



23 November 2015

(U//FOUO) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures Used in the 13 November 2015 Paris Attacks

(U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This *Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB)* is intended to provide a review of the tactics, techniques, and procedures demonstrated by the perpetrators of the 13 November 2015 attacks in Paris, France. This *JIB* does not provide analysis of any follow-on operations or operations occurring in Europe in the wake of the attacks. It relies on a variety of open source and media reporting for the analysis, which could change as official details of the post-incident investigations come to light. This *JIB* is intended to support the activities of DHS, FBI and NCTC to assist federal, state, and local government counterterrorism and law enforcement officials, first responders, and private-sector security partners in effectively deterring, preventing, preempting, or responding to terrorist attacks against the United States. Information in this *JIB* is current as of 23 November 2015.

(U) Coordinated with NPPD.

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(U//FOUO) Attack on Paris Underscores the Potential for Mass Casualties in Complex Attacks in the West

(U//FOUO) DHS, FBI and NCTC assess the 13 November near-simultaneous attacks targeting a stadium, multiple restaurants, and a concert hall in Paris—for which Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has claimed responsibility—demonstrated a greater degree of coordination and use of multiple tactics, resulting in higher casualties than has been seen in any previous ISIL Western attack. The selection of multiple targets and the disciplined approach to each attack indicate the attackers may have had some level of prior training, conducted some level of pre-operational activity, had familiarity with the target sets, and conducted tactical planning to ensure the attacks would be effective. The attackers, some of whom are assessed by European services to have traveled to Syria, were equipped with assault rifles and explosive-laden suicide belts, and operated in a manner indicative of prior training. The selection of targets, including an approximately 80,000-person capacity stadium hosting a soccer match between the French and German national teams, a concert venue featuring an American rock band, and restaurant districts, indicate they may have used their local insight to select targets. French authorities believe that the attacks were coordinated by now-deceased Belgian national Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who was linked to several other ISIL plots in Belgium and France this year.

(U//FOUO) At least eight attack operatives divided into three teams attacked seven different locations, murdering at least 130 and wounding at least 352 in less than an hour. Six of the attackers reportedly died after detonating suicide belts and another was reportedly killed by police during a raid; European authorities have issued an international warrant for at least one of the remaining operatives who is believed to be at large and are investigating possible accomplices in multiple European countries.

- » (U//FOUO) **Stadium Attack:** One team of three operatives detonated their suicide belts outside the Stade de France, killing one bystander, based on eyewitness accounts and French government statements. According to unconfirmed accounts, one suicide bomber allegedly tried to enter the France-Germany soccer match and detonated his device after being denied entry to the stadium by security. A second suicide bomber detonated himself outside the stadium, while the third detonated himself outside an American fast food restaurant near the stadium. Details about the sequence of events are still preliminary.
- » (U//FOUO) **Restaurant Attacks:** Two operatives opened fire on patrons of Le Carillon bar and Le Petit Cambodge restaurant in the city's 10th district, murdering 15 and injuring more than 20. The gunmen then drove to the La Bonn Biere and opened fire, murdering five people before moving onto La Belle Equipe restaurant and killing 19, according to open source reports. One of the operatives detonated a suicide belt on the veranda of the Voltaire restaurant, seriously injuring a restaurant patron. None of these locations were known to have had a security presence.
- » (U//FOUO) **Concert Hall Attack:** Three gunmen wearing suicide belts stormed the Bataclan Hall during a rock concert, took hostages, and reportedly started executing them, resulting in more than 80 deaths and scores of injuries. One of the operatives purposefully detonated his suicide belt, while the final two gunmen were killed in a shoot-out with police. Details on the sequence of events are still preliminary.
- » (U//FOUO) **Subsequent Activities:** French authorities conducted a pre-dawn raid on 18 November at an apartment in a neighborhood near the Stade de France, according to the French interior minister, and received heavy gunfire from the apartment inhabitants. At least three suspects were killed and seven others were taken into custody. French authorities confirmed the suspected attack coordinator, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, was killed during the raid. The results of the aftermath of this raid are still being investigated by French authorities, including the potential for follow-on attacks. Belgian authorities on 22 and 23 November

conducted raids at multiple locations across Belgium, resulting in the arrests of at least a dozen individuals and charges against three persons believed to have been involved in the 13 November attacks.

(U//FOUO) Recent ISIL Targeting in the West Includes a Diverse Set of Soft Targets, Range of Complexity

(U//FOUO) We assess ISIL may expand efforts to conduct attacks against soft targets based on the success of the Paris attacks; we are, however, unaware of any intelligence indicating any active, credible ISIL plots of the type seen in Paris targeting the Homeland. We judge ISIL will almost certainly consider a diverse selection of soft targets for attacks in the West—including in the United States—that extend beyond targeting government, military, and law enforcement officials and facilities, based on the target selection in the attacks and other recent plots in the West. Supporters of the group who may be located in the Homeland continue to have the ability to conduct relatively unsophisticated attacks with little to no warning.

- » (U//FOUO) Train passengers in late August 2015 overpowered a gunman on an Amsterdam-to-Paris Thalys train as he attempted to conduct a mass shooting and stabbing attack against passengers. The attacker, Moroccan national Ayoub El-Khazzani, had possibly traveled to Syria, according to open source and official government statements.
- » (U//FOUO) An alleged ISIL operative arrested in mid-August 2015 told French police that he was ordered by an individual fitting the description of Abaaoud to conduct a mass shooting at an unspecified concert venue in France, according to press reports. The suspect had been in France for two months after returning from a six-day trip to Syria.
- » (U//FOUO) French authorities in late April 2015 arrested another alleged ISIL operative—Sid Ahmed Ghlam, who was also linked to Abaaoud—after he accidentally shot himself and called for medical assistance, according to open sources. Police discovered weapons, ammunition, bullet-proof vests, and details about possible attacks against churches in Ghlam’s car. French security services were previously aware of Ghlam’s expressed interest in traveling to Syria.
- » (U//FOUO) Belgian authorities raided multiple locations in mid-January 2015, including a safehouse in Verviers, Belgium associated with Abaaoud, and disrupted an ISIL plot involving at least 10 operatives, according to open sources. The plot—possibly targeting the police or the public—featured police uniforms, explosive precursors consistent with the manufacturing of triacetone triperoxide, or TATP, and resulted in the death of two operatives and the arrest of facilitators in multiple countries. Prior to the Paris attack, the Verviers plot illustrated a higher level of operational planning than known ISIL plots against the West.

(U//FOUO) Attack Indicates Efforts to Maximize Impact of Simple Assault Tactics Through Operational Security and Effective Planning

(U//FOUO) We assess the three-team coordination and near-simultaneous timing of the attacks suggests the attackers may have had some level of pre-operational surveillance, familiarity with the target sets, and some level of tactical planning to ensure the attacks would be effective. The attackers and operational planners employed a high degree of operational security, which almost certainly aided in their ability to remain under the radar of law enforcement and intelligence services. These factors indicate some of the attackers and planners almost certainly had some level of training, conducted some level of pre-operational activity, and had familiarity with the target sets.

- » (U//FOUO) **Operational Security:** The French government has confirmed some of the operatives were French nationals, some of whom likely had returned from Syria and may have planned the attack from Belgium, giving them opportunities to discuss operational details outside the purview of French security services. The attackers rented three vehicles in Belgium before re-locating to a safe house in France, possibly in an effort to conceal their movements and obscure the ultimate target locations. French authorities located a cellphone outside the Bataclan concert venue likely belonging to one of the operatives containing encrypted applications, likely intended to make it difficult for security services to exploit the contents. There is limited details on the origin of the firearms or the fabrication of the explosives belts but the cell was either able to build them in Europe without receiving scrutiny by security services or smuggle them across international borders.
- » (U//FOUO) **Preoperational Surveillance and Coordination:** French authorities also claimed the phone linked to the Bataclan cell contained a map of the music venue, indicating the operatives probably familiarized themselves with the layout of the venue and conducted some sort of pre-operational surveillance prior to launching the attack, according to our analysis of open sources. The phone also contained a text message that included the phrase “let’s go, we’re starting,” highlighting phones were the probable method used for coordinating the assault, either at the theater or amongst all the attackers.
- » (U//FOUO) **Familiarity with Target Sets:** Since many of the attackers were French or had spent time residing in Paris, we assess they almost certainly had insight into which areas would be most crowded and at which times. We also assess the attackers likely would have recognized the high-profile nature of the match involving the French national soccer team, which would generate high attendance at the stadium and receive significant television coverage.
- » (U//FOUO) **Training:** The tactical maneuvers observed by witnesses at the Bataclan Theater may be indicative of some level of prior training. Witness reports indicate at least two of the shooters sought a high-ground position, possibly on the second level, which provided an advantageous position to maximize casualties. Witness reports also indicate the operatives maintained a disciplined firing approach; while one operative would reload, another would continue firing to avoid being disrupted and continue the carnage. During the police raid, one of the attackers detonated his suicide belt to potentially avoid being taken into custody or to kill first responders.
- » (U//FOUO) The operatives who attacked the restaurants pulled up in a vehicle and began firing at patrons after exiting the car. According to our analysis of video footage, one of the attackers remained in a fallback position closer to the vehicle, which allowed for their ability to escape and move to the next target location in the event someone attempted to disrupt the operation.

(U//FOUO) ISIL Messaging and Social Media Reaction to the Paris Attacks

(U//FOUO) We assess ISIL and its supporters will continue media releases praising the Paris attacks and encouraging additional attacks against the West; however, analysis of previous similar releases have indicated these claims are likely to suggest general targets and be aspirational in nature. Despite this, we encourage our state, local, and private sector partners to remain vigilant and report suspicious activities to the appropriate authorities.

- » (U//FOUO) On 18 November, ISIL’s al Furat province released an Arabic- and French-language video highlighting the French attack. The video features a French speaker urging his brothers to conduct martyrdom operations as well as footage of someone preparing a suicide belt followed by an image of Times Square.

- » (U//FOUO) On 16 November, ISIL's Salah ad Din province released a video praising the Paris attacks and threatening similar attacks against Washington, DC and other locations in coalition partner countries. The video threatened to attack Europe with car bombs, explosions, explosive vests, and silencers but did not suggest any specific targets.
- » (U//FOUO) Following the attacks, several ISIL-supporters praised the attacks as retaliation for airstrikes in Syria and made general claims that additional attacks were going to occur in various cities, to include Washington, DC, Rome, and London.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) We assess ISIL plots involving multiple teams of operatives—at least some of whom are dispatched from or received training in Syria or Iraq—are more likely to occur in Europe and other overseas locations than in the United States due to a variety of geographic and societal factors. Europe and the Middle East's geographic proximity to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq and the number of Western foreign fighters currently in theater highlight both the significant challenges for Western law enforcement to detect and investigate multi-jurisdictional threats and the necessity of interagency information sharing about emerging and ongoing threats. We assess ISIL will continue efforts to direct mass-casualty attacks such as those seen in Paris, the 12 November suicide bombings in Beirut, Lebanon, and the 10 October 2015 bombings in Ankara, Turkey, targeting Western countries or individual targets they perceive to be linked to coalition operations.

(U//FOUO) We assess homegrown violent extremists (HVEs) either inspired or directed by Syria-based external operatives represent the most likely ISIL threat to the Homeland.* We remain concerned HVEs could seek to replicate the effects of the Paris attacks using similar weapons and tactics, although on a smaller scale. We remain concerned about US persons who connect with violent extremist groups overseas—regardless of their original reasons for traveling—because they could gain combat skills, violent extremist connections, and possibly become further radicalized or persuaded to conduct organized or lone offender violent extremist-style attacks, potentially targeting the United States and US interests abroad.†

(U//FOUO) Importance of Suspicious Activity Reporting

(U//FOUO) We encourage reporting of suspicious activity to appropriate authorities and encourage our homeland security, military, law enforcement and private sector partners to remain vigilant. We face an increased challenge in detecting in-progress terrorist plots by individuals or small groups acting quickly and independently or with only tenuous ties to foreign handlers. Pre-operational indicators are likely to be difficult to detect; therefore, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners play a critical role in identifying and reporting suspicious activities and raising the awareness of federal counterterrorism officials.

* (U//FOUO) DHS, FBI and NCTC defines an HVE is a person of any citizenship who has lived and/or operated primarily in the United States or its territories who advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically-motivated terrorist activities (including providing support to terrorism) in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by a foreign terrorist organization, but is acting independently of direction by a foreign terrorist organization. HVEs are distinct from traditional domestic terrorists who engage in unlawful acts of violence to intimidate civilian populations or attempt to influence domestic policy without direction from or influence from a foreign actor.

† (U//FOUO) DHS and FBI define radicalization as the process through which an individual changes from a non-violent belief system to a belief system that includes the willingness to actively advocate, facilitate, or use unlawful violence as a method to effect societal or political change.

- » (U//FOUO) A tip by a vigilant hardware store clerk in May 2015 to local police about a potentially suspicious purchase of an explosive precursor led German authorities to foil a possible attack against a major sporting event in the country after a couple purchased an unusually large amount of hydrogen peroxide. Hydrogen peroxide is a precursor for TATP, which was the explosive used in the Paris attacks and the disrupted Verviers plot. German authorities later discovered the couple presented fraudulent credentials, and were associated with the local violent extremist community in Germany.

(U) Responding to Active Shooters and Improvised Explosive Devices

(U) To assist law enforcement in better understanding and responding to violent situations, the FBI released a study in 2014 that identified the characteristics of active shooter incidents, as well as a pocket commander guide to aid in incident response. The 2014 study and other active shooter resources are available on www.fbi.gov.

- » (U) The link to the FBI Active Shooter study is: <http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2014/september/fbi-releases-study-on-active-shooter-incidents/pdfs/a-study-of-active-shooter-incidents-in-the-u.s.-between-2000-and-2013>.
- » (U) DHS Active Shooter resources are available at: www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness.
- » (U) Counter-IED information, resources, and tools for federal, state, local, and private sector partners are available at: <https://TRIPwire.dhs.gov>.

(U) Indicators

(U//FOUO) Based on background and analysis of a body of past attacks and plots, the following activities may suggest pre-operational activities, although not necessarily demonstrated in the Paris attacks. Some of these behavioral indicators may be constitutionally protected activities and should be supported by additional facts to justify increased suspicions. No single behavioral indicator should be the sole basis for law enforcement action. The totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances should be evaluated when considering any law enforcement response or action. Independently, each behavioral indicator may represent legitimate recreational or commercial activities. Multiple indicators, however, could suggest a heightened threat:

- » (U//FOUO) Showing an unusual interest or asking questions about security procedures, or engaging in overtly suspicious actions to provoke and observe responses by security or law enforcement officers;
- » (U//FOUO) Demonstrating an unusual interest in entry points, peak days and hours of operation, security personnel, surveillance assets (including cameras), and access controls such as alarms, barriers, doors, gates, or locks;
- » (U//FOUO) Demonstrating an unusual interest in security reaction drills or procedures, initiating multiple false alarms or fictitious emergency calls to the same locations or similar venues;
- » (U//FOUO) Loitering, parking, or standing in the same area over multiple days with no reasonable explanation;
- » (U//FOUO) Unusual interest in speaking with building maintenance personnel or security guards;
- » (U//FOUO) Attention to or avoidance of surveillance cameras;

- » (U//FOUO) Interest, without justification, in obtaining site plans, ingress and egress routes, and information on employees or the public;
- » (U//FOUO) Garments not appropriate for the weather or season without a reasonable explanation.
- » (U//FOUO) Sharing of media glorifying violent extremist acts in attempting to mobilize others to violence;
- » (U//FOUO) New or increased advocacy of violence;
- » (U//FOUO) A subject's advocacy that their religious, cultural, or national group requires violent defense from an external threat;
- » (U//FOUO) Participation in paramilitary exercises and reconnaissance or surveillance activities in a manner that is reasonably indicative of pre-operational planning related to terrorism, particularly in conjunction with advocacy of violence; and
- » (U//FOUO) Acquisition of suspicious quantities of weapons and ammunition, or materials that could be used to produce explosives such as hydrogen peroxide, acetone, gasoline, propane, or fertilizer.

(U) Protective Measures

(U//FOUO) In light of the potential threats posed by US-based violent extremists and criminally-motivated attackers, we urge security personnel to consider protective measures, which should integrate available equipment, personnel, current procedures, and information to improve threat detection. The following protective measures have been effective in assisting safety, security, and counterterrorism efforts:

- » (U//FOUO) Establish liaison and regular communications with local, state, and federal law enforcement, emergency responders, and public health organizations to enhance information exchange and develop comprehensive security/emergency response plans that include interaction and integration with these entities;
- » (U//FOUO) Test communications equipment with emergency responders;
- » (U//FOUO) Develop mass evacuation procedures, to include considerations for special needs populations (for example, persons with physical disabilities and/or non-English speaking);
- » (U//FOUO) Ensure personnel receive training/briefings on indicators of surveillance and reconnaissance (for example, photography of entrances or access points, questions related to security measures, presence of individuals during off-duty/non-work hours);
- » (U//FOUO) Ensure personnel receive training/briefings on Active Shooter preparedness, IED/VBIED awareness/recognition, and suspicious activity reporting procedures;
- » (U//FOUO) Always be aware of the possibility of secondary devices, particularly along designated evacuation routes or sites;
- » (U//FOUO) If a suspicious item or vehicle is located, evacuate the immediate area (refer to DHS-FBI Bomb Threat Standoff Card for recommended evacuation distances);

- » (U//FOUO) Consider all unattended baggage, vehicles, or items in a high traffic, unusual, or otherwise strategic location as hazardous;
- » (U//FOUO) Increase visibility of armed security and law enforcement personnel in areas adjacent to and in front of security checkpoints to deter unwanted activity;
- » (U//FOUO) During times of heightened threat, maintain awareness of travel and patrol patterns, and, if possible, vary times and routes to avoid predictability, and increase random patrols to reduce predictability and reduce the perceived value of potential targets;
- » (U//FOUO) Report missing or stolen equipment, to include weapons, to the proper authorities, including emergency services responding to an incident;
- » (U//FOUO) Test and repair electronic security systems to ensure they operate as designed, and review all Emergency Action Plans to ensure they are up-to-date and complete;
- » (U//FOUO) Raise community awareness of potential threats and vulnerabilities;
- » (U//FOUO) Be familiar with the “If You See Something, Say Something™” campaign and appropriately report all odd or suspicious activity to agency security officers, Federal Protective Service, or local law enforcement; and
- » (U//FOUO) Encourage employees, tenants, and visitors to report anything that appears to be odd or suspicious.

(U) Recently Disseminated Products

(U//FOUO) DHS has released three products over the last six months to HSIN-CI that may provide additional context on the ISIL threat to the Homeland:

- » (U//FOUO) Future ISIL Operations in the West Could Resemble Disrupted Belgian Plot;
- » (U//FOUO) Analysis of ISIL-Related Arrests in the Homeland from January 2014-September 2015; and
- » (U//FOUO) Foreign Terrorist Organizations’ Official Media Arms and Violent Extremist Web Forums.

(U//FOUO) Source Summary Statement

(U//FOUO) The analysis in this JIB of the tactics, techniques, and procedures used in the 13 November 2015 Paris attacks is based on open source media reporting that includes official government statements. We have **medium confidence** in our analysis of these tactics, techniques, and procedures, as much of the information has not been corroborated.

(U) Report Suspicious Activity

(U) To report suspicious activity, law enforcement, Fire-EMS, private security personnel, and emergency managers should follow established protocols; all other personnel should call 911 or contact local law enforcement. Suspicious activity reports (SARs) will be forwarded to the appropriate fusion center and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force for further action. For more information on the Nationwide SAR Initiative, visit <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/resources.aspx>.

(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response

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