After a siege at a Kenyan mall two years ago, the FBI started staging mock attacks in U.S. shopping centers during off hours to test their readiness, an official said.

More than 60 people died when Al-Shabaab militants raided an upscale mall in Nairobi and held shoppers hostage for four days.

The terror group released a video Saturday calling for similar attacks in malls in the United States, Canada and the UK.

Although Homeland Security and the FBI say they are not aware of a specific, credible plot against U.S. malls, they've worked to improve security in light of the attack in Kenya.

Last year, the FBI teamed up with various malls nationwide to increase preparedness, a law enforcement official told CNN. It tested the readiness of SWAT teams by staging fake attacks at malls when they were closed, the official said.

Since then, the FBI has had a program that works with malls to improve security, the official said.

**Competing for attention**

The Somalia-based terror group has limited past attacks to its home country and neighboring Kenya and Uganda.

But as other terror groups such as ISIS have made vicious headlines, Al-Shabaab may be feeling left out, U.S. officials said.

The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI say they believe the video was the militants' attempt to compete for attention and recruits with other terrorist groups, one official said.

Al-Shabaab's strength is compromised, a U.S. law enforcement official said, and while the group has the desire to see a mall attack in the U.S., it probably isn't able to do so.

**Caution urged, nonetheless**

Despite what some officials described as an attention ploy, security was beefed up in malls listed as potential targets.

Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said there's no credible evidence suggesting a U.S. mall attack is in the works. But shoppers should be vigilant nonetheless, he said.

"There will be enhanced security (at malls)," he said Sunday. "But public vigilance, public awareness and public caution in situations like this is particularly important, and it's the environment we're in, frankly."

Stressing that there is no known credible threat to any mall, Johnson cautioned that attacks can be unpredictable.

"I won't know about when the next bad actor is going to strike," he said.
We take any potential threat seriously

In Bloomington, Minnesota, home to Mall of America, one of the shopping centers named in the video, law enforcement agencies said they remain vigilant.

"Enhanced security measures to include additional personnel have been implemented and all information is being monitored," local police said in a statement Sunday.

The mall said it takes any "potential threat seriously" and has implemented extra security.

The West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada, which was also named in the video, said it has boosted security and is working with federal and local law enforcement agencies.

"Canada will not be intimidated by threats from any terrorist organization," Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney said.

The video also mentioned shopping centers in the UK.

Westfield Corp. said there is no "evidence of an imminent threat" to its shopping centers, but it's taking steps to ensure safety.

UK Metropolitan Police Counter Terror Command also said it is aware of the video.

Al-Shabaab's previous targets

Although Al-Shabaab's past attacks have been limited to East Africa, the militants have heavily recruited in Minneapolis, where young men have been slipping away to join the terror group. The city is home to the largest Somali population in the United States.

In addition to Kenya and Somalia, Al-Shabaab has also struck in Uganda, where it killed dozens gathered to watch a World Cup soccer match in Kampala five years ago. Kenya and Uganda have sent their forces to neighboring Somalia to battle the extremists.

As the attacks get more daring, the international community has rallied to fight the militants.

Last year, a U.S. airstrike in Somalia killed the Al-Shabaab leader. The terror group later replaced him and vowed to avenge his death.

Al-Shabaab started off with a goal of waging a war against the Somali government in an effort to implement a stricter form of Islamic law, or Sharia.

It has since shifted focus to terrorist attacks in Somalia and beyond.

CNN's Catherine E. Shoichet and Joe Sutton contributed to this report.

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper. The first two questions can be answered in 1-2 sentences. The third question needs a full-page, well thought out response.

1. Who is the intended audience for this article, and how do you know that?
2. What was the author’s purpose for writing this article, and how do you know that?
3. The mock attacks that these malls are staging are similar to our lockdown drills. Do you think it is a good idea for them to practice responding to attacks? What other types of businesses should practice these things?