning to covertly coerce you to alter your route – and leave you thinking it was your idea. Case studies supported by custom-prepared illustrations show you exactly how it's done. Coming up in Article #4...

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You'll learn about the telltale patterns that give them away. You'll be able to detect them without them realizing you've spotted them. You'll see five maneuvers you can use while driving to trick them into revealing themselves.

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The first method teaches you how to out-maneuver a cheating command vehicle and its backup unit. The second method shows you how to beat the FBI's stakeout box. The third method explains how to slip away while the goons are shifting from vehicle to foot surveillance.

In each case the FBI is forced to implement a lost-command drill in order to try and find you again. Copyright ©1998 Lee Adams. All rights reserved.

This is the second article in a five-part series that teaches you how to respond when confronted by FBI wheel artists – and the FBI's floating-box system of vehicle surveillance.

The story up to now. In the previous article you learned about the FBI's floating-box system. You saw how FBI agents don't just follow you, they surround you.

You also found out about the different functions of each vehicle in the surveillance team – command, backup, outriders, and advance. You also discovered how the FBI's stakeout box operates. You learned how the trigger vehicle signals the layup vehicle to pick up the follow when the target drives away.

Even more important, you learned about command of the target. You saw how a cheating command vehicle is located in front of the target. You learned how a commit vehicle is located at a decision point. You saw how the commit vehicle is used to cue a layup vehicle to enter the situation and assume command of the target.

What you'll learn next. In this tutorial you'll learn about the mechanical modifications that the FBI makes to its surveillance vehicles. You'll see how these modifications give the surveillance team an advantage over you.

You'll also see how the members of the surveillance team communicate with each other. You'll learn why you never see them talking.

You'll see graphic examples of teamwork and tactics utilized by the surveillance team. You'll learn how they handle intersection turns, U-turns, returning to a parked car, and other situations. You'll also discover how the vehicle surveillance team supports the activities of the foot surveillance team.

## Vehicle modifications

The FBI employs a potpourri of different vehicles in its surveillance operations. Wheel artists drive anything and everything, including sedans, coupes, stationwagons, pickup trucks, vans, minivans, sport utility vehicles, taxis, motorcycles, commercial trucks, ambulances, 18-wheelers, and others.

Many of these surveillance vehicles have been specially modified for their role.

Probably the most significant modification is the addition of cutout switches and dimmer switches for many of the lights on the surveillance vehicle.

**Headlamps.** The driver can disable either of the front headlamps. He can also adjust the brightness of the headlamps. This provides a tremendous advantage at night – the agent can alter the way her vehicle appears to other drivers. For part of the follow the surveillance vehicle has two normal headlamps. For a while it might show only the left headlamp. And for part of the follow the vehicle might exhibit dimmed headlamps, suggestive of a faulty alternator or low battery condition. Many unwitting targets of surveillance have been completely hoodwinked by this feature.

**Brake lights:** The FBI agent can also disable the vehicle's brake lights. This is particularly effective when the agent has a cheating command of the target. That means the FBI agent is positioned ahead of the target. If the agent's brake lights are not continually flashing, the target is less likely to detect that the agent is adjusting her speed in order to maintain a



constant distance in front of the target. Again, many targets have been fooled by this modification.

**Stall switch:** Some FBI surveillance vehicles are equipped with a stall switch. This allows the wheel artist to simulate a vehicle breakdown. This deception is particularly effective in helping the FBI recover from mistakes during a follow. Stalled in front of the target vehicle, and apparently unable to get the vehicle restarted, an FBI agent is able to delay the target until the rest of the surveillance team gets back in position.

**Bumpers:** FBI surveillance vehicles can be equipped with reinforced ramming bumpers. These are effective when agents need to prevent a suspect from fleeing – or force a victim off the road at high speed.

**Standard modifications:** Because of the stress involved in constant on-road use, FBI mechanics routinely make a number of standard modifications to the Bureau's surveillance vehicles. They often install a heavy-duty radiator and battery. A heavy-duty steering pump is also a common feature. These, along with top-quality shocks and springs, enhance the staying power of the vehicle during long follows.

One of our contacts has recently told us that the FBI uses stainless steel brake lines in many of its surveillance vehicles. This modification apparently boosts performance by overcoming certain types of condensation and heat-related problems during some weather conditions.

#### Driver communications

A typical radio transmission between FBI wheel artists goes something like this:

"Gamma is flipping. Possible spark or smoke."

In plain language, this means "The target vehicle has just made a U-turn. He may have detected us."

By using communication codes, the FBI is able to reduce the chances of an eavesdropper figuring out what's going on. Anyone picking up a stray signal is unlikely to realize that it's from a surveillance team.

Why you never see them communicating. FBI agents are trained to conceal their voice communications. Often two agents will be riding in one vehicle. In order to disguise a radio transmission, the agent in the passenger seat will turn his/her head towards the driver while transmitting. If you're stopped at a red light ahead of the FBI surveillance vehicle, all you'll see in the rear view mirror is two people who appear to be talking to each other.

During a surveillance operation, FBI agents can use either their body rigs or the vehicle radio sets for transmitting. The body rig includes a standalone, internally mounted ear-

piece that is virtually undetectable unless you're looking for it. The effective range of the FBI's standard body rig is much less than their vehicle radio sets. Both the body-rig and the vehicle set offer hands-free operation.

#### CASE STUDY: Hostile situation.

When an FBI agent finds herself alone in a congested traffic situation with the target – and perhaps under close visual scrutiny by a suspicious target – she can still transmit critical information to the team leader. She simply clicks her tongue instead of talking. Here's an example.

Wheel artist – numerous clicks.

Controller – "Is that you, Echo?"

Wheel artist – two clicks (Yes).

Controller – "Are you in command of the target?"

Wheel artist – two clicks (Yes).

Controller – "Has the target made contact with the other suspect yet?"

Wheel artist – silence (Possible No).

Controller – "Is the target not in contact with the suspect?"

Wheel artist – Two clicks (Yes).

And so it continues, two clicks meaning Yes, silence meaning No.

#### Real-time communication

The FBI has found that agent-to-agent communication in real-time is a vital component of a productive surveillance operation. Real-time communication gives the surveillance team a tactical advantage over the target. The illustration shown below provides a good example of this principle. As the target walks back towards his parked vehicle, the various members of the vehicle surveillance team take up positions in a standard stakeout box. Note how layup vehicles Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta are facing away from the target's vehicle, ready to pick up the follow and assume command of the target no matter which direction the target takes.

Equally important is the trigger vehicle. As shown in the illustration above, one of the ruses the FBI uses is to pull in and park ahead of the target's parked vehicle. This is called a cheating trigger. Being in front of the target, the FBI agent is less likely to attract suspicion, but he is still in a position to cue other members of the surveillance team when the target begins to drive away. This makes for a seamless transition from the foot surveillance team to the vehicle surveillance team.

In particular, the trigger vehicle transmits the start-time, direction of travel, and speed of the target's vehicle to the other members of the surveillance team. The appropriate layup vehicle can smoothly pick up the follow and assume command of the target because he has advance knowledge of the target's direction, etc., thanks to the radio transmission from the FBI agent in the trigger vehicle.

The lesson is obvious. Your adversary is the entire surveillance team, not just the FBI agents you happen to spot. Exposing the FBI's secrets: Basic tactics

Cover. Camouflage is an important component of an FBI vehicle surveillance operation.

FBI agents drive anything and everything, including sedans, coupes, utility vehicles, vans, trucks, four-wheel drive, minivans, commercial trucks, taxis, motorcycles, and even 18-wheelers.

Likewise, the FBI agents themselves come in all shapes and sizes. You'll see many different silhouettes. (That's spy-talk for the personal appearance of an agent.) When you're under FBI surveillance, you can expect to see singles, couples, families, seniors, disabled, rappers, and so on. Anybody with a pulse might be part of an FBI surveillance team.

A common mistake. If you're like most people, you might be thinking to yourself, "There's no way they'd use a sweet little sixty-year-old grandmother." Yeah, right. Grow up, and stop being such a patsy. The FBI loves rubes like you.

Or maybe you're thinking, "No way they'd use a punk rapper with cranked-up music blaring from his car stereo." Uh huh. Start packing your toothbrush, doofus. Because the goons don't give you much time when they come a-knockin' an hour before dawn.

The most important lesson you'll ever learn. Any competent surveillance team – no matter which agency it's from – will use your preconceptions, prejudices, and personal biases against you.

So stop leaping to conclusions based on peoples' appearance.

Go back and read that last sentence again. If you want to catch surveillance teams, you need to start evaluating people based on what they do, not what they look like. To catch spooks, you need to size people up by their behavior, not their appearance.

Fundamental tactics

As you learned in the previous article in this series, the FBI utilizes a floating box to track you during a vehicle surveillance operation. The essential components of the box are the command vehicle, the backup vehicle, the left and right outrider vehicles, and the advance vehicle.

Under typical circumstances, the floating box is a powerful and versatile system of vehicle surveillance. The only occasions that cause concern to the FBI are when the target makes a turn. As you learned in the previous tutorial, a surveillance vehicle that follows a target around the corner is easy to spot.

The cheating intersection. When the target is approaching a decision-point – and her direction of travel cannot be predicted by the FBI – the surveillance team leader makes certain that two FBI vehicles are in front of the target's vehicle. This is a deadly tactic. It has meant the ruin of many suspects who thought they could beat FBI surveillance.

Each cheating FBI vehicle takes a different route. The FBI has every possible scenario covered. No matter which route you choose, a cheating FBI surveillance vehicle (positioned in front of you) has you covered.

Many targets of surveillance have been repeatedly fooled by this tactic.

At a typical intersection, the target vehicle can proceed in three different directions – left, right, or straight ahead. In a high-priority investigation where the FBI does not want to be detected, the team leader will place three surveillance vehicles ahead of the target. As shown above, each vehicle takes a possible route that the target might take. It doesn't matter which direction the target chooses, she is covered by a cheating command vehicle.

This technique is very difficult to detect in the short-term. (See the fourth tutorial in this five-part series for tips on how to provoke a surveillance team into revealing itself.) The technique is also expensive in terms of personnel and vehicles, so the FBI uses it mainly at major intersections. How a floating box turns.

When the target makes a right turn at an intersection, the right-side outrider also turns right – and becomes the new advance vehicle. As shown above, other members of the surveillance team also transform their roles.

The former advance vehicle becomes the new left-side outrider. The backup vehicle becomes the new right-side outrider. And the left-side outrider becomes the new command vehicle.

In the situation shown above, the former command vehicle usually continues straight through the intersection, so as not to attract attention to itself. It will be replaced by another FBI agent being held in reserve by the team leader.

The same principles apply when the target makes a left turn at a side-street intersection. Because this type of maneuver by the surveillance team results in predictable positions, an experienced target can use a deliberate turn as an antisurveillance method to detect the outriders and advance units of the surveillance team. For more information about antisurveillance and countersurveillance techniques, see the fourth tutorial in this five-part series.

### Special situations

An especially troublesome situation for the vehicle surveillance team is a sudden U-turn by the target. In many instances, the FBI has no way of knowing if the target simply

missed his turn or if he is executing a deliberate antisurveillance or countersurveillance maneuver.

The backup vehicle immediately makes a left turn. This puts the FBI agent in a position to monitor the target and slip in behind him as he drives past. While this is happening, the other members of the surveillance team will be doing their best to redeploy in the new configuration.

Many newcomers who find themselves under FBI vehicle surveillance soon grasp the idea that U-turns are an effective way to befuddle the surveillance team. These newbies tend to make a U-turn and then try to detect vehicles "following" them. What they should be doing instead is watching for a vehicle making a quick left turn in response to the target's sudden U-turn.

**ANTISURVEILLANCE TIP** – Over a period of a few days, make a few unpredictable, sudden U-turns. If you see a pattern of vehicles turning away immediately after your U-turn, you may be under surveillance.

#### Diversions and decoys

The FBI has become sophisticated in its use of diversions and decoys to cover the activities of its vehicle surveillance teams.

**Diversion #1 – Tailgating.** That inconsiderate driver tailgating you is not always just some shmuck. The FBI has found that this diversion is an excellent way to take your mind off other things that may be happening around you, like surveillance, for example.

**Diversion #2 – Musical chairs.** You're stopped at a red light, and the bozo in the car ahead of you gets out and rummages through his trunk. Yeah, right. You get the picture.

**Diversion #3 – Confused drivers.** They take forever to make a left turn. Or they straddle lanes. Or they start to make a turn, then change their mind and continue on. All of this happens directly in front of you, of course. It's an effective distraction. It's also an effective way to delay you while the rest of the surveillance team gets back into position after a mistake.

**Diversion #4 – Sloppy drivers.** This is the same maneuver as above, except that the FBI agent pretends to be a reckless driver. He might drive over the curb. He might speed and careen recklessly. Anything to get your mind off the situation and allow the other members of the surveillance team to escape detection.

**Diversion #5 – Honey pots.** The FBI will use pedestrians (attractive agents of the opposite gender) to distract you while you're driving. They use this ruse a lot more than most people realize. It's an incredibly effective way to divert the attention of the target. They'll also use customized cars and other eye-catching items or behavior to capture your attention.

Supporting the foot surveillance team.

FBI surveillance vehicles often contain one or two additional FBI agents besides the driver. This provides good cover. Most targets don't suspect a car containing a group of people.

This is not the reason, however, that the FBI uses groups. The extra people in the surveillance vehicle are there for a reason. They are important assets in the FBI's arsenal of surveillance tricks.

Foot surveillance. When the target parks his vehicle and sets off on foot, the vehicle surveillance team switches modes. The wheel artists immediately begin dropping off the pavement artists who will form a floating box around the walking target.

The vehicle surveillance team then assumes a support role, assisting the foot surveillance team. In particular, an FBI vehicle surveillance team will support the foot surveillance team in five ways.

Support Role #1 – Transition. The wheel artists drop off the foot agents in a floating box around a target who has just left his/her vehicle.

Support Role #2 – Leapfrogging. During the foot follow, the wheel artists will pick up, carry, and drop off FBI pavement artists at locations ahead of the walking target. This makes it easier to maintain a secure floating box around the target by leapfrogging members of the FBI team to locations where they are needed.

Support Role #3 – Communications. The vehicle surveillance team will provide reception and rebroadcast of the low-range body-communications equipment of the FBI foot surveillance agents. This is important in locations where radio reception can be difficult, such as high-density urban situations with concrete and steel buildings.

ANTISURVEILLANCE TIP – Look for a vehicle with a lone occupant at high elevation – atop a parkade, for example. During a foot surveillance operation in difficult terrain (downtown, for example), this FBI agent is positioned to receive weak transmissions from a pavement artist and rebroadcast them to the rest of the team.

Support Role #4 – Orientation. The wheel artists will provide map and direction-finding support to the pavement artists. This is particularly helpful during a lost-command drill, where the foot surveillance team has temporarily lost sight of the target. Map support also helps the foot surveillance team anticipate upcoming obstacles.

Support Role #5 – Transportation. After the target returns to his/her vehicle, the vehicle surveillance team picks up the foot operators and carries them to the next location.

Conclusion. When implemented properly, the FBI's floating-box strategy is an effective vehicle surveillance system that gets results. Most targets never realize they're being

watched. Those targets who manage to detect a command vehicle or backup vehicle are likely to be lulled into a false sense of safety by the cheating command vehicles and cheating intersection maneuvers. The mix of agent silhouettes and vehicles used by the surveillance team makes detection extremely difficult for the untrained target.

Coming up in Article #3

In the next tutorial you'll learn about advanced methods of vehicle surveillance, like setups, traps, ambushes, and attacks. You'll also find out about psychological operations that the FBI can run against you while you're driving. You'll discover how they can use operant conditioning to covertly coerce you to alter your route – and leave you thinking it was your idea. Case studies supported by custom-prepared illustrations show you exactly how it's done. Coming up in Article #4

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