



Homeland
Security

INTELLIGENCE NOTE

2 June 2020

(U//FOUO) Substantive Revision: Some Violent Opportunists Probably Engaging in Organized Activities

(U//FOUO) Scope. This *Intelligence Note (IN)* provides information on violent opportunist activity amidst otherwise lawful protests related to recent officer-involved deaths. This *IN* is an update to “(U//FOUO) Some Violent Opportunists Probably Engaging in Organized Activities,” dated 1 June 2020. The information in this *IN* is current as of 2 June 2020. This is a revision to a previous version, which contained information that has since proven to be factually inaccurate.

(U//FOUO) Prepared by the DHS Intelligence Enterprise (DHS IE) Counterterrorism Mission Center (CTMC).

(U//FOUO) We assess that some violent opportunists have become more emboldened following a series of attacks against law enforcement during the last 24 hours nationwide. This could lead to an increase in potentially lethal engagements with law enforcement officials as violent opportunists increasingly infiltrate ongoing protest activity. We also have received an increase in reports on shots fired during lawful protests nationwide—an indicator we associate with the potential for increased violence moving forward—and several uncorroborated reports of probably violent opportunists pre-staging improvised weapons at planned protest venues. Law enforcement officers continue to be the primary targets of firearm attacks, though several incidents last night involved violent opportunists shooting into crowds of protestors.

- » (U//FOUO) This morning the St. Louis Police Department (SLPD) reported that four SLPD officers were shot during protests and transported to local hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries. The officers were engaged with a group of about 200 violent opportunists throughout the night who were throwing rocks, shooting fireworks at officers, and dumping gasoline on them.
- » (U//FOUO) Last night, two separate shooting incidents in Las Vegas resulted in the critical injury of a Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) patrol officer and the death of a separate suspect. According to LVMPD, officers began attempting to make arrests after some individuals began throwing bottles and rocks at officers attempting to disperse crowds on the Las Vegas Strip. As one officer was struggling with a violent agitator, the officer was shot in the head by another individual walking alone who was approximately 75 feet from the melee. The LVMPD officer is currently in critical condition. In a separate shooting near the Lloyd George Federal Building, officers encountered an individual carrying multiple firearms and who appeared to be wearing body armor. According to LVMPD, the subject reached for a firearm during an interaction with the police and the officers engaged him. The suspect was later pronounced deceased at the hospital from several gunshot wounds.
- » (U//FOUO) Also today, violent opportunists in two separate incidents drove vehicles into a crowd of protestors in Asheville, North Carolina, according to operational reporting. In one of the incidents, the occupants allegedly fired several shots into the crowd before speeding away. There were no reported injuries and we lack information suggesting that this was a coordinated incident. Separately, a law enforcement vehicle on patrol last night near planned protests in Davenport, Iowa, was shot 13 times, injuring one of the officers in the vehicle, according to media reporting. This attack was several hours after a protester was shot and killed at a nearby protest.

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- » (U//FOUO) We have several uncorroborated reports of bricks being pre-staged at planned protest venues nationwide, according to media reporting. Although we have been unable to verify the reporting through official channels, the staging of improvised weapons at planned events is a common tactic used by violent opportunists, and an increase in reports of staging of these materials at separate locations could be indicative that local coordination to infiltrate protests is increasing. We lack reporting indicating individuals are coordinating violence across multiple jurisdictions.

(U//FOUO) Indicators Associated with Potential Escalation to More Widespread Organized Violence

(U//FOUO) The following list of indicators may be indicative of violent opportunist efforts to plan and coordinate activities in support of attacks targeting law enforcement or the destruction of critical infrastructure. Some of the observed suspicious behaviors include constitutionally protected activities and should not be reported absent articulable facts and circumstances that supports a reasonable belief the observed behavior is itself, or when taken in context of other activities, is indicative of violent activities.

- » (U//FOUO) Pre-staging of potential weapons-of-opportunity or stolen vehicles at planned protest venues.
- » (U//FOUO) Increased reports of more lethal weapons—such as firearms—being used to target law enforcement officials at lawful protest activities.
- » (U//FOUO) Monitoring and reporting on law enforcement personnel, communications, and movements during planned protests.
- » (U//FOUO) Transition from generic calls for violence to providing specific targeting or operational guidance.
- » (U//FOUO) Online planning of criminal activity or violence related to planned protests by individuals who lack ties to local communities.
- » (U//FOUO) Encouraging or redirecting planned protest activities away from major metropolitan areas to cities and municipalities with fewer law enforcement personnel.
- » (U//FOUO) Discovery of banners or other materials used to employ “Black Bloc” tactics for concealing identity or shielding activities from law enforcement scrutiny.
- » (U//FOUO) Reports of coordinated reconnaissance of planned protests venues prior to the event.

(U) DHS Definitions

(U//FOUO) DHS I&A defines **violent opportunists** as Illicit actors who may or may not hold violent extremist ideological beliefs, but seek to exploit opportunities in non-violent protests to engage in unlawful violence against federal, state, or local government and law enforcement personnel or facilities, as well as other critical infrastructure, that either poses a danger to human life, threat of potential destruction of the critical infrastructure, or would be so disruptive as to endanger the minimal operations of state and local governments to respond. These actors may capitalize on violent extremist narratives often espoused by organized DVE movements, such as anarchist extremists or racially motivated violent extremists, to justify violent activities that may potentially destroy government critical infrastructure at the state, local and federal levels, and may attempt to incite others to violence to provide cover for their own illicit activities. Their primary motivations may be influenced by a variety of criminal objectives and goals.

(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) Tracked by: HSEC-8.1, HSEC-8.5, HSEC-8.6, HSEC-8.8, HSEC-8.10.

(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//FOUO) This IN is based on media reporting and DHS field reporting. We have **medium confidence** in the underlying information obtained from DHS due to evolving situations on the ground and the press reporting given the evolving nature of these events. We have **high confidence** that material received from our state and local partners represents their best information at the time of dissemination.

(U//FOUO) We have **medium confidence** in our assessment, based on the uncorroborated and sporadic nature of some of the underlying reporting. Additional reporting regarding organized activities could strengthen this assessment.