

# The Risk Professional: New Yorkers want terrorism trials moved out of the city

New York's property management companies have asked the Attorney General to hold future trials relating to terrorism, particularly those relating to 11 September, somewhere other than in the city to reduce risk, cost and inconvenience.

New York is, says The Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater New York, overcrowded with both people and traffic.

Holding terrorism trials brings in large numbers of spectators and media. In the latter case, they come with live media trucks that the roads cannot cope with when they are mobile, and which hamper traffic when they are parked. In the absence of proper facilities for the media pack and their supporting technology, the city suffers greatly.

But there are other knock-on effects including the fear that anyone wanting to oppose or capitalise on the trials may decide to attack other buildings, with the result that expensive and intrusive security measures must be put in place.

"holding this trial in an already traumatized community would be grounds alone to argue for a change of venue, but there are physical and financial implications that argue against holding the trial in Lower Manhattan and must be considered:

-- While most Class A buildings in lower Manhattan have state-of-the-art security equipment/procedures to meet today's terrorism challenges, the financial downturn has caused hundreds of other buildings to postpone installation of electronic access systems (which carry price tags in the hundreds of thousands) and perimeter access patrols. Additional costs of electronic and manned personnel would financially burden these owners and managers.

-- Emergency Action Plans depend on easily accessible outdoor locations for evacuation; plans would have to be rewritten, certified and filed for this one-instance-only at an additional financial cost.

-- Approximately 250,000 motor vehicles pass through Lower Manhattan's overburdened road system every day. Traffic flow is severely impeded now because of major construction on the area's three main highways. The trial could attract an estimated 20,000 or more members of the press with live trucks and other large automotive facilities that can barely be accommodated, will slow down Emergency Services access and will severely impede one's ability to navigate in Lower Manhattan.

Delivery delays will cause financial hardships on small business," says the group.