



Office of Intelligence and Analysis



SNAPSHOT

01 May 2010: Attempted Bombing in New York City

Event Information Cutoff as of: 02 May 2010 2220 EST

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Attempted Bombing in New York City

(U) New York City—On 1 May 2010, a Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) was discovered in the Times Square area of New York City

(U) Times Square:

– (U) At 6:34pm, a 1993 Nissan Pathfinder bearing Connecticut license plates was discovered in front of 45th Street and Broadway, the Times Square area of New York City, with smoke in the cabin. Eyewitnesses report seeing smoke and hearing popping sounds coming from inside the vehicle, and people were observed running from the scene. A mounted NYPD Patrol Officer responded, evacuated the area, and notified the bomb squad.

(U) On 2 May, at approximately 1330, Al-Jazeera reported that a group claiming to be Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan had claimed responsibility for the attack in a one-minute long video posted on a video-sharing Website. It has yet to be determined if the tape is authentic, and if so, if the group played any role in the attack.

(U//FOUO) Homeland Implications: Terrorist groups or lone offenders sympathetic to extremist causes continue to seek ways to conduct attacks and circumvent security procedures.



Attempted Bombing in New York City

(U) Officials are examining local security cameras in the area following reports that a man was seen fleeing the area.

(U) Witnesses reported that the subject is possibly a white male, approximately 40 years of age.

(U) The NYPD is interviewing witnesses, one of whom may have photographed the suspect.

(U) One surveillance video shows an unidentified male slip down an alley and shed his shirt. He is seen looking back towards the smoking vehicle and furtively stowing his shirt in a bag.



Incident Observations

(U) Tactics & Techniques: The vehicle was parked in a high traffic area, by both pedestrians and vehicles, and if it had ignited it could have produced numerous casualties.

(U//FOUO) The following items were found in the vehicle:

- (U//FOUO) Two 5 gallon containers of gasoline
- (U) Three 20 pound propane tanks
- (U) Electrical wires
- (U) Black powder
- (U) Consumer-grade fireworks
- (U) Two digital clocks with batteries
- (U//FOUO) A 4-foot by 2-foot metal box resembling a gun locker filled with possibly fertilizer.

(U//FOUO) The Device: Consumer-grade fireworks, resembling a model known as M-80s, were taped around the outside of the gasoline cans...two clocks with batteries, including one that resembled a child's toy, were connected to the device by small wires. Investigators believe the fireworks had been lit, but did not explode.

(U//FOUO) The vehicle is currently being analyzed by the FBI and NYPD. The VIN number had been removed from one location on the vehicle but recovered elsewhere.



Similar Plots and Attacks

- (U) 2004 Financial Buildings Plot – U.S.: Dhiren Barot, an al-Qa'ida-associated operative who intended to detonate vehicles packed with propane canisters in London's night club district. He also planned simultaneous attacks in Washington, D.C. and New York City.
- (U) 29 June 2007 – London, England: Police responding to a vehicle fire in London discovered plastic gasoline containers, propane tanks, and a large quantity of nails in the vehicle. The device was timed to explode at 2:00 am when the streets would be filled with people exiting the nightclubs.
- (U) 30 June 2007 – Glasgow, Scotland: Two men drove a jeep loaded with gas cylinders and nails into the international airport in Glasgow.
- (U) 18 February 2009 – Athens, Greece: A security guard called police to report an abandoned vehicle. Police discovered a device composed of propane canisters filled with ammonium nitrate fuel oil.

(U//FOUO) The use of gas cylinders in VBIEDs is a common practice for many extremist groups. The cylinders are easily acquired by theft or legitimate purchase. The versatility of the containers has lent itself to many uses.



TRIED TO DEVASTATE LONDON

1:30am The first car was packed with 13 gallons of petrol, gas cylinders and nails. It was parked within feet of the exit doors of Tiger Tiger, a Haymarket nightclub. Police believe the bomb was to be detonated at 2am, when 800 nightclubbers were due to leave. The blast would have triggered a fireball that would have spread up to 100metres with red hot shrapnel firing in all directions.

Numerous (five or six) canisters of propane gas of varying sizes, divided between the boot and the back seat.

13 gallons of petrol in plastic containers, again divided between boot and back seat

The device was disabled at around 1:30am by police bomb disposal experts, who had been alerted by an ambulance crew who saw smoke coming from the Mercedes.



Mobile phones one on the back seat and one in the boot, connected by wire to a detonating device. When the phone rang the circuit would have completed and ignited the petrol.

Daily Mail

Implications & Preventive Actions

(U//FOUO) Measures law enforcement and security personnel can take to reduce the risk or mitigate the impact of an attack on commercial and retail facilities include:

- Posting signs encouraging visitors and personnel to be alert and immediately report any suspicious or threatening situation, including unattended bags.
- Instituting visible security patrols varying in composition, timing, and routes.
- Deploying visible security cameras at access points and restricted areas and reviewing footage frequently to detect indicators of preoperational activity.
- Providing daily security and awareness briefings to essential facility personnel.
- Approaching all illegally parked vehicles in and around facilities, questioning drivers and directing them to move immediately, and removing unattended vehicles immediately.
- Examining possible attack scenarios and weaknesses in security and reviewing response plans and processes with local law enforcement, emergency management, and facility personnel.
- Regularly training all staff, particularly security personnel, on threat awareness, surveillance detection, and recognition of suspicious behavior.







Source: IA-0047-10, 20 Nov 09



Implications & Preventive Actions

(U//FOUO) POTENTIAL VBIED INDICATORS:

- License plates inconsistent with vehicle registration.
- Obviously carrying a heavy load, heavy rear end.
- Modification of truck or van with heavy duty springs to handle heavier loads.
- Rentals of vans with false papers for dry runs.
- Rental of self-storage space for the purpose of storing chemicals or mixing apparatus.
- Delivery of chemicals directly from the manufacturer to a self-storage facility or unusual deliveries of chemicals to residential or rural addresses.
- Theft of explosives, blasting caps, or fuses, or certain chemicals used in the manufacture of explosives.
- Chemical fires, toxic odors, brightly colored stains, or rusted metal fixtures in apartments, hotel/motel rooms, or self-storage units due to chemical activity.
- Small test explosions in rural wooded areas.
- Treatment of chemical burns or treatment for missing hands/fingers.
- Untreated chemical burns or missing hands/fingers.

ATF	VEHICLE DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM EXPLOSIVES CAPACITY	LETHAL AIR BLAST RANGE	MINIMUM EVACUATION DISTANCE	FALLING GLASS HAZARD
	COMPACT SEDAN	500 Pounds 227 Kilos <i>(In Trunk)</i>	100 Feet 30 Meters	1,500 Feet 457 Meters	1,250 Feet 381 Meters
	FULL SIZE SEDAN	1,000 Pounds 455 Kilos <i>(In Trunk)</i>	125 Feet 38 Meters	1,750 Feet 534 Meters	1,750 Feet 534 Meters
	PASSENGER VAN OR CARGO VAN	4,000 Pounds 1,818 Kilos	200 Feet 61 Meters	2,750 Feet 838 Meters	2,750 Feet 838 Meters
	SMALL BOX VAN <i>(14 FT BOX)</i>	10,000 Pounds 4,545 Kilos	300 Feet 91 Meters	3,750 Feet 1,143 Meters	3,750 Feet 1,143 Meters
	BOX VAN OR WATER/FUEL TRUCK	30,000 Pounds 13,636 Kilos	450 Feet 137 Meters	6,500 Feet 1,982 Meters	6,500 Feet 1,982 Meters
	SEMI-TRAILER	60,000 Pounds 27,273 Kilos	600 Feet 183 Meters	7,000 Feet 2,134 Meters	7,000 Feet 2,134 Meters

Source: ATF, 08 Dec 09

Source: National Homeland Security Knowledgebase, 08 Dec 2009

Sources

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