



Central Florida Intelligence Exchange

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Jihadist Propaganda Provides Guidance For Lone Offender Attacks Against Law Enforcement

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INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN CENTRAL FLORIDA INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE (CFIX)

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(U//FOUO) Jihadist Propaganda Provides Guidance for Lone Offender Attacks Against Law Enforcement

(U) Scope

(U//FOUO) Propaganda providing guidance and/or encouraging "individual jihad" or small cell operations against the West continues to be a prevalent theme in jihadist messaging. This bulletin was created by the CFIX in order to address recent propaganda from the Islamic State and its supporters which provides guidance on targeting law enforcement officers. The CFIX bases its analysis in this bulletin from open source reporting and internet postings with varying degrees of reliability, especially in regards to the true intention and capabilities of terrorist organizations and their supporters. This information is intended to support local, state and federal government agencies along with other entities in developing / prioritizing protective and support measures relating to an existing or emerging threat to homeland security.

(U) Key Judgments

(U//FOUO) We assess with medium confidence¹ that there will be a continued call - by the Islamic State and their supporters - for lone offender attacks against Western security forces (both military and law enforcement). These threats will likely increase as the U.S. and its allies continue to carry out airstrikes against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.

(U//FOUO) The CFIX assesses with medium confidence based on historical trends and recent guidance provided in jihadist propaganda, that law enforcement officers could be targeted by HVEs inspired by the Islamic State, Al-Qa'ida and their supporters. Attacks carried out by a lone offender or a small cell of individuals remains the greatest threat.

¹ **High confidence** generally indicates judgments are based on high-quality information or the nature of the issue makes it possible to render a solid judgment. A high confidence judgment is not a fact, or a certainty, however, and such judgments still carry risk of being wrong. **Medium confidence** generally means information is credibly sourced and plausible but not sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a high level of confidence. **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is questionable, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences or significant concerns or problems exist with respect to the sources.

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(U//FOUO) We assess that law enforcement officers would most likely be targeted individually in spontaneous 'ambush' style attacks similar to the 2013 machete attack against a British soldier in the U.K. Although the victim in the machete attack was a Soldier, this type of spontaneous attack has also been encouraged against law enforcement and government officials.

(U) Overview

(U//FOUO) Current airstrikes in Syria and Iraq by the U.S. and its allies is being used by the Islamic State and its supporters as a means to mobilize individuals in the West to carry out retaliatory attacks. On 18 September 2014, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, the official spokesman for the Islamic State, released an audio message via jihadist forums and Twitter calling for lone-wolf attacks in the West by any means possible. Within the message Adnani specifically identifies law enforcement, military and other government officials as viable targets. He states:

(U//FOUO) "...Do not let this battle pass you by wherever you may be. You must strike the soldiers, patrons, and troops of the tawaghit. Strike their police, security, and intelligence members, as well as their treacherous agents. Destroy their beds. Embitter their lives for them and busy them with themselves. If you can kill a disbelieving American or European – especially the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war...against the Islamic State...If you are not able to find an IED or a bullet, then single out the disbelieving American, Frenchman, or any other of their allies. Smash his head with a rock, or slaughter him with a knife, or run him over with your car, or throw him down from a high place, or choke him, or poison him...If you are unable to do so, then burn his home, car, or business. Or destroy his crops..."

(U//FOUO) Adnani's video message is the first official statement from the Islamic State advocating for lone-wolf attacks; however, supporters and Western fighters from the group began suggesting this tactic in April 2014. As a result of Adnani's statement, there have been numerous posts, in English and Arabic, on jihadist forums and social media platforms by Islamic State supporters which provide targeting guidance for Muslims in the West.

(U//FOUO) Islamic State Supporter Provides Guidance for Targeting Law Enforcement

(U//FOUO) In response to Abu Muhammad al-Adnani's statement, Abu Safiya al-Iraqi, a jihadist who identifies himself as an "engineer" for the Islamic State, wrote an Arabic-language article titled "Retaliation Advice for Those Who are Missing Bullets". The article was posted to Abu Safiya's Twitter account on 22 September 2014 and provides instructions for making explosive devices and specific recommendations for targeting law enforcement officials. He states: "We will present a collection of advice for those who are lacking weapons but are determined on revenge against officers and military of the nonbelievers...make the world of the police a hell they live every moment, thinking they will be killed. Do not let them feel secure even in their home".

(U//FOUO) Abu Safiya emphasizes the importance of gathering intelligence on selected targets prior to carrying out an attack. He states: "You can take out the police one by one when they leave, or before they enter home, but you must first gather information about them". He also suggests:

- (U//FOUO) After identifying the home address of the police officer, the first suggestion provided is to stab him as he enters or leaves his home. After killing the officer, Abu Safiya suggests beheading him as a warning. The second solution is to burn the officer's house or vehicle.
- (U//FOUO) Monitor the officer's activities and identify his shift change. Watch for the officer to leave in civilian clothing, get him alone on the street or a deserted location and kill him.
- (U//FOUO) If you know of a detective but cannot kill him yourself "spread his photo until he's killed by someone else and do not allow him to ever stay comfortable".

(U//FOUO) Listed below are additional recommendations provided by Abu Safiya:

- (U//FOUO) Abu Safiya mentions that "placing suspicious objects in the streets might stop traffic for hours". He also mentions that police officers can be targeted by providing "false news" to "lure them to a remote area" where the brothers can "finish them off".
- (U//FOUO) If a brother knows that he is being surveilled by law enforcement, he should evacuate his family then "lure the officer into your home" and blow it up.
- (U//FOUO) Terrorize the officers by calling them from an anonymous number in the middle of the night and telling them "ISIS is coming for you now and your head will fly off".
- (U//FOUO) He suggests that they remove the tag from their vehicles, cover their face, then search for the officers and run them over.
- (U//FOUO) Drive an explosive laden toy car under their police vehicle. Once the officer enters the vehicle, remotely detonate the explosives.
- (U//FOUO) For those who no longer have the ability to travel, Abu Safiya advises that they can kidnap and murder military personnel of Western and allied countries.

(U//FOUO) Abu Safiya ends his post by advising prospective lone-wolves to allow large scale attacks to speak for themselves; however, smaller attacks should be filmed or photographed and distributed via social media.

(U) Additional Guidance on Targeting Law Enforcement, Military and Government Personnel

(U//FOUO) In addition to the article by Abu Safiya al-Iraqi, there have been several others posted on jihadist forums over the last month calling for lone offender operations in West. At least two of these articles have identified local and federal law enforcement, military and government officials as desirable targets:

- (U//FOUO) On 16 September 2014, a lengthy message written by an ISIS supporter was posted in Arabic and English on two top-tier jihadist forums. The article titled "A message to the 2.6 Million Muslims in the United States: This Is How To Respond to Obama's War on Islam" attempted to legitimize and provide specific guidance on lone-wolf operations in the United States. The author suggested various targets including:

- (U//FOUO) "Men and women law enforcement officers (police, FBI, homeland security agents, CIA, DA's, federal prosecutors, judges (especially those who tried fellow Muslims for jihad-related cases...INS and IRS officers)"
 - (U//FOUO) "Men and women military officers. The higher the rank the more significant the impact"
 - (U//FOUO) "Politicians (members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, representatives at the UN, ambassadors, State Department and DoD employees)"
- (U//FOUO) On 23 September 2014, in response to airstrikes in Syria and Iraq, supporters of the Islamic State initiated a discussion thread on the Al-Minbar al-Jihadi Media Network calling for lone-wolf attacks in the West. In the discussion thread the author encouraged lone-wolves to target soldiers in the West. He states: "focus on kuffar soldiers when they exit from work and hunt your prey silently. An operation like this needs intelligence work; get familiar with the soldiers; where they live; where they work and take action in the appropriate place".

(U) Aspirational/Successful Targeting of Law Enforcement by HVEs

(U//FOUO) Over the last few years there have been several incidents, at home and abroad, radicalized individuals becoming operational and aspiring to or successfully carrying out attacks against law enforcement. Listed below are instances of the successful and/or disrupted targeting of law enforcement by HVEs. The most popular methods of attack have been VBIED's, small arms and explosives:

- (U//FOUO) September 2014 – Two Australian counterterrorism agents were stabbed by an 18 year old ISIS sympathizer. The suspect had been summoned to the police station for an interview. When the agents came out to meet the suspect in the parking lot, he pulled out a knife and stabbed them.²
- (U//FOUO) April 2013 – Following their attack on the Boston Marathon, Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev^{USPERS}, shot and killed an MIT police officer.
- (U//FOUO) January 2012 - Sami Osmakac^{USPER} was arrested by FBI-Tampa for planning to carry out a synchronized small arms and explosives, lone offender operation in Tampa, Florida. In preparing for his operation, Osmakac^{USPER} discussed detonating a car bomb outside a nightclub in Ybor City and/or outside of the Operations Center of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, while at the same time taking hostages in another nearby location using small arms and a suicide vest with b.b. gun pellets as shrapnel.³
- (U//FOUO) November 2011 - Jose Pimentel^{USPER} was arrested by NYPD for planning to carry out lone offender operations in New York. Pimentel's^{USPER} suggested targets included: postal facilities; police vehicles; police stations; and soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq [particularly Army & Marine Corps]. Pimentel^{USPER} was using instructions from *INSPIRE's* 'Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of your Mom' to build pipe bombs. He was using plumbing elbow joints and intended to use nails as shrapnel. He purchased the necessary materials

² (U) <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/24/us-australia-security-shooting-idUSKCN0HI2IM20140924>

³ (U) Criminal Complaint, United States of America vs. Sami Osmakac, 7 January 2012

from various stores to avoid raising red flags and planned on testing his explosives by placing them in mail boxes and detonating them.⁴

(U//FOUO) Past Activities Observed in Cases of Violent Extremist Mobilization⁵

- (U//FOUO) Consumption and sharing of media glorifying violent extremist acts
- (U//FOUO) Internet research for target selection, acquisition of technical capabilities, planning, logistics
- (U//FOUO) Communication with or links to violent extremists, either through virtual or direct contact
- (U//FOUO) Association with violent extremist groups
- (U//FOUO) Active participation in violent extremist web forums
- (U//FOUO) Active role/increased participation within a violent extremist cluster of individuals, live or virtual
- (U//FOUO) Suspicious foreign travel to a key terrorist safe-haven location without explanation
- (U//FOUO) Attempted travel for the purpose of paramilitary training through a terrorist organization or to conduct attacks
- (U//FOUO) Acceptance, approval, or intent to conduct violence
- (U//FOUO) Effort to obtain weapons, weapons materials, or chemical precursors for explosives combined with active advocacy of violence
- (U//FOUO) Participation in weapons training, paramilitary exercises, and reconnaissance and surveillance activities in a manner that is reasonably indicative of preoperational planning related to terrorism
- (U//FOUO) Use of cover terms to mask the true meaning of events or nefarious activities combined with active advocacy of violence
- (U//FOUO) Complete isolation; broken contact with friends, family; unexplained self-initiated exit from school or work combined with active advocacy of violence

(U) Outlook and Implications

(U//FOUO) The CFI is unaware of any specific threats to law enforcement from the Islamic State or U.S.-based supporters of the Islamic State. However, we assess with medium confidence that the potential for lone offender attacks against law enforcement, will likely increase over the next year due to continued airstrikes in Syria and Iraq by the U.S. and its allies. Although there is no way to predict if someone will become operational based on these calls to action, the information is readily available for those looking to participate in the 'global jihad movement'. As seen with Nidal Hasan, the Tsarnaev brothers, and most recently Mehdi Nemmouche in Brussels, the motivation of one person or a small cell is sufficient enough to carry out a successful attack.

⁴ (U) Criminal Complaint, State of New York vs. Jose Pimentel, 19 November 2011

⁵ (U//FOUO) DHS-FBI Roll Call Release, Mobilization of Violent Extremists in the United States, 17 January 2012

(U) Reporting Notice

(U) The Central Florida Intelligence Exchange is unaware of any specific threats; however, this bulletin is being provided for situational awareness. For additional information on this product, or to report suspicious activity, please contact the CFIx at (407) 858-3950 or CFIX@ocfl.net.

(U) Entities and agencies outside of the Central Florida region should report suspicious activity to the appropriate law enforcement agency and their regional or state fusion center.

(U) Disclaimer

(U) The CFIx recognizes that Americans have constitutionally protected rights to assemble, speak, and petition the government. The CFIx safeguards these first amendment rights, and reports on only those activities where the potential use of rhetoric and/or propaganda could be used to incite extremists to carry out acts of violence. Additionally, potential criminality exhibited by certain members of a group does not negate the constitutional rights of the group itself or its law-abiding participants to exercise their individual liberties under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.