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## HOTELS BEEF UP SECURITY

By Greg Gatlin

Boston hotels and high rises boosted surveillance and security measures yesterday, even as some worried the latest government terror alert could hurt an already struggling hospitality industry.

But one lodging safety expert said many hotels haven't done enough to prepare for a possible terrorist attack.

**"I've seen a lot of cosmetic changes the hotel industry has made in response to 9-11, but few have made substantive changes,"** said John C. Fannin, chief executive of SafePlace Corp., which provides safety accreditations. **Only about one-third of U.S. hotels scored well in a post-9-11 Cornell University study of safety and security features including fire sprinklers, electronic locks and security cameras.**

"We are taking a higher awareness of things going on, not only in the hotel but the entire complex," said Paul Jacques, general manager of the Boston Harbor Hotel.

Spokesmen for the John Hancock Tower and the Prudential Center declined to say whether they had increased precautions, citing security policies. But those buildings appeared to have beefed up security with more guards. The walkway to elevators in the Prudential was roped off.

"I noticed a lot of security and I'm not sure why," said 19-year-old Darren Moore, leaving The Shops at The Prudential Center after a day of shopping. Others said they weren't aware of increased security.

One Hub hotel general manager, who asked not to be identified for security reasons, said his property went on full alert following yesterday's government warning, much as it did after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Loading docks were better secured. The number of entrances to the hotel was reduced. Guests were personally escorted by staff to the hotel's restaurant.

Ed Carey, marketing director for the Boston Hiltons, said, "The security department both at the Back Bay Hilton and here at Logan is aware of the higher levels of alert." He said Hilton security teams yesterday were more visible. Others said guards and staffers were told to keep an eye out for suspicious bags, and were making additional surveillance rounds.

"In talking to employees, we're asking them to be more aware of all surroundings and people and foreign objects, things that shouldn't be there," Jacques said.

The Massachusetts Lodging Association yesterday sent an alert to members advising

them to review security precautions. "The government hasn't released any specific information, so there's not a lot we can tell them," said Amy Chickles, the association's deputy director.

Chickles said there's a concern such warnings could weaken business for an industry trying to rebound from the Sept. 11 attacks and an economic downturn. But, she added, the warnings are a necessity.

"It hurts business," one hotelier said. "Going to war isn't going to help."

**With yesterday's warning, Fannin said hotels should be locking down nonpublic spaces, such as kitchens, housekeeping corridors and access to water supplies and ventilation. They should also beef up closed-circuit surveillance with an eye toward anything unusual, including packages without an owner and unexplained deliveries.**

**He also supports requiring all guests to show a government-issued ID. In a heightened terror alert, policies should be strictly enforced. Housekeepers should not admit someone to a room that claims to have been locked out or lost a key, he said. And security directors need to make sure the building is ready to be evacuated.**

Shaun Bean contributed to this report.

Caption: NO SURPRISES: A Massport official checks the trunk of a limousine parked curbside at a Logan International Airport terminal yesterday. All cars idling at curbs at the airport must now keep their trunks open. STAFF PHOTO BY MARK GARFINKEL