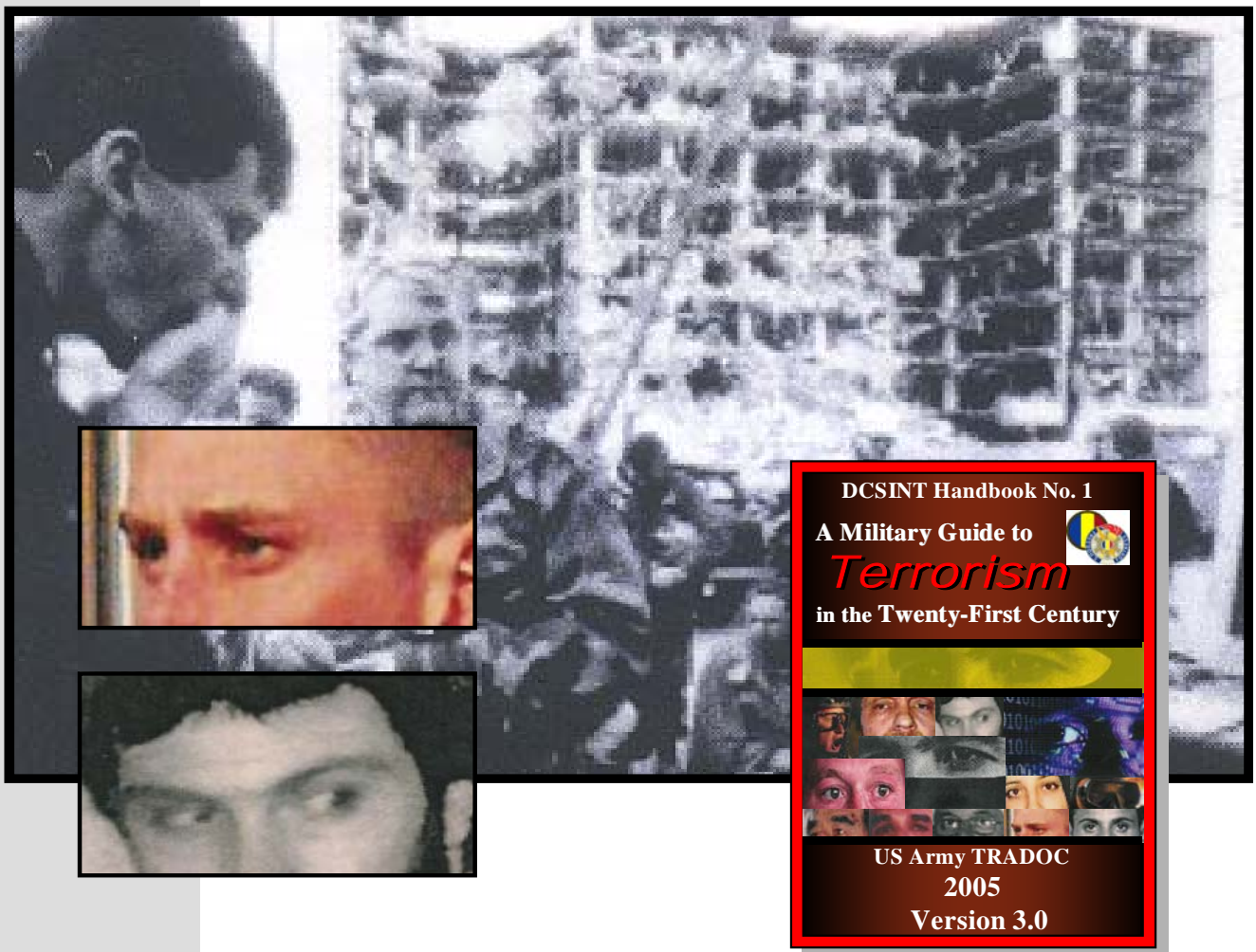




# *Terror Operations*

## *Case Studies in Terrorism*



**US Army Training and Doctrine Command  
Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence  
Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence - Threats  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
15 August 2005**

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## Preface

***Terror Operations: Case Studies in Terrorism*** is a supplemental handbook that presents several terrorist incidents in a case study methodology. This handbook supports a U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence capstone reference guide on terrorism, DCSINT handbook No. 1, ***A Military Guide to Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century***. Both the capstone guide and supplemental handbook are prepared under the direction of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence-Threats. Understanding terrorism spans foreign and domestic threats of nation-states, rogue states with international or transnational agent demonstrations, and actors with specific strategies, tactics, and targets. A central aspect of this handbook comprises foreign and domestic threats against the United States of America in a contemporary operational environment (COE).

**Purpose.** This informational handbook supports operational missions, institutional training, and professional military education for U.S. military forces in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This document promotes an improved understanding of terrorist incident objectives, motivation, planning, and conduct of operations.

**Intended Audience.** This handbook exists primarily for U.S. military forces, and invites a common situational awareness in the context of three principal venues: forces that are deployed, forces that are in transit to or from an operational mission, and forces that are primarily non-deployable as installation or institution support. Other applicable groups may include interdepartmental, interagency, intergovernmental, civilian contractor, non-governmental, private volunteer, humanitarian relief organizations, and the general citizenry. Compiled from open source materials, this handbook promotes a “Threats” perspective and enemy situational awareness of the U.S. in combating terrorism. Neither a counter-terrorism directive nor anti-terrorism manual, the handbook complements but does not replace training and intelligence products on terrorism.

**Handbook Use.** Study of contemporary terrorist behavior and motivation, terrorist goals and objectives, and a composite of probable terrorist tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) improves readiness of U.S. military forces. As a living document, this handbook will be updated as necessary to ensure a current and relevant resource. A selected bibliography presents citations for detailed study of specific terrorism topics. Unless stated otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

**Proponent Statement.** Headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is the proponent for this publication. Periodic updates will accommodate emergent user requirements on terrorism. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 directly to TRADOC Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence – Threats at the following address: Director, TRADOC ADCSINT – Threats, ATTN: ATIN-L-T (Bldg 53), 700 Scott Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-1323. This handbook is available at Army Knowledge Online ([www.us.army.mil](http://www.us.army.mil)). Additionally, the General Dennis J. Reimer Training and Doctrine Digital Library ([www.adtdl.army.mil](http://www.adtdl.army.mil)) lists the handbook as a special text.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Threats Terrorism Team (T3) Network

The Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command extends special appreciation to the many stakeholders who were invited to contribute information, subject matter expertise, and insight into the update of this 2005 unclassified terrorism handbook, *A Military Guide to Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*.

This expanding partnership of the Threats Terrorism Team (T3) Network in conjunction with the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence-Threats includes:

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U.S. Northern Command, JTF-Civil Support, J5 Plans, CBRNE Consequence Management  
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U.S. Army Aviation Logistics Center  
U.S. Army Management Staff College  
U.S. Army School of Information Technology  
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U.S. Northern Command, Homeland Security/Defense Education Consortium (HSDEC)  
**U.S. Army TRADOC, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence-Threats**

# Terror Operations: Case Studies in Terrorism

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## Terror Operations: Case Studies in Terrorism

### Introduction

**...War has been waged on us [USA] by stealth and deceit and murder. This nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger. The conflict has begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in a way, and at an hour, of our choosing.**

George W. Bush  
The President of the United States of America  
September 14, 2001

This supplemental handbook presents a sampling of foreign and domestic terrorist incidents against the United States of America. Using an abridged case study methodology, analysis approaches each case from a “Threats” adversary viewpoint. Assessment provides observations on terrorist effectiveness in a contemporary operational environment.

The *Contemporary Operational Environment* (COE) has several common threads or constants for defining the environment. The U.S. will not experience a peer competitor until 2020 or beyond. Armed forces will continue to be used as a tool to pursue national interests. The U.S. may direct military action within the context of an alliance, a coalition, or even as unilateral action, with or without United Nations sanctions. Actions will be waged in a larger environment of diplomatic, informational, economic, and military operations. Modernization of capabilities by potential or known adversaries could negate U.S. overmatch for select periods of time or specific capabilities. Similarly, advanced technologies will be readily available on a world market for nation-states and non-state actors. Non-state actors can cause significant impacts on a military operation, as combatants and non-combatants. Of course, these factors and their effects will vary depending on a particular situation; however, a constant that must also be addressed is the issue of variables.

Complementing these overarching constants or factors, the U.S. Army describes eleven critical variables that enhance a comprehensive appreciation of a particular mission setting. This assessment and analysis is appropriate for both real world contingencies and training preparations. Whether a real world threat or an opposing force created to simulate realistic and relevant conditions for training readiness, the COE is a dynamic and adaptive process of being more aware, better prepared, and fully ready to counter any adversary that could negatively impact on conduct of an assigned U.S. military mission.

“Constants and variables” are U.S. Army doctrinal terms of reference that assist in describing today’s operating environment. To recognize the conditions, circumstances, and influences that effect employment of terrorist acts, analysis includes constants

[factors] of the contemporary operational environment, as well as critical variables that define a specific operational situation.<sup>1</sup>

Interaction among these elements may range from peaceful humanitarian assistance to high-intensity combat operations. Alliances and coalitions are the expectation in most operations, but U.S. unilateral action is always a consideration. Military operations interrelate with other elements of national power – diplomatic, economic, social-cultural, and informational – for both the U.S. and an adversary. Advanced technologies are available to almost anyone, yet sophistication of weapon systems, in itself, may be a liability. Intelligence and operational tools must overlap and integrate complex sensor-surveillance systems and the clarity of human intelligence “eyes on the ground” collection and analysis. Engagement among significant actors in the COE can span formal nation-state representatives to the impact of individual combatants and noncombatants. Acts of terrorism are part of this reality.

### Critical Variables of the COE

- **Nature and Stability of the State**
- **Regional and Global Relationships**
- **Economics**
- **Sociological Demographics**
- **Information**
- **Physical Environment**
- **Technology**
- **External Environment**
- **National Will**
- **Time**
- **Military Capabilities**

(Source: U.S. Army Field Manual 7-100)

Using open source material, this case study series provides an appreciation of how much information is readily available to friend and foe in understanding the tactics, techniques, and procedures of a terrorist operation. Combined with situational awareness, U.S. military forces can better deter, dissuade, or deny terrorists in the ability to achieve terrorist acts and aims. Simultaneously, U.S. military forces maintain the ability to better defend and protect the United States, its people, and interests in the Homeland and abroad throughout a full spectrum of operations and contingencies.

The U.S. is conducting a Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This national strategy is offensive, direct, and continuous.<sup>2</sup> U.S. action will initially disrupt, over time degrade, and ultimately destroy terrorist organizations of global reach.<sup>3</sup> Targets of U.S. operations will include terrorist leaders; their command, control, and communications; material support; and their finances. The war on terrorism will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy over an extended period of time.

<sup>1</sup> Field Manual [U.S. Army] 7-100, *Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, iv to x, xvi (Washington, D.C., 2003). See discussion of DOD operating environment and Army description on contemporary operational environment (COE) “constants” and “critical variables.”

<sup>2</sup> The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Section III and IX, 17 September 2002; available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>; Internet; accessed 30 April 2004.

<sup>3</sup> The White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 2, February 2003; available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2003/17798.htm>; Internet; accessed 30 April 2004.

## Case Study Purpose

Know your enemy. This can be a two-edged sword of situational awareness and understanding. Through discerning threats and capabilities with documented terrorist incidents, U.S. military leaders will develop better situational awareness of forces and vectors of terrorism.

## Case Study Elements

Case study method is a process of shared responsibility and disciplined exploration. In this terrorism handbook, case study organization comprises three main elements of (1) a case study abstract; (2) a main body comprising an introduction, learning objectives, situational overview, focus areas, case study discussion questions, and a brief case assessment; and (3) a bibliography of selected open-source references per terrorist incident. The references are a prompt to seek additional resources through multi-media research and study.

Case study is an effective adult learning method that "...provides an opportunity to gain confidence in one's own judgment, but also a degree of humility as well. It also provides a most invaluable opportunity to learn how far one can go by rigorous logical analyses of one of the other dimensions of the problem and the extent to which judgment comes into play when many factors which have no common denominator must be weighed."<sup>4</sup>

This process guides, but does not dictate, a learning outcome. Using the case method, every iteration "...provides opportunity for new intellectual adventure, for risk taking, for new learning. One may have taught [studied] the case before, but last year's notes have limited current value. With a new group of students [leaders], the unfolding dynamic of a unique section, and different time circumstances, familiar material is revitalized."<sup>5</sup>

**Abstract.** A brief statement summarizes the case study and its significant observations on foreign or domestic terrorism.

**Introduction.** A preface presents the principal contents and purpose of the case study. Providing background information, the introduction provides context to the incident and enhances an appreciation of the sequence of events and act of terrorism.

## Case Methodology

The case study presents, analyzes, and assesses salient aspects of a terrorism incident. This method evolves from an overarching study of selected terrorism characteristics, specified learning objectives, case questions which focus analysis, and a summarized assessment of the analysis for discussion. Research data comes from unclassified sources and is available from common open-source portals.

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<sup>4</sup> Louis B. Barnes, C. Roland Christensen, and Abby J. Hansen. *Teaching and the Case Method*. (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1994), 41.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

**Learning Objectives.** The group of intended outcomes from the case study enables focused study, discussion, and analysis of a specific terrorist incident.

**Case Questions.** Issues, stated as open-ended questions, propose primary study topics. These queries explore relationships of terrorist tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP), and how terrorist capabilities were implemented to achieve a terrorist objective.

**Assessment.** Cogent statements summarize deliberate analyses of causal factors or linked relationships in a specified act of terrorism, and present informed conclusions to optimize planning and actions against terrorism capabilities.

### Case Studies Index

- Tokyo Chemical Sarin Attack, Tokyo, Japan (1995)
- Murrah Federal Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA (1995)
- Khobar Towers, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (1996)
- USS *Cole*, Aden Harbor, Yemen (2000)

## The Contemporary Operational Environment

The Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) is an operational environment of today and for the foreseeable future. The *Operational Environment* (OE) as defined by the Department of Defense is: “A composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect employment of military forces and bear on the decisions of the unit commander.”<sup>6</sup> The U.S. Army builds on this DOD definition and further defines a mission setting for the current or near-term future circumstances – a Contemporary Operational Environment.<sup>7</sup>

The *Contemporary Operational Environment* (COE) encompasses a full range of terrorism threat. Originated to address known and potential *conditions* and adversaries that U.S. forces might confront in a post-Cold War world, the COE is a conceptual construct to recognize several norms and critical variables for military decisionmaking, planning, and operating. As a superpower, the U.S. must still consider the normal influences of movements and regional powers around the world and the capabilities of their armed forces, paramilitary forces, or clandestine groups.

### Challenging Threats

- **Traditional**
- **Irregular**
- **Catastrophic**
- **Disruptive**

The U.S. National Defense Strategy identifies four types of challenging threats. Traditional challenges exist by states that employ recognized military capabilities and forces in the more

<sup>6</sup> Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military Terms*, available from <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/data/o/03843.html>; Internet; accessed 25 April 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Army Field Manual 7-100, *Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, May 2003), Foreword and iv.

conventional forms of military competition and conflict. Irregular challenges are the more unconventional ways and means to counter the traditional advantages of much stronger opponents. Catastrophic challenges involve the acquisition, possession, and possible use of WMD or methods that produce WMD-like effects (WMD/E). Disruptive challenges may be the use of breakthrough technologies to limit or negate the operational advantage of an opponent.<sup>8</sup>

The National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism (NMSP-WOT) addresses the GWOT nature of the threat, and states priorities and responsibilities within the U.S. Armed Forces. As noted by the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, this strategy "...produces a clearer understanding of the enemies we face and the conditions under which we fight..." The nature of this environment is a war against extremists that advocate the use of violence to gain control over others, and in doing so, threaten our [U.S.] way of life. Success will rely heavily on close cooperation and integration of all instruments of national power and the combined efforts of the international community. The overall goal of this war is to preserve and promote the way of life of free and open societies based on rule of law, defeat terrorist extremism as a threat to that way of life, and create a global environment inhospitable to terrorist extremists.<sup>9</sup>

The United States will target eight major terrorist vulnerabilities. This targeting is against terrorists, their enablers, and their organizations and networks, including state and non-state supporters. The contemporary operational environment can be assessed as "...the most

### **Terrorist Vulnerabilities**

- **Ideological Support**
- **Leadership**
- **"Foot Soldiers"**
- **Safe Havens**
- **Weapons**
- **Funds**
- **Communications and Movement**
- **Access to Targets**

*Source: National Defense Strategy, March 2005*

dangerous times of our lifetime...not so much because we know precisely what somebody's going to do, when and where, or how they're going to do it; but that we know their intent and we know what the possibilities are and we know what our vulnerabilities are...So terrorism is part of the tactic. In other ways it's [terrorism] an 'ism', much like communism and the others, only so much as it's embodied in whatever movements and for whatever reasons."<sup>10</sup> The intent is to maintain the initiative and dictate the tempo, timing, and direction of military operations.

As an example, denying resources to terrorists and terrorist networks is critical to countering the ideological support of terrorism. These efforts remove any legitimacy to terrorism and eliminate state and private support for terrorism; make it politically unsustainable for any country to support or condone terrorism; and support models for moderation in the

Muslim regions of the world. Techniques in coordinating such actions may include a methodology of identifying or "mapping" key components that affect resources such as technology, key figures, and locations. Identifying the major connections among these

<sup>8</sup> *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, 1 March 2005, 2.

<sup>9</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, J5 War on Terrorism, Strategic Planning Division, Briefing (U) *The National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism (NMSP-WOT)*, Version 18 April 2005.

<sup>10</sup> General Peter Schoomaker, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, "Media Roundtable at the Association of the United States Army Annual Convention, Washington, D.C., 4 October 2004; available from: <http://www.army.mil/leaders/leaders/csa/interviews/04Oct04Roundtable.html>; Internet; accessed 11 January 2005.

components can spotlight weak assailable links of the networking and where targeting and action plans may be most effective. Measuring results and adapting operations enable a process for improved Joint leader education, readiness training, and GWOT operations.<sup>11</sup>

## Red Teaming

As a time-proven concept used in U.S. government and commercial enterprises, “red teaming” deepens the understanding of options that are available to counter adaptive adversaries. This methodology both complements and informs intelligence collection and analysis, and enhances predictive estimates of adversary capabilities and intentions. Analyses of friendly forces; partners, allies, or neutral forces in an operational environment; and adversary capabilities and limitations are elements of a comprehensive decision support process. Aggressive “red teams,” embedded in friendly force organizations, challenge emerging operational concepts, evolving contingency plans, as well as operational orders in order to discover weaknesses before real adversaries do. The perspective of an adversary may be that of a confirmed threat, or a contingency of threat capabilities used to present conditions, circumstances, and influences for training and readiness. Focusing effects to achieve friendly force commander mission and intent uses red teaming to combat terrorism threats in a systematic, proactive command and staff decisionmaking process.

### Assessing the Threat

- **Mapping the Threat**
- **Analyzing Networks**
- **Planning Actions**
- **Determining Metrics**
- **Tracking Actions**
- **Evaluating Outcomes**
- **Adapting Methods**
- **Improving Results**

### Threat and Opposing Force

**Threat** - Any specific foreign nation or organization with intentions and military capabilities that suggest it could become an adversary or challenge the national security interests of the United States or its allies.

U.S. Army Regulation 350-2

**Opposing Force (OPFOR)** – A plausible, flexible military and/or paramilitary force representing a composite of varying capabilities of actual worldwide forces, used in lieu of a specific threat force, for training and developing U.S. forces.

U.S. Army Regulation 350-2

In 2003, a Defense Science Board task force validated two primary reasons for expanding the role of red teaming in the DOD: (1) To deepen understanding of the adversaries the U.S. now faces in the war on terrorism and in particular their capabilities and potential responses to U.S. initiatives, and (2) To guard against complacency. Red teaming can stress concepts, plans, and systems to identify vulnerabilities and capabilities before direct confrontation with a real world adversary. To best apply red teaming programs, red team members must be able to understand the thinking and motivations of adversaries with different cultural and social backgrounds, to assess and analyze acting as independent and adaptive adversaries, and to interact and recommend in

<sup>11</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, J5 War on Terrorism, Strategic Planning Division, Briefing (U) *Countering Ideological Support for Terrorism*, Version 19Jan05, 5 April 2005.

constructive and creative ways with the supported friendly forces leader and military decisionmaker.<sup>12</sup> The world today is complex, as is armed conflict. A significant difference today, different from previous recent wars, is the reality of a protracted conflict of uncertain duration<sup>13</sup> – a war on terrorism. To “detect, deter, and destroy terrorist organizations at every turn,” another evolving component of any U.S. action plan is to act against threats before they are fully formed. The ability to “red team” terrorist capabilities and limitations can be a powerful tool to understand risks and identify friendly forces options.

The overarching aim of this handbook is to create situational awareness and understanding of current terrorism capabilities and limitations, and complement the deliberate processes of military risk management, force protection, and mission orders conduct and leader decision-making. U.S. Armed Forces are at war – a Global War on Terrorism. In this long-term war of uncertain duration, the United States of America will continue to defend its values, liberties, and culture; its economic prosperity; and its security, along with allies and international partners.

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<sup>12</sup> Department of Defense, Defense Science Board, *Defense Science Board Task Force on The Role and Status of DoD Red Teaming Activities*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, September 2003), 1, 15, 16, and Appendix 1.

<sup>13</sup> Cofer Black, “The International Terrorism Threat,” Testimony before the House International Relations committee, Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Human Rights, Washington, D.C., 26 March 2003; 6, available from <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2003/19136.htm>; Internet; accessed 21 April 2005.

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## Tokyo Chemical Sarin Attack (1995)

### Chapter 1: Tokyo Subway Sarin Attack

The March 20, 1995 chemical nerve agent attack with sarin on the population of Tokyo provides several significant and peculiar insights of terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction/effects (WMD/E). The rush-hour attack was nearly simultaneous in execution on five subway trains that were converging to the center of Tokyo. This deliberate act of terrorism, conducted by a cult, intended to cause thousands of casualties with a chemical nerve agent.

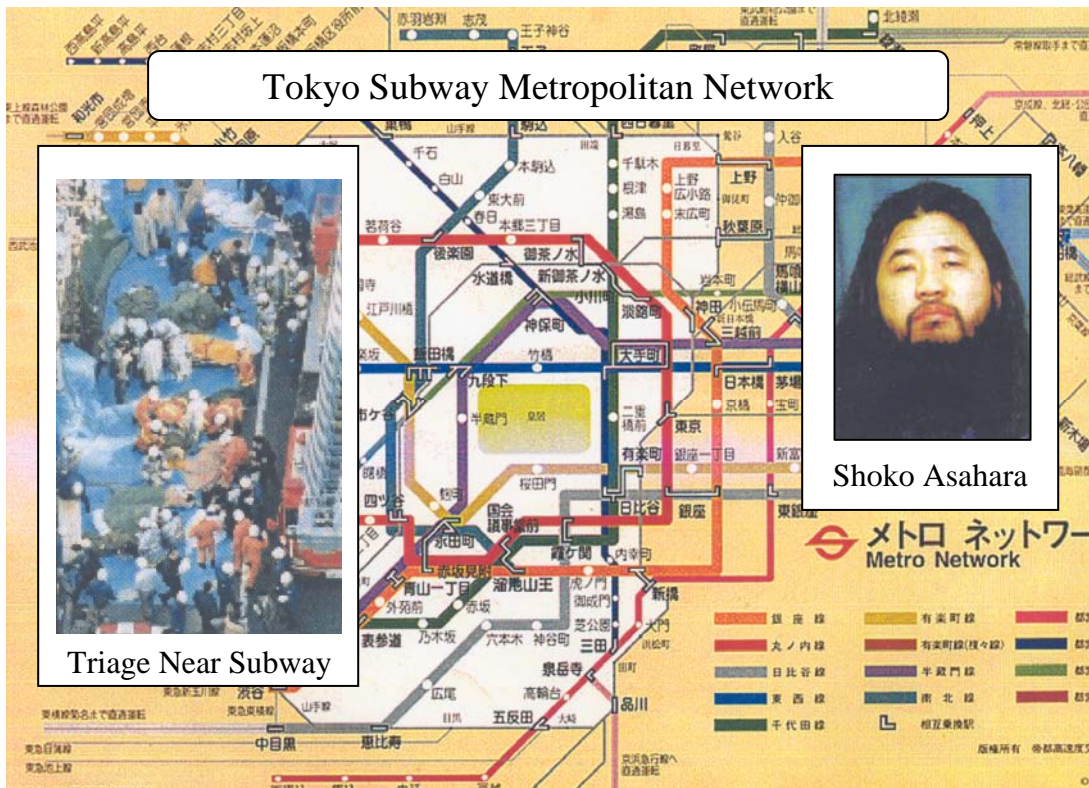


Figure 1-1. Above. **Tokyo Subway Metropolitan Network Map**

(Source: map <http://www.bento.com/subtop.html> )

Figure 1-2. Above, Left. **Triage Near Subway**

(Source: <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/humantoll/htimages/mad2.jpg> )

Figure 1-3. Above, Right. **Shoko Asahara –Aum Shinrikyo Leader**

(Source: <http://www.mpa.gr/gr/other/terrorism/images/aum-shinrikyo-LEADER.jpg> )

This case study presents an unclassified summary of the terrorist cult history and motivations leading up to and including the Tokyo subway attacks; planning and preparation; tactics and

techniques of the multiple point-area assault; the immediate aftermath of the incident. Several vignettes highlight cult member terrorists, victims, and governmental responses to the attack.

Timing and method are tools of terrorist choosing and further complicate risk management and force protection of a target selected by terrorists. In the case of the Aum Shinrikyo cult,<sup>14</sup> this subway attack with sarin was one act in a long series of criminal acts that spanned several years and involved at least one previous attack with sarin.

A primary underlying aim of terrorism is a demoralizing psychological effect on the target population and its leaders, often with explicit media coverage of mass casualty or mass destruction effects, to erode resolve and enhance terrorist objectives.

A former U.S. Secretary of Defense stated the issue of chemical weapon use by terrorists and a trend toward increased levels of violence and mayhem in this way:

**“Also looming is the chance that these terror weapons will find their way into the hands of individuals and independent groups – fanatical terrorists and religious zealots beyond our borders, brooding loners and self-proclaimed apocalyptic prophets at home. This is not hyperbole. It is reality.”<sup>15</sup>**

Honorable William Cohen  
U.S. Secretary of Defense  
1999

## Introduction

The 1995 terrorist attack using sarin nerve agent signaled a new level of terrorism using weapons of mass destruction or effect.<sup>16</sup> A chronology table of Aum Shinrikyo activities prior to this incident displays an escalating degree of violence and crime. Activities immediately after the sarin subway attack also display selective acts of terrorism as national, regional, and local authorities sought to apprehend Aum Shinrikyo cult members as suspected criminals of the sarin attack. A timeline table shows the nearly simultaneous conduct of the sarin attacks at various points of the Tokyo subway, and notes the initial civil and military actions to the incident.

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<sup>14</sup> *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*, ed. Victoria Neufeldt (Cleveland & New York: Simon & Schuster's, Inc., 1991), 337. *Cult*, defined as, a quasi-religious group, often living in a colony, with a charismatic leader who indoctrinates members with unorthodox or extremist views.

<sup>15</sup> Dana A. Shea and Frank Gottron, *Small-scale Terrorist Attacks Using Chemicals and Biological Agents: An Assessment Framework and Preliminary Comparisons*, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Order Code RL32391, 6, 20 May 2004.

<sup>16</sup> *National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2004*, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1. The NMS uses the term “WMD/E” to describe a broad range of adversary capabilities that poses potentially devastating impacts. WMD/E include chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and enhanced high explosive weapons as well as other, more asymmetrical “weapons.” These type weapons may rely more on disruptive impact than destructive kinetic effects. For example, negative psychological effects on people may be more severe than the numbers of lethal destruction or the degree of economic damage.

Analysis confirms a dedicated plan and preparation for WMD/E experimentation and use, combined with a cultish dedication to a leader with an Armeggeddon-like expectation of the contemporary period. Previous use of chemical attacks by the cult bolstered their confidence in using a chemical agent, and aided the planning and execution process of the Tokyo subway attack, as well as the evasion of the five attack teams from the five separate attack sites. Studying this terrorist group and attack incident has other interesting aspects not necessarily observed in other well-known terrorist incidents. The specific terrorists in this attack were highly educated individuals. Several members of the cult were recruited from, and infiltrated into, activities in civil government, law enforcement, commercial industry, postgraduate academia, and the national military forces.

## **Learning Objectives**

Learning objectives focus on analyzing case study information in order to synthesize and evaluate insights from this attack, discern patterns of terrorist method and means, and determine likely trends in future terrorist activities. Comparing and contrasting conditions, circumstances, and asymmetric options available to the terrorist can enhance judgment to recognize vulnerabilities, identify threats, and minimize the ability of terrorism to impact on accomplishing a friendly force mission.

The objectives for this case study are:

- Describe intelligence indicators that might have been analyzed to create a more effective tactical estimate of terrorist intention and capability in the March 20, 1995 sarin attack.
- Understand the motivation of Aum Shinrikyo cultists of choosing the population of the Tokyo subway system as a terrorist target of high value.
- Recognize aspects of force protection measures that could apply in a similar U.S. situation.
- Explain terrorist organizational structure and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) used for the Tokyo subway system attack.
- Deduce a trend for terrorist acts with the objective of an increased combination for mass casualties and mass destruction.

## **Case Study Overview– Tokyo Chemical Sarin Attack (1995)**

In mid-March 1995, the Aum Shinrikyo cult collected intelligence of a pending raid on their compound by government agencies. On very short notice, the Aum Shinrikyo cult leader decided to conduct a sarin attack on a densely populated urban environment to distract government authorities and possibly avert the raid on cult facilities.

On March 20, 1995, five two-person teams entered the Tokyo subway system during the morning rush hour of people going to work. The selection of entry points and destinations were part of an elaborate action plan to attack the city population with the chemical nerve agent sarin along a significant portion of the subway system. The subway trains route converged on Kasumigaseki Station in the center of the capital's government district. This district includes many national and international activities such as the U.S. Embassy. The attacks occurred at or about 8:00 a.m. when traffic was busiest on a normal workday. The attack teams used one member as a vehicle driver while the other individual placed a sealed package, camouflaged with newspaper, on overhead storage racks or on the subway car floor. Using a sharpened tip of an umbrella, the individual punctured the package that allowed sarin liquid to ooze into the car<sup>17</sup> and gradually vaporize.

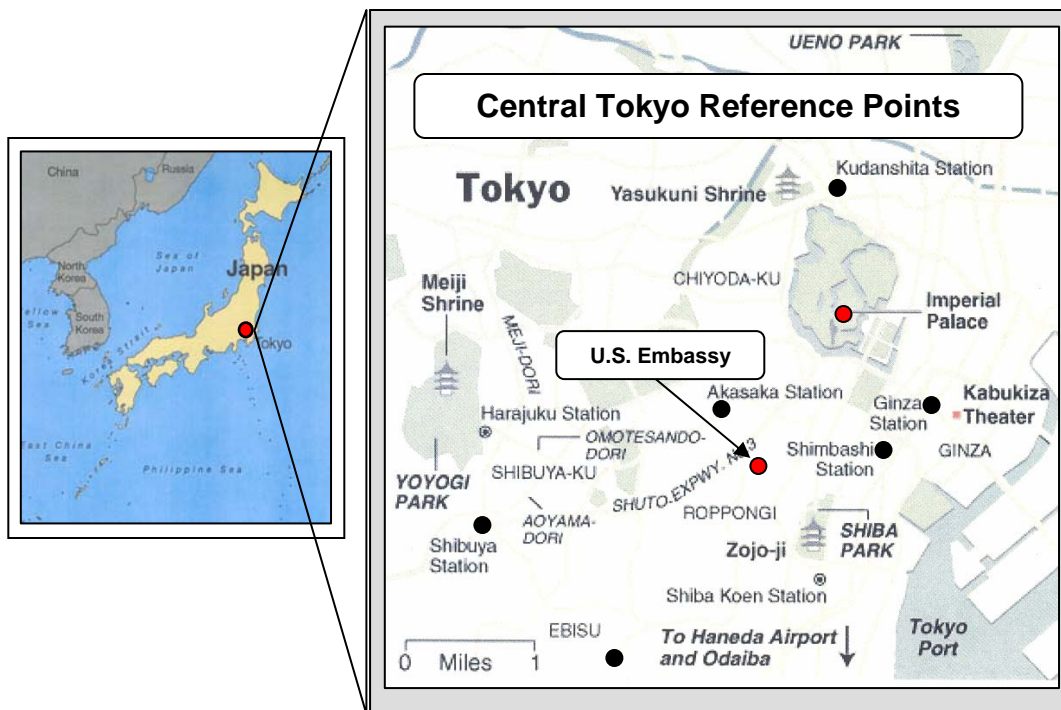


Figure 1-4. Above, Left. **Map of Japan and Tokyo**

(Source: Tokyo Map [before additions] [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/world\\_cities/tpkyo.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/world_cities/tpkyo.jpg) )

Figure 1-5. Above, Right. **Surface Map of Central Tokyo Attack Area**

(Source: Japan Map [before additions] <http://hwebb.freeshell.org/nytimestokyo.gif> )

Nerve agent effects were observed immediately in various degrees of severity. Some people smelled a strong solvent-like odor. Sarin in its pure state is colorless and odorless. The sarin used in the attack was only about 30 percent pure which caused the noticeable odor. Initial symptoms included eye irritation, difficulty in breathing, coughing, choking, and vomiting. Some people suffered with convulsions. Some people

<sup>17</sup> Commentary No. 60, *The Threat of Chemical/Biological Terrorism*, August 1995, 1; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/cbw/com60e.htm>; Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

lost consciousness. Depending on the degree of sarin released in the confined space of a subway car or train station platform, concern of passengers and subway workers quickly degraded to panic and hysteria in some cases. Scenes included groups of people collapsing in heaps. One platform had over 30 people collapse after being overcome by the sarin vapor. A strange smell was strong enough to be noticed at ticket counters one floor above one of the train platforms.<sup>18</sup>

In reaction to the attack, emergency responses were overwhelmed as the cause of symptoms was unclear and reports were conflicting. Similarities to a “toxic gas” incident in Matsumoto in 1994 soon alerted medical teams and police of the strong possibility of a sarin attack. Nonetheless, citizens, subway workers, and emergency response personnel that assisted in the first reactions to the incident were contaminated, and in some cases, also became victims. Evacuation and reception of victims to local hospitals caused further contamination to several medical workers and hospital staff.

The attack caused 12 deaths and contaminated or adversely affected between 3500 and 5500 people. About 1000 people were mildly or moderately suffering sarin effects, with about 500 people requiring hospitalization. Nonetheless, the psychological trauma or perceived physical effects caused several thousand additional people to seek medical treatment. This further complicated an already overwhelmed emergency response system. The initial hours of response were further confused by reports of a gas explosion as the causal factor.<sup>19</sup>

The original intention of the Aum Shinrikyo was much more devastating in concept. As evidenced in raids conducted by the Japanese government on Aum Shinrikyo facilities after the subway attack, the cult used sarin that was a much less potent and diluted product. Had the sarin been fully potent, had the complete number of sarin packages been punctured and agent released, and had a number of other contributing factors been available to the Aum Shinrikyo cult, casualties would have been much more severe. Aum Shinrikyo had an expectation that thousands of people might die from the sarin attack and additional thousands of people would suffer from nerve agent effects or the psychological trauma of a massive chemical weapon attack.

## Background

The Aum Shinrikyo was founded in 1987 by Chizuo Matsumoto, a middle-aged former yoga teacher. In 1984, he formed a company called the Aum Shinsen-no kai which was a yoga school and publishing house. He changed his name to Shoko Asahara or “Bright Light,” and in 1987, changed the name of his yoga group to the Aum Shinrikyo, a Sanskrit derivative literally meaning “Supreme Truth.”

In August 1989, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government granted the Aum Shinrikyo official religious corporation status. This law provided the group various privileges including massive tax breaks and de facto immunity from official oversight and prosecution. Under the Japanese Religious Corporation Law, after a group is recognized as a religious organization, authorities

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<sup>18</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. Senate Government Affairs Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. *A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. Washington, D.C., 31 October 1995, 2; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995\\_rpt/aum/part01.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995_rpt/aum/part01.htm); Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

<sup>19</sup> *Chemical Terrorism in Japan: The Matsumoto and Tokyo Incidents*, 2, available from <http://www.opcw.org/resp/html/japan.html>; Internet; accessed 22 December 2004.

are not permitted to investigate its "religious activities or doctrine". This is broadly interpreted to cover almost all activities of the religious group including actions that raise revenue or contributions for corporate activities. Although the police could investigate a religious group for criminal acts, in practice, this would be difficult if not impossible to do because of the law and the government's reluctance to investigate religions.

With its status as a legally recognized religion, the Aum's activities and character dramatically changed. From a small handful of members in 1984, Aum Shinrikyo claimed membership of about 10,000 members in 1992 and about 50,000 members worldwide by 1995. Similarly, expansion occurred from a one-office operation in Japan in 1984 to over 30 branch offices in over six countries. Net worth grew from less than 430 million yen (approximately \$4.3 million) when recognized in 1989 to more than 100 billion yen (\$1 billion) by the time of the Tokyo incident in 1995.

The cult of Aum Shinrikyo became more aggressive and dangerous. With its dramatic growth, evidence increased of complaints from parents and family members that some Aum recruits were kidnapped and physically assaulted by the cult. A number of anti-Aum groups were started in this period by families of cult members. The people that formed these groups complained that they also became victims of assaults and harassment.

In February 1990, Asahara decided to become a political power in Japan and announced to his members that the Aum Shinrikyo would campaign for representative positions in the Japanese Diet [Congress] election. Asahara and 24 other members of his inner circle campaigned for these governmental positions under the banner of the Aum's own party - the Shinrito. Asahara received only 1700 votes out of approximately 500,000 votes. All of the Aum Shinrikyo candidates lost the election with very disappointing voting results.

The 1990 election defeat appears to be a major decision point for Asahara and the direction he would lead Aum Shinrikyo to demonstrate in subsequent years. Aum Shinrikyo rejected normal interaction with the larger Japanese society. Announcements of Armageddon<sup>20</sup> and paranoia were recurring with a steady increase in violence and confrontation with the government.<sup>21</sup>

The Aum Shrinrikyo beliefs merged a combination of several philosophies, religions, or mystic traditions. With the basis of Buddhism as an initial framework of belief, the cult distorted this religion with concepts of a god of destruction, and mystic predictions similar to Nostradamus.<sup>22</sup> Asahara shifted ideas of spiritual liberation through peaceful contemplation and discipline to a vision of vaguely explained levels of enlightenment, surviving the destruction of the world, and earning salvation after the pending apocalypse<sup>23</sup> only through

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<sup>20</sup> *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*, 74. *Armageddon*, defined as, biblical reference to place where the last, decisive battle between forces of good and evil is to be fought before Judgement Day.

<sup>21</sup> *A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. 31 October 1995, 1-3.

<sup>22</sup> *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*, 927. *Nostradamus*, defined as, a French astrologer, Michel de Notredame (1503-1566), known for predictions that have been interpreted in many forms as certain events occurred through the centuries and into the present era.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 64. *Apocalypse*, defined as, Judeo-Christian writings (c. 200 B.C. – c. A.D. 300) depicting symbolically the ultimate destruction of evil and triumph of good.

the Aum beliefs.<sup>24</sup> Ashara stated that salvation was possible only through his teaching as “the Spirit of Truth, His Holiness the Master the Shoko Asahara” or the “Supreme Master.” He often announced bizarre predictions such as:

“From now until the year 2000, a series of violent phenomena filled with fear that are too difficult to describe will occur. Japan will turn into wasteland as a result of a nuclear weapons attack. This will occur from 1996 through January 1998. An alliance centering on the United States will attack Japan. In large cities in Japan, only one-tenth of the population will be able to survive. Nine out of ten people will die.”<sup>25</sup>

Shoko Asahara  
Aum Shinrikyo  
1993

Asahara had been predicting the apocalypse for some time. Japanese government officials reported that Asahara published a 1989 treatise on Armageddon and described a worldwide calamity based upon a war between Japan and the United States which would start sometime in 1997. By the early 1990s, Asahara published numerous predictions and claims of a pending world war by 1997 and a catastrophic reduction in the world population. In 1994, Asahara presented a public sermon from the Aum Shinrikyo headquarters in Tokyo that claimed the Aum Shinrikyo were victims of “poison gas attacks” by Japanese and U.S. military aircraft. Alleging attacks since 1988, he stated, “the use of poison gases such as sarin were clearly indicated. The hour of my death has been foretold. The gas phenomenon has already happened. Perhaps the nuclear bomb will come next.”<sup>26</sup>

Table 1-1. “Aum Shinrikyo and Selected Events 1984-1995” provides a chronology of key activities in the expansion and influence of the Aum Shinrikyo cult leading to the March 1995 sarin attack, as well as events immediately after the attack.

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<sup>24</sup> *Aum Shinrikyo: Beliefs of the Group*, 6-7, available from <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/aums.html>; Internet; accessed 6 January 2005.

<sup>25</sup> *A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. 31 October 1995, 3-4; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995\\_rpt/aum/part03.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995_rpt/aum/part03.htm); Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

**Table 1-1. Aum Shinrikyo and Selected Events 1984-1995**

Date	Event
<i>Note:</i>	<i>Selected events were not a collated analysis prior to the March 20, 1995 sarin attack on Tokyo subway passengers.</i>
1984	Asahara forms Aum Shinsen-no kai Company for book publishing and yoga training center. [Sen, Part 8]
1987	Company changes name to “Aum Shinrikyo.” [Sen, Part 8]
1989	Parents and family members of Aum Shinrikyo recruits complain to law enforcement officers that Aum Shinrikyo was kidnapping and physically assaulting recruits and family members. [Sen, Part 8]
Nov 1989	Mr. Sakamoto, a lawyer representing anti-Aum Shinrikyo groups, kidnapped and murdered along with his wife and one-year old son. [After the 1995 Tokyo attack, Aum members confess to crime and families’ remains are found.] [Sen, Part V, p.1]
Aug 1989	Aum Shinrikyo recognized as religious corporation by Tokyo Metropolitan Government. [Sen, Part 8]
Feb 1990	Asahara and some Aum Shinrikyo members run for governmental offices in Lower House [Congress]; none elected to office. [Sen, Part 8]
Oct 1990	Aum Shinrikyo members found guilty in Japanese court of violating the Utilization of Land Planning Act. [Sen, Part V, p.1]
Oct 1992	Aum Shinrikyo “medical mission” sent to Zaire to obtain sample of Ebola virus. [Sen, Part 8]
ca. <sup>27</sup> 1993	Aum Shinrikyo begins research into and production of chemical agents. [Sen, Part V, p.1]
Jun 1993	Aum Shinrikyo purchases 500,000-acre sheep ranch in Western Australia. [Sen, Part 8]
Jun 1993	Local residents (approximately 100 people) complain to officials in Koto Ward of Tokyo about noxious fumes emitting from building believed to be affiliated with Aum Shinrikyo. [After the 1995 Tokyo sarin attack, Aum members tell Japanese officials that Aum Shinrikyo dispersed anthrax bacilli at their Tokyo headquarters during this 1993 period.] [Sen, Part V, p.1]
Sep 1993	Asahara and 26 members visit ranch in Australia. [Sen, Part 8]
Sep 1993	Two Aum Shinrikyo members plead guilty to charge of carrying dangerous chemicals on an airplane in Perth, Australia. [Sen, Part V, p.1]

<sup>27</sup> ca., that is *circa*: about; approximately.



Apr 1994	Aum Shinrikyo members visit Australia to investigate possibility of extracting uranium. [Sen, Part 8]
Jun 1994	Aum Shinrikyo purchase a MI-17 helicopter from Russia. [Sen, Part 8]
Jun 1994	231 people in seven towns in western Japan (Nara prefecture) suffer rash and eye irritations from unknown source. [Sen, Part 8]
Jun 1994	Sarin chemical agent attack in Matsumoto kills seven people and injures over 200 people. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Jul 1994	Aum Shinrikyo sell sheep ranch in Australia at a financial loss. [Sen, Part 8]
Jul 1994	Aum Shinrikyo begins manufacturing AK-74 rifles. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Nov 1994	Aum Shinrikyo members break into Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department building in order to steal driver license data. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Dec 1994	Residents complain repeatedly of peculiar odors from the Aum Shinrikyo's Kamikuishiki [north of Tokyo] complex. [Sen, Part 8]
Dec 1994	Aum Shinrikyo members break into Hiroshima Factory of the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in order to steal technical documents on weapons such as tanks and artillery. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Dec 1994	Aum Shinrikyo's "Home Affairs Ministry" head Tomomitsu Niimi sprays Tadahiro Hamaguchi with VX nerve agent; man dies ten days later. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Jan 1995	Niimi attacks Hiruki Nagaoka, leader of the Association of the Victims of Aum Shinrikyo, with VX nerve gas; Nagaoka survives. [Sen, Part 8]
Feb 1995	A village office administrator kidnapped and killed by drug injection; his body is burned in microwave incinerator and remains discarded. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Feb 1995	An Aum Shinrikyo follower pharmacist, Otarō Ochida, is hanged in Aum Shinrikyo facility; his body is burned in microwave incinerator and remains discarded. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
ca. Mar 1995	Aum Shinrikyo members assist in firebombing attack of Aum Shinrikyo headquarters in effort to inspire public sympathy for the cult just before the Tokyo sarin attack. [Sen, Part V, p.2]
Mar 5, 1995	Eleven people hospitalized from strange fumes in the Keihin Kyuko train line in Yokohama. [Sen, Part 8]
Mar 15, 1995	Three attaché cases containing liquid, fans, vents, and batteries are discovered in Kasun-dgaseki subway station in Tokyo. [Sen, Part 8]
<b>Mar 20, 1995</b>	Twelve people die and up to 5500 people injured from sarin agent release in five subway trains of Tokyo subway system.
Mar 30, 1995	Director of National Police Agency is shot. [Sen, Part 8]
Apr 4, 1995	Odors noticed from suspected Aum Shinrikyo location in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo. [Sen, Part 8]

Apr 11, 1995	Twenty people complain of sore throats and foul odor on Keihin line in Yokohama. [Sen, Part 8]
Apr 19, 1995	500 people hospitalized due to fumes in the Yokohama railway system. [Sen, Part 8]
Apr 21, 1995	27 people overcome by fumes in a store near the Yokohama rail station. [Sen, Part 8]
Apr 23, 1995	Hideo Murai, Aum Shinrikyo member in charge of the “Science and Technology Ministry” stabbed to death in front of Aum Shinrikyo headquarters.
May 5, 1995	Two bags of “poison gas” found in the men’s restroom in the Shinjuku subway station in Tokyo. [Sen, Part 8]
May 16, 1995	Parcel bomb explodes at office of Tokyo’s Governor; one aide is wounded. [Sen, Part 8]
Jul 4, 1995	Poison gas found in women’s restroom on the Hibiya line, Kayaba-Cho subway station and in men’s restroom of Shinjuku station in Tokyo. [Sen, Part 8]
<i>Note:</i>	<i>During weeks and months following the March 20, 1995 sarin attack, several of the Aum Shinrikyo leadership [including Asahara, were arrested. Hearings, trials, and convictions are not included in this table.</i>

**Sources:**

U.S. Congress. Senate. Senate Government Affairs Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. *Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. Staff Statement 31 October 1995. Available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995\\_rpt/aum/index.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995_rpt/aum/index.html); Internet; Accessed 7 January 2005.

U.S. Congress. Senate. *Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. Available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995\\_rpt/aum/part05.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995_rpt/aum/part05.htm) [table code Sen, Part V]; Internet; Accessed 7 January 2005.

*Ibid.*, [table code Sen, Part 8].

## **Planning and Preparation: Matsumoto – Sarin in the Air**

Almost one year before the 1995 Tokyo sarin attack, the industrial and tourist city of Matsumoto, Japan experienced a sarin chemical attack in one of its residential neighborhoods. Sometime during the early evening hours of June 27, 1994, Aum Shinrikyo cult members used a converted truck to disperse sarin toward a group of houses, apartment buildings, and dormitory.

About 11:00 p.m., the local police and fire department started to receive calls for assistance from frightened residents. Residents, disoriented and ill when firefighters or policemen arrived, were transported to the hospital. Casualties mounted as the police used loudspeakers to warn local citizens what they thought was a toxic gas leak. Emergency response and medical treatment and evacuation continued throughout the night. However, by the early

morning hours, six people had died, and another person would die that same day.<sup>28</sup> Over 500 hundred people<sup>29</sup> were transported to hospital facilities with about 50 people admitted for medical care. Over 250 people received outpatient treatment.<sup>30</sup>

Japanese authorities conducted a special investigation of the attack, or “accident” as the incident was initially called, and within a week confirmed that sarin had been identified by gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) results. At the time, no evidence identified a link to incriminate the Aum Shinrikyo cult. Nonetheless, the incident signaled the escalation of a known threat and demonstrated the danger of a chemical attack using sarin.

The Aum Shinrikyo terrorist team improvised a dissemination system within a truck to vent sarin vapor during an approximate 20-minute period. A light breeze allowed the sarin to drift through open windows or doorways to spread over an area about 800 by 750 meters. Most of the sarin effects occurred within an area of about 400 by 300 meters.<sup>31</sup>

Of note, emergency response workers were affected by the sarin too. Of the over 50 rescue workers operating at the attack site, 18 workers experienced negative effects. One rescue worker was admitted to the hospital. Although other workers did not seek medical assistance at the time, they displayed mild symptoms that included eye pain, darkness of vision, nausea, vomiting, headache, mucous discharge from the nose, narrowing field of vision, sore throat, fatigue, or shortness of breath. Physical examinations conducted three weeks after the attack on rescue workers identified no remaining abnormal symptoms.<sup>32</sup>

During subsequent investigations of the Matsumoto incident and the operations of the Aum Shinrikyo cult, law enforcement authorities determined the reason for the attack. The cult wanted to slow or stop a civil lawsuit over real estate. The three judges sitting on the legal panel resided in a dormitory of this neighborhood. Not wanting to risk a legal decision against the cult, the Aum Shinrikyo decided to stop the judges from making any decision by attacking them, and others in the area, with a vapor of sarin nerve agent.

## The Decision to Attack Tokyo

Hindsight demonstrates clearly the significant intent and capability of the Aum Shinrikyo to produce and use chemical agents against people they believed to be threats to their cult.<sup>33</sup> The

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<sup>28</sup> Chemical & Biological Arms Control Institute, *The Matsumoto Incident: Sarin Poisoning in a Japanese Residential Community*, (Fall 1994), 2 and 3; available from [http://www.cbaci.org/pubs/fact\\_sheets/matsumoto.html](http://www.cbaci.org/pubs/fact_sheets/matsumoto.html); Internet; accessed 9 February 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Kyle B. Olson, *Aum Shinrikyo: Once and Future Threat?*, Center for Disease Control, Emerging Infectious Diseases (July-August 2000), 1; available from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol5no4/olson.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005.

<sup>30</sup> *Chemical Terrorism in Japan: The Matsumoto and Tokyo Incidents*, 1; available at <http://www.opcw.org/resp/html/japan.html>; Internet; accessed 22 December 2004.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Nakajima, T; S Sato; H Morita; and N Yanagisawa, Operational & Environmental Medicine Online, “*Sarin Poisoning of a Rescue Team in the Matsumoto Sarin Incident in Japan*,” (vol 54, 1997), 1; available from <http://oem.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/54/10/697>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2005.

<sup>33</sup> *A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. 31 October 1995, 11. Reports link Aum Shinrikyo with chemical nerve agent VX attacks in December 1994 and January 1995. In one incident the victim died, and in the other incident the victim was in a coma for several weeks but survived.

notoriety of the Matsumoto incident was just one in a series of chemical agent incidents. Some reports indicate Aum Shinrikyo first attempted to buy sarin as early as 1988 from an alleged weapons smuggler or later from contacts in the former Soviet Union. Eventually, the Aum Shinrikyo leadership decided to develop their own capability for producing sarin. Scientists recruited into the Aum Shinrikyo developed and produced small amounts of sarin in late 1993 and into 1994. A facility called Satyan 7 [or Satian Building No.7] was built with Aum funds to mass produce sarin. Several million dollars, scientists, and skilled workers created a high-quality facility with computer-controlled reactors and industrial packaging equipment to automatically package specified amounts of sarin and seal the bags.<sup>34</sup> However, based on a chemical agent production accident in 1994, the facility was not used in any mass production. Scientists continued to experiment with precursor chemicals to manufacture small amounts of sarin measured in grams or kilograms. Notwithstanding, the Aum Shinrikyo sustained an aim to have a capability for producing tons of sarin.

Japanese law enforcement organizations continued investigations on several incidents and gathered information that indicated the Aum Shinrikyo might be involved in incidents involving chemical attacks. However, the Japanese Constitution and laws protecting recognized religious organizations prevented Japanese authorities from certain levels of detailed inquiry or direct action against the Aum Shinrikyo. Reports and allegations continued to indicate Aum Shinrikyo involvement in several criminal actions, and newspaper editorials suggested an Aum Shinrikyo link to the Matsumoto incident.

Eventually, Japanese police linked the Aum Shinrikyo to crime scene evidence involving a kidnapping and murder. Based on this information, police used this linkage to obtain a search warrant to enter the Kamikuishiki compound of the Aum Shinrikyo. In planning the raid, police were aware of suspicious reports about facilities on the compound and possible chemical agent manufacturing. When policemen coordinated with the Japanese Self Defense Force (JDSF) [military forces] for contingencies in chemical protective measures, members of Aum Shinrikyo inside the JDSF alerted the Aum Shinrikyo leadership of the planned raid on the cult compound.

Shoko Asahara, as the leader of the Aum Shinrikyo, decided to take an immediate preemptive action by conducting a major chemical nerve agent sarin attack. The intention was to distract police and prevent the raid on the Kamikuishiki compound.<sup>35</sup>

## **Tokyo – Recipe for Disaster**

The five terrorists selected to conduct the actual attacks rehearsed at the Aum Shinrikyo's Kamikuishiki compound near Mt. Fugi. In the early morning hours of March 20, 1995, they used umbrellas with a sharpened tip to practice piercing plastic bags filled with water. Preliminary contingency training for such an event may have spanned several days or weeks, but the decision to attack, final checks, and rehearsals were conducted within hours of the attack. After the final rehearsal period and coordination at the compound, they were issued

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<sup>34</sup> Nerve Agent: GB (Sarin), 8 and 9; available from <http://cbwinform.com/Chemical/OPNerve/GB.shtml>; Internet; accessed 14 February 2005.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 9 and 10.

hypodermic needles filled with an antidote for nerve agent symptoms if they experienced sarin effects from the attack.<sup>36</sup>

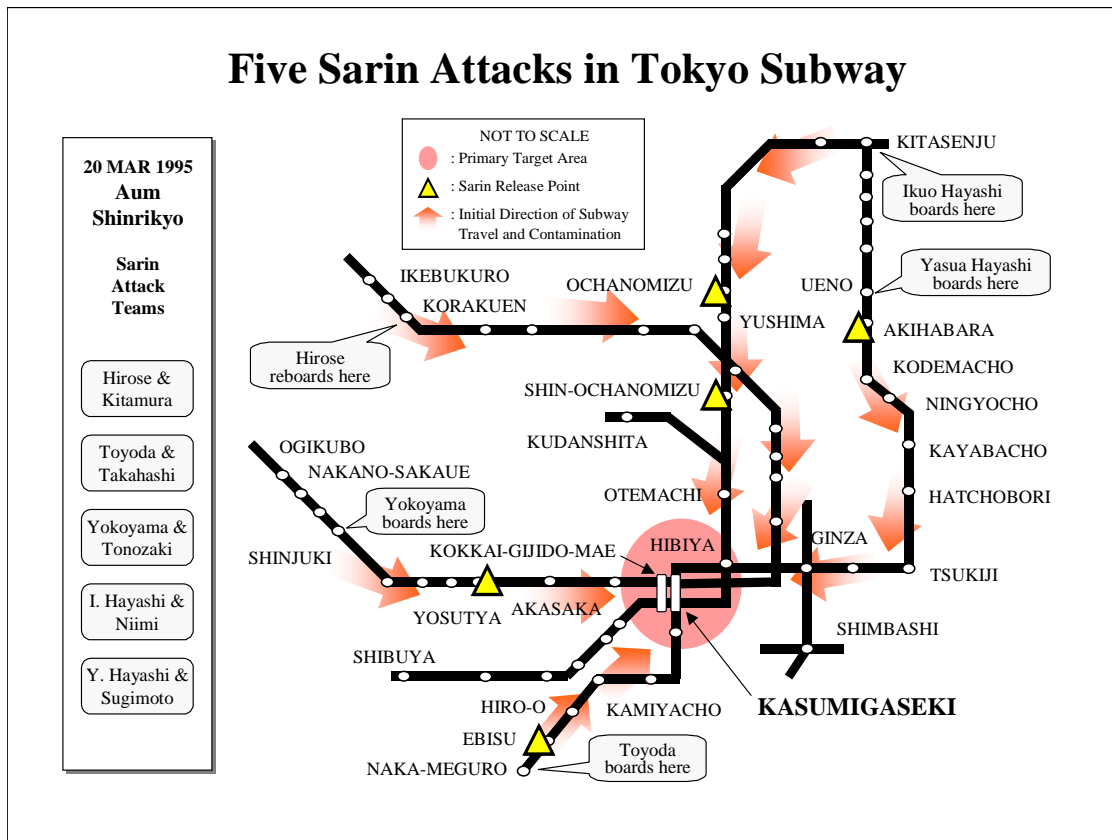


Figure 1-6. Five Sarin Attacks in Tokyo Subway

## The Sarin Attack

Five two-person teams conducted a nearly simultaneous attack on thousands of passengers of the Tokyo subway system. One attacker and one automobile driver comprised each of the five teams. Four of the subway rider-attackers carried two sarin packages and one subway rider-attacker carried three packages. Each of the packages held about 20 ounces of sarin nerve agent.<sup>37</sup> Fortunately, the sarin was only about 30 percent pure in its concentration. This dilution of the sarin was a significant factor in limiting the number of casualties in attacks about to occur in the Tokyo subway system.

The morning rush of downtown Tokyo had already started with thousands of people using the public subway system to reach their places of business and appointments. The five teams

<sup>36</sup> Murakami, Haruki, *Underground* (New York: Vintage International, 2001), 10-11.

<sup>37</sup> *Chemical Terrorism in Japan: The Matsumoto and Tokyo Incidents*, 1; available from <http://www.opcw.org/resp/html/japan.html>; Internet; accessed 22 December 2004.

departed from Aum Shinrikyo facilities and drove to designated subway stations selected for their respective entry to the several subway lines.

Masato Yokoyama and Kiyotaka Tonozaiki were assigned the objective of attacking the Marunouchi Line. On the way to the subway station, Yokoyama bought a newspaper and wrapped the sarin packages to disguise the weapon. Wearing a wig and fake glasses, Yokoyama boarded the Shinjuku subway at 07:39 a.m. as the train headed southeast along a route to Ikebukuro. He poked his sarin packages as the subway approached the Yotsuya Station. His poking released sarin from only one of the two packages. Yokoyama departed the subway car and went immediately to a rest room and washed his umbrella tip with water. He met Tonozaiki in the waiting automobile<sup>38</sup> and departed the area.

By 08:30 a.m., this subway train reached the end of the line at Ikebukuro and started a return trip along the line. At the Ikebukuro Station, the train passengers were evacuated and a search of the train did not identify anything suspicious. As the train resumed the subway route, passengers were feeling unpleasant and reported a strange object in one of the cars.

Meanwhile on the Hibiya Line, Yasuo Hayashi and Shigeo Sugimoto were about to start their attack from the Ueno Station. As Sugimoto drove the automobile to the subway station, Hayashi wrapped the sarin packages, three packages in this case, in newspaper. Hayashi boarded the subway at 07:43 a.m. and once the train was underway, dropped the packages on the floor. He punctured the packages with his umbrella tip at the Akihabara Station, and departed the subway train to meet the waiting Sugimoto and automobile. They returned to the local Aum Shinrikyo headquarters. As the sarin started to evaporate or came in contact with people, a series of subway stations experienced casualties as the subway train continued its route. Sarin effects were most significant along a route of five stations. This was the most disastrous of the five attacks with eight deaths and 275 people with serious injuries.<sup>39</sup>

Kenichi Hirose and Koichi Kitamura also attacked the Marunouchi Line. Hirose wrapped the sarin packages in a sports tabloid, and boarded the subway about 07:45 a.m. His apprehension and mounting tension caused him to depart a subway car and stand on the subway platform for a brief moment. He reboarded a train car and as the subway approached the Ochanomizu Station, he dropped the sarin package on the subway car floor and poked the package with his umbrella tip. He departed the subway and linked up with Kitamura.

Before entering the automobile, Hirose rinsed the umbrella tip with bottled water and tossed the item in the trunk of the car. Even with these simplistic decontamination precautions, Hirose started to show symptoms of nerve agent poisoning. He injected himself with an antidote, and subsequently required additional emergency care at the local Aum Shinrikyo headquarters. The attack at this subway line caused one passenger death and 358 serious injuries.<sup>40</sup>

The Chyoda Line was the attack objective of Ikuo Hayashi and Tomomitsu Niimi. Enroute to the station, the team purchased newspapers to wrap and camouflage the sarin packages. Hiyashi boarded the southwest bound subway about 07:48 a.m. Wearing a surgical mask often worn by citizens to reduce the spread of colds during this season, he looked around the

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<sup>38</sup> Murakami, Haruki, *Underground*, 104-106.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-145.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-61.

subway car as he prepared to release the sarin. Dropping the packages by his foot, he poked the packages several times with the umbrella. Although only one of the two sarin packages was punctured, casualties at this site eventually totaled two deaths and 231 people with serious injuries. Hayashi departed the train at the Shin-ochanomizu Station and met Niimi in a waiting automobile. Both terrorists returned to the local Aum Shinrikyo headquarters.<sup>41</sup>

The fifth attack started at the Ebisu Station of the Hibiya Line when Toru Toyoda punctured his two sarin packages with an umbrella tip. He had been driven from the local Aum Shinrikyo headquarters to the Naka-meguro Station by Katsuya Takahashi. Toyoda departed the subway station at 07:59 a.m., sat down in a subway car, and dropped his sarin packages on the floor. Leaving the train immediately after puncturing the packages, he met the automobile and returned to the Aum Shinrikyo headquarters. During this trip, Toyoda displayed symptoms of sarin poisoning, but did not experience any permanent effects. This attack resulted in one death and 532 seriously injured people.<sup>42</sup>

Table 1-2. “Timeline of Sarin Attack in Tokyo Subway (1995)” presents the nearly simultaneous attacks along five subway lines trains on three major subway lines of the network within a 20-minute period, as well as the mass confusion and anxiety as the emergency incident of unknown origin defined into an attack with a chemical agent. Emergency response technicians, transportation system workers, and law enforcement officials were quickly overwhelmed as casualties surpassed any normal triage capability at the attack sites or the several local hospitals.

Lack of timely communication or protocols for combined emergency response to a verify a chemical agent attack; effective command and control of civil and government organizations in the response effort; quarantine of effected areas, equipment, and people; and slow public announcement of the sarin threat further complicated the response and allowed additional people to be contaminated.

<b>Table 1-2. Timeline of Sarin Attack in Tokyo Subway (1995)</b>	
<b>Chronology</b>	<b>March 20, 1995 Selected Events Sequence</b>
07:39-07:59	Five Aum Shinrikyo members each enter a separate subway train in Tokyo subway system with sarin packets. [ZH, 2]
07:39	Yokoyama boards Shinjuka train, and punctures one packet at Yottsuya Station. [WE, 4]
07:43	Hayashi Yasuo boards southwest bound train at Ueno Station, and punctures packets at Akihabara Station. [WE, 5]

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 9, 60.

<sup>42</sup> Murakami, Haruki, *Underground*, 119-120.

ca. <sup>43</sup> 07:45	Hirose boards westbound Marunouchi train, and punctures packets at Ochanomizu Station. [WE, 4]
07:48	Hayashi Ikuo boards southwest bound Chiyoda train, and punctures packet at Shin-ochanomizu Station. [WE, 3]
07:59	Toyoda boards northeast bound Hibiya train, and punctures packets at Ebisu Station. [WE, 4]
ca. 08:00	Five near simultaneous attacks release sarin in subway train cars. [CM, 12]
ca. 08:00	Passenger at Kodenmacho Station kicks packet from train onto the platform. Packet leaks to form puddle. [ZH, 2]
ca. 08:00	Five subway trains converge on Kasumigaseki Station near the center of Tokyo's government offices. [CM, 8]
08:09	First emergency call arrives at Tokyo Metropolitan Fire Department.
08:09-09:10	Numerous emergency calls arrive at Tokyo Metropolitan Fire Department from fifteen different subway stations. [CM, 17]
08:10	Passenger on southwest bound train presses emergency stop button. Several train passengers collapse onto the platform when the train arrives at the Tsukiji Station. [ZH, 2]
ca. 08:10	Train staff make progressive announcements to train passengers, "sick passenger...explosion occurred at Tsukiji...Tsukiji next stop...Evacuate, Evacuate, Evacuate." [CM, 12]
08:16	St. Luke's Hospital notified of a subway incident.
08:17	First report of "fumes." [ZH, 2]
08:20	First report to Tokyo emergency switchboard with "foul odor" at Kamiyacho Station. [CM, 26]
08:26	"Bad smell" noticed by several passengers at Nakano-sakaue Station of Marunouchi line.
08:28	First victims arrive on foot at St. Luke's Hospital
ca. 08:30	Train is evacuated and searched at the Ikebukuro Station. No packets are discovered and train resumes schedule. [ZH, 2]
08:32-09:27	Train at Ikebukuro Station departs on return route, complete route and returns to Ikebukuro Station.
08:33	Fire Department emergency squad receives call of six passengers collapsing at Nakano Sakaue station. [CM, 26]
08:35	Hibiya line stops all service.
08:38	Train reaches Ogikubo Station terminal point on Marunouchi line, boards additional passengers, and starts route in opposite direction.

<sup>43</sup> ca., that is *circa*: about; approximately.



ca. 08:45-09:15	During this period, train staff removes packets at Hongo-san-chome Station and mops train car floor. [ZH, 2]
ca. 08:40	First ambulances with casualties arrive at St. Luke's Hospital. [ZH, 2]
08:44	National Police Agency (NPA) convinced of major incident in subway system and significant response required. [CM, 13]
08:50	Emergency medical sites are established on outside subway stations. [ZH, 2]
ca. 09:00	Police start to block access to subways that are not already closed by subway staff. [CM, 26]
ca. 09:00	Tokyo Metropolitan Fire Department establishes emergency response operations headquarters at affected subway stations. [CM, 17]
09:20	St. Luke's Hospital declares medical emergency and initiates emergency medical treatment.
09:27	Train on Marunouchi line removed from service. [ZH, 2]
08:40-09:40	St. Luke's Hospital receives surge of 150 patients from sarin attack. [CM, 30]
before 11:00	Police have confirmation that sarin is source of attack, but hospitals and Tokyo Metropolitan Fire Department not officially notified of sarin agent. [CM, 22]
ca. 11:00	Police announce at a press conference that sarin is source of subway attacks. [CM, 23]
ca. 16:50-21:20	Self Defense Force teams decontaminate train cars with bleach and water solution. [CM, 28]
First 24 Hours After the Attack	Ten people die from sarin attack. Nine people died at the incident sites, and one person died just after arrival at a hospital. [PK, 2]
Several Weeks After the Attack	Two more people die from complications of brain damage suffered from the sarin attack. [KP, 2]

## Sources:

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Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia (2004), s.v. "Sarin Gas Attack on the Tokyo Subway." Available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarin\\_gas\\_attack\\_on\\_the\\_Tokyo\\_subway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarin_gas_attack_on_the_Tokyo_subway); Internet; Accessed 22 December 2004. [table code WE]

## Supplemental Vignettes -The Immediate Aftermath

Communications at several levels of civil and government organizations were not effective for public safety and services in a crisis response. Numerous examples arose of civilian, transit authority, and first-responder awareness of a critical problem but displayed a slowness in reporting or coordinating action. Passengers in the trains were the first to observe other passengers with symptoms of illness, or felt sick themselves. The subway train cars had a direct intercommunication system from each car to the train conductor, however, passengers were either not aware of the system or were not willing to be the first to declare a serious problem.

Once the train control center was notified of a critical issue without knowing the full extent of the problem, trains were allowed to continue on their scheduled routes. Three trains continued their operation for a period of time before being pulled from active service. This continuation of service contaminated people and facilities along the train line. Additionally, other station managers and trains were not alerted along the same lines. As more trains and their passengers were attacked, a sluggish alert protocol delayed immediate reactions and effective emergency response. Subway cleaning crews were not aware of the threat when dispatched to clean platform or train car areas which caused some crew personnel to become casualties to the sarin. Due to insufficient training on how to decontaminate an area for this type of agent, some train yard areas were further contaminated.<sup>44</sup>

In contrast to what was contaminated, many factors have been identified that minimized sarin effects in the subway attack, with the dilution of the sarin as a frequently stated reason. The relatively rapid response of emergency treatment and decontamination teams, and an exceptionally powerful air exchange system in the subway stations assisted in reducing the number of casualties.<sup>45</sup>

By evening, fifteen subway stations had been affected by the sarin. Of the three train lines (Marunouchi, Hibiya, and Chiyoda) contaminated with sarin, all service was suspended on the Hibiya line the day of the attack. Nonetheless, regular service resumed the following day. On the Marunouchi and Chiyoda lines, regular service resumed by late afternoon on the same day as the attack, except for the Kasumigaseki Station. This station resumed service on the following day.<sup>46</sup>

## The Terrorists

The court trials and legal proceeding have taken, in some cases, several years to come to a legal decision on criminal charges. The information in Table 1-3. "Current Legal Status – Tokyo Sarin Terrorists," presents the court sentences against the Aum Shinrikyo leader, as

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<sup>44</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation. US-Japan Mass Transit Security Workshop Proceedings and Meetings: January 2002 (March 2002) by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Japanese Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, 9 and 10; available from <http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/12000/12100/12190/>; Internet; accessed 1 February 2005.

<sup>45</sup> Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Commentary No. 60, The Threat of Chemical/Biological Terrorism, August 1995, 2. available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/cbw/com60e.htm>; Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, US-Japan Mass Transit Security Workshop Proceedings and Meetings: January 2002, 33.

well as the sentences against members of the five two-person teams that actually conducted the chemical nerve agent sarin attacks on people in the Tokyo subway system on March 20, 1995. As the judge was reading the court verdict to the cult leader, Asahara smiled, laughed, and later yawned but showed no real emotion to his death sentence.<sup>47</sup>

Documents seized by Japanese police from Aum facilities after the March 1995 Tokyo attack indicate that the apocalypse date predicted by the Aum Shinrikyo cult may have been moved from 1997 to an earlier date of November 1995. Aum Shinrikyo articles in early 1995 contained anti-Japanese and anti-U.S. editorials that included one article questioning assassination of the U.S. President and other assassinations of Japanese officials. The cult claimed that the Japanese government and U.S. military had attacked their compound with “poison gas.” An October 1995 U.S. Senate paper noted an unconfirmed report that the cult may have planned to send sarin packages to locations in the United States.<sup>48</sup>

**Table 1-3. Current Legal Status -- Tokyo Sarin Terrorists**

Name	Court Sentence
Shoko Asahara (Aum Shinrikyo Leader)	Death
Masato Yokoyama (Sarin Attacker)	Death
Kiyotaka Tonozaki (Accomplice-Driver)	Life in Prison
Toru Toyoda (Sarin Attacker)	Death
Katsuya Takahashi (Accomplice-Driver)	<b>Still at Large</b>
Kenichi Hirose (Sarin Attacker)	Death
Koichi Kitamura (Accomplice-Driver)	Life in Prison
Ikuo Hayashi (Sarin Attacker)	Death
Tomomitsu Niimi (Accomplice-Driver)	Death
Yasuo Hayashi (Sarin Attacker)	Death
Shigeo Sugimoto (Accomplice-Driver)	Life in Prison

*Note:* At time of handbook publication, some appeal actions continue on behalf of convicted terrorists.

In determining the motivation of terrorist groups willing to use WMD/E such as sarin, at least six characteristics to consider are: charismatic leadership; no external constituency; apocalyptic vision; presentation as a loner or splinter group; sense of paranoia or grandiosity; and preemptive aggression. Comparing these characteristics to the Aum Shinrikyo, the cult displayed these types of actions and behavior. The Aum Shinrikyo combined intent with capability to conduct attacks using WMD/E.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Court TV’s Crime Library: Criminal Minds and Methods, “Death Sentence,” available from [http://www.crimelibrary.com/terrorists\\_spies/terrorists/prophet/26.html?sect+22](http://www.crimelibrary.com/terrorists_spies/terrorists/prophet/26.html?sect+22); Internet; accessed 18 April 2005.

<sup>48</sup> *A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*. 31 October 1995, 4-6.

<sup>49</sup> Steve Bowman and Helit Barel, *Weapons of Mass Destruction – The Terrorist Threat* RS 20412 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 8 December 1999), 3 and 6; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RS20412.pdf>; Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

Table 1-1. “Aum Shinrikyo and Selected Events 1984-1995,” notes several incidents after the Tokyo sarin attack that included cyanide chemical devices in public facilities, a mail bomb to a Japanese official, and the murder of an Aum Shinrikyo associate in front of an Aum Shinrikyo office. Cult reaction, even after the police raids following the March 20, 1995 subway attack, indicated a number of dedicated cult members using terror as a tactic. Other actions may have involved copy-cat type criminal acts. Three months after the Tokyo subway sarin attack, a commercial airline flight, ANA Flight 857 heading from Tokyo to Hakodate was hijacked using fake sarin containers and explosives.<sup>50</sup>

Law enforcement scrutiny and legal actions on Aum Shinrikyo escalated dramatically after the Tokyo attack. Media coverage and political debate continued to highlight events in this cult, even after the cult changed its name in to “Aleph” in January 2000. Public domain websites maintain chronologies of events and issues.<sup>51</sup>

## The Victims

The number of injured citizens in the Tokyo subway sarin attack totaled about 3800 people with about 1000 persons requiring hospitalization. Using data from one of the several hospitals that treated casualties in the sarin attack, injuries although serious for many people, could have been a much more catastrophic incident. Of 641 victims at that hospital, five were in a critical state. Two of these patients died while three patients fully recovered. Major symptoms were severe convulsions and cardiac arrest.

Many patients with moderate symptoms were primarily eye problems and headaches. 106 people were hospitalized overnight for observation and treatment. Contraction of the pupil of the eye was a most common symptom, while other signs included pain in the eyes, blurred vision, and visual darkness. Shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, muscle weakness, and coughing were other symptoms. Many of the people with mild attack symptoms complained primarily of eye problems. These were treated and released after six hours of observation at the hospital.



Figure 1-7. Triage at Tokyo Subway Exit

(Source: [http://murphyshow.com/images/terror/1995\\_sarintokyo.jpg](http://murphyshow.com/images/terror/1995_sarintokyo.jpg))

<sup>50</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, US-Japan Mass Transit Security Workshop Proceedings and Meetings: January 2002, 21.

<sup>51</sup> *News & Articles on Aum Shinrikyo*, Surfswax Political News; available from [http://news.surfswax.com/politics/files/Aum\\_Shinrikyo.html](http://news.surfswax.com/politics/files/Aum_Shinrikyo.html); Internet; accessed 13 January 2005.

Demographics of this hospital's patient population represented a mix of about 40 percent female and 60 percent male with ages ranging 13 years to 60 years old. Four women were pregnant. Based on follow-up surveys to patients one month after the attack, about 60 percent suffered from some post-incident symptom and remained at about the same levels after three and six months.<sup>52</sup> A separate medical study of rescue team members and police officers exposed to sarin in the Tokyo subway emergency response was conducted about three years after the attack. Although the medical report states that further study of possible other contributing factors was required, the study observed a chronic decline of memory function in the group (rescue team members and police officers) when compared with a control group.<sup>53</sup>

## Case Discussion Questions

### Intelligence and Threat Warning?

- What activities preceding the March 1995 sarin attack might have indicated the intent of the Aum Shinrikyo cult to use WMD/E against a civilian population?
- Did Aum Shinrikyo announcements state or indicate a security risk to U.S. national interests?
- How were subway cleaning crews and first-responder emergency treatment personnel warned and protected initially from sarin contamination?

### Security Measures in Effect?

- How did Japanese national laws relating to religious groups restrict investigative procedures by law enforcement organizations?
- What centralized command and control procedures existed among Japanese civil government-military organizations for emergency response to a catastrophic incident?

### Terrorist Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures?

- What precedents in domestic terrorism, using chemical agents, had occurred in Japan that could have focused government awareness and counter actions?
- What type of rehearsals did the teams conduct for the attack?
- What was the terrorist rationale for using small packets to deliver the sarin?
- How could terrorists have increased mass casualty effects as even more devastating?

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<sup>52</sup> Ohbu, Sadayoshi; Akira Yamashina; Nobukatsu Takasu; Tatsuo Yamaguchi; Tetsuo Murai; Kanzoh Nakano; Yukio Matsui; Ryuzo Mikamai; Kenji Sakurai; and Shigeaki Hinohara, *Sarin Poisoning on Tokyo Subway*, 1 to 4; available from <http://www.sma.org/smj/97jun3.htm>; Internet; accessed 22 December 2004.

<sup>53</sup> Nishiwaki, Yuji; Kazuhiko Maekawa; Yasutaka Ogawa; Nozomu Asukai; Masayasu Minami; Kazuyuki Omae; and the Sarin Health Effects Study Group, *Effects of Sarin on the Nervous System in Rescue Team Staff members and Police Officers 3 Years after the Tokyo Subway Sarin Attack*, 1-7; available from <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/members/2001/109p1169-1173nishiwaki/nishiwaki-full.html>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005.

- How did the terrorist group structure itself, communicate, and operate during the phases of final planning, rehearsals, and execution of the sarin attack?

## Assessment

A U.S. Congressional Research Service study on the terrorist threat and weapons of mass destruction spotlighted several interesting aspects of the Aum Shinrikyo and its Tokyo sarin attack. In a developmental period of several years in the early 1990s, the cult experimented and attempted to acquire various forms of WMD/E. Recruiting for expertise included Aum Shinrikyo activities at universities with particular emphasis on physics, engineering, and computer departments.<sup>54</sup> A worldwide cult membership reported in the tens of thousands, an asset inventory net worth in the range of \$1 billion, and connections with diverse civilian, academic, and international business interests provided research facilities, equipment, and scientific expertise for an ominous capability. Although initiatives to acquire biological weapons appear to have failed, the Matsumoto and Tokyo attacks demonstrated a clear purpose of causing mass casualties with a cult-manufactured chemical nerve agent.

After the Tokyo attack, assessment by the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation had very little information on the Aum Shinrikyo. One immediate concern noted by US officials in Tokyo was the fact that Aum Shinrikyo had an office several blocks from Times Square in downtown New York City. No illegal activities were uncovered when searching these premises with a warrant. Nonetheless, information appears to note a significant failure to identify this emergent threat to the USA until well after the Tokyo sarin attack.<sup>55</sup>

In Japan, contemporary laws and legal system of Japan provided special protections to recognized religious groups and placed significant constraints on law enforcement surveillance and investigation, even when incidents and allegations indicated a very suspicious manner of cult operations.

At the time of the Tokyo attack, the Matsumoto attack was still officially labeled as an “accident.” Suspicion of linking Aum Shinrikyo and sarin use at Matasumoto was increasing by late 1994, and a newspaper story in early 1995 suggested Aum Shinrikyo involvement.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, law enforcement investigation was constrained.

The Matsumoto incident alerted emergency responders, police, and physicians that another sarin attack was possible or even likely to occur. Timely information sharing and interdependence would be key in any future incident. At least one physician who had treated patients in Matsumoto called hospitals in Tokyo on March 20, 1995 to alert them to the fact that the symptoms he was seeing on television matched those he had observed in the Matsumoto sarin exposure. He assisted hospital medical staff near the subway sites to a correct diagnosis of sarin attack. Similarly, a hospital involved in the Matsumoto incident

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<sup>54</sup> Robyn, Pangi, *Consequence Management in the 1995 Sarin Attacks on the Tokyo Japanese Subway System*. BCSIA Discussion Paper 2002-4, ESDP Discussion Paper ESDP-2002-01, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, February 2002, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Judith Miller, Stephen Engelberg, and William Broad, *Germs: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 152-153, 161.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

faxed information about sarin treatment to the hospitals in Tokyo. As the news reports provided live coverage of the Tokyo victims, a Japanese manufacturer of a critical medicine for treatment took the initiative to send a supply of the item to Tokyo without waiting for a government request.<sup>57</sup>

The use of a chemical weapon in a terror attack complicates the issues of public safety and emergency response. Issues and actions can quickly compound when chemical agent use is suspected. Special care medical facilities must be established, protection of first responder personnel must be adequate and timely; secondary contamination of people, equipment, and facilities must be limited; and anxiety can erupt into chaos once a chemical agent is confirmed. During the Tokyo sarin attack, over 5000 people arrived at hospitals, but only about 20 percent of those people displayed symptoms of sarin poisoning.<sup>58</sup>



Figure 1-8. **Emergency Response at Tokyo Subway**  
(Source: <http://www.cbirf.usmc.mil/background.htm> )

For the Tokyo attack, the Japanese Self Defense Forces were the only organization with decontamination expertise. Yet, the role of this military force was primarily limited by protocol to the decontamination of the trains after incident recovery operations were complete.<sup>59</sup> Within two hours of the subway attack, several Japanese military experts arrived at Tokyo hospitals to advise and assist on patient treatment.<sup>60</sup>

A recent Central Intelligence Agency report states that terrorist attacks in the future would likely be “small-scale, incorporating improvised delivery means, or easily produced or obtained chemicals, toxins, or radiological substances.”<sup>61</sup> Small-scale chemical weapons can be a weapon-of-choice by terrorists given the sure knowledge of the anxiety and other

<sup>57</sup> Nerve Agent: GB (Sarin), 11. available from <http://cbwinfo.com/Chemical/OPNerve/GB.shtml>; Internet; accessed 14 February 2005.

<sup>58</sup> Dana A. Shea, *Terrorism: Background on Chemical, Biological, and Toxin Weapons and Options for Lessening Their Impact*, RL 31669 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 1 December 2004), 5 and 6; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL31669.pdf>; Internet; accessed 7 January 2005.

<sup>59</sup> Pang, *Consequence Management in the 1995 Sarin Attacks on the Tokyo Japanese Subway System*, 39.

<sup>60</sup> Nerve Agent: GB (Sarin), 11; available from <http://cbwinfo.com/Chemical/OPNerve/GB.shtml>; Internet; accessed 14 February 2005.

<sup>61</sup> *Terrorists Interested in Unconventional Weapons, CIA Says*, November 23, 2004; available from <http://www.usembassy.it/file2004/alia/a4112901.htm> and [http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/721\\_reports/july\\_dec2003.htm](http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/721_reports/july_dec2003.htm); Internet; Accessed 7 January 2005.

psychological stress the attack threat or use can produce. Health concerns by the general population include the awareness that attack can occur without warning; knowledge that a deliberate terrorist decision, rather than a natural disaster, can cause the attack; incomplete or unfamiliar information of actual health threats can increase anxiety, as can the potential long-term effects of a chemical weapon on current or future generations.<sup>62</sup>

Some senior U.S. Defense Department leaders believe that WMD/E attack against civilian populations or military forces and infrastructure is a consideration of “when” rather than a possibility of “if” terrorists will use chemical or other means of WMD/E.

**“...they [terrorists] inevitably will get their hands on them [weapons of mass destruction] and they will not hesitate to use them.”<sup>63</sup>**

Honorable Donald Rumsfeld  
U.S. Secretary of Defense  
2002

A separate study by the Office of the Secretary of Defense assessed the potential for a chemical attack to cause significant delays in the deployment of military forces and to negatively impact on mission success. Findings indicate that significant delays in force projection could occur and mission conduct could be impaired.<sup>64</sup>

Whether the terrorist target is a civilian or military population and infrastructure, this case study provides insight to the multi-dimensional requirements to combat terrorism that include international and national policy and law enforcement issues, intelligence constraints and restrictions in a democratic society, use of military forces in consequence management support of a catastrophic chemical incident, intergovernmental emergency response preparation and readiness, and public awareness of the terrorist and WMD/E threat.

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*Note:* What is sarin? See the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) fact sheet “*Chemical Agent Fact Sheet – Sarin*” appended to this case study. This one-page display provides a definition of sarin and overview of delivery means, production, historical use, function, effects, medical treatment, and other “quick facts.”

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<sup>62</sup> Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers, “*The Effects of Terrorist Attacks and Threats on the Well being of People*,” DEF SEC COM Terrorism Study task Force, 29 July 2003, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Dana A. Shea and Frank Gottron, *Small-scale Terrorist Attacks Using Chemicals and Biological Agents: An Assessment Framework and Preliminary Comparisons*, 6.

<sup>64</sup> Theodore Karasik, *Toxic Warfare*, RAND Project Air Force, Contract F49642-01-C-0003, 2002, 33.



## Chemical Agent Fact Sheet—Sarin

**Sarin** is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, human-made chemical warfare agent. It was originally developed in Germany in the 1930's as a pesticide. Sarin is a nerve agent—it disrupts the functioning of the nervous system. Nerve agents are the most toxic and rapidly acting of all known chemical warfare agents. Sarin is highly toxic in both its liquid and vapor states.



Military gear worn to protect against sarin

**Delivery:** Following release into the air, people can be exposed to sarin through contact with skin or eyes. Sarin can also be inhaled as a gas. Sarin mixes easily with water, and since it is odorless, people would not be aware of sarin in drinking water. Furthermore, sarin in water can be absorbed through the skin.

**Production:** Sarin is made by mixing several commercially available chemicals in the right amounts and in the right sequence. It is debatable how easy it is for the layperson to synthesize sarin. It is somewhat complicated and dangerous to produce.

**Historic Use:** Iraq used sarin in the 1980-1988 war with Iran. The Japanese religious sect, Aum Shinriko, released sarin in Matsumoto in 1994 and the Tokyo subway in 1995. In May 2004, the presence of sarin was detected in the debris of a bomb that exploded in Iraq.

(Sources: CDC, U.S. Army, WHO)

\*National Library of Medicine

### Quick Facts

**Agent Type:** Chemical nerve agent

**Lethality:** High      **Transmission:** None

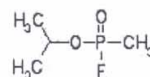
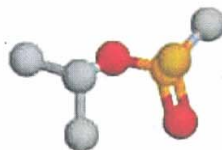
**Treatment:** Antidote, if administered quickly

**Status:** CDC Nerve Agent

**Delivery:** Inhalation, ingestion, absorption

**Mechanism:** Sarin disrupts the ability of the body to regulate nerve impulses. When this happens, the glands and muscles of the body are continually stimulated, leading to system fatigue. The victim will lose control over his bodily functions. Ultimately, the victim will fall into a coma and suffocate.

**Effects:** The first signs of sarin exposure are a runny nose, tightness in the chest, pinpoint pupils, eye pain, and blurred vision. The victim will then experience



Molecular structure of sarin\*

drooling, excessive sweating, coughing, chest pain, diarrhea, increased urination, confusion, drowsiness, weakness, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Exposure to large doses of sarin will result in loss of consciousness, involuntary twitching and jerking, paralysis, coma and eventually, death.

**Treatment:** There are antidotes to sarin, but they must be provided very soon after exposure to be effective. Clothing can retain sarin, so it must be removed. The victim should move quickly to fresh air. As quickly as possible after exposure, the victim should wash thoroughly with soap and water.

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## Murrah Federal Building (1995)

### Chapter 2: Murrah Federal Building Bombing

The truck bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 19, 1995, signaled a horrific escalation of domestic terrorism conducted in the United States homeland.

**“This is the place, after all, where terrorists don’t venture. The Heartland. Wednesday [April 19] changed everything.”<sup>65</sup>**

*The Daily Oklahoman*  
April 20, 1995

This act of domestic terrorism highlights the importance of accurate and timely intelligence on potential terrorist activities and capabilities, while preserving the individual rights and liberties of our democracy. The shock of this devastating attack was much more than physical damage. The psychological impact, both near-term and long-term, propelled each United States citizen into a stark recognition that domestic terrorism truly exists within the nation’s borders. This example of terrorism in a contemporary operational environment illustrates an emergent terrorist trend of mass casualty or mass destruction effects as a terrorist objective.



Figure 2-1. Above, **Overhead View of Murrah Building Damage**<sup>67</sup>

Figure 2-2. Below, **FBI Forensic Sketch and Photograph of Timothy McVeigh**

McVeigh was convicted for the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building.

He was executed June 11, 2001.



<sup>65</sup> Department of Justice, Office of Justice programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *Responding to Terrorism Victims* (October 2000), ix, by Kathryn M. Turman, Director; available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/infores/respterrorism/welcome.html>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2004.

<sup>66</sup> Photo Image; available at <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/lab/org/ipgu.htm>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2004.

This incident was, ultimately, the wanton act of one person. This case study presents an unclassified summary of a calculated strategy and tactics for a specific terrorist act based on U.S. findings in the criminal prosecution of Timothy McVeigh and his co-conspirator.

A primary underlying aim of terrorism is a demoralizing psychological effect on a target population and leaders to erode resolve and enhance other terrorist objectives. This was clearly McVeigh's goal when he selected a government target in the "heart of America."

## **Introduction**

The U.S. Department of Justice provided a concise summary on physical effects and casualties of the bombing. The blast at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building killed 167 men, women, and children and injured 853 others. A volunteer nurse became the 168<sup>th</sup> fatality when she was struck by falling debris during the emergency response. The explosion devastated downtown Oklahoma City. The blast reduced the north face of the Murrah Building to rubble, and caused extensive damage to each of the nine floors as they collapsed into the center. When the dust cleared, one-third of the building lay in ruins. The force of the blast damaged 324 surrounding buildings, overturned automobiles, started fires, shattered windows, and blew out doors in a 50-block area. News reports indicated that the blast was felt 55 miles from the site and registered 6.0 on the Richter scale.

Nineteen children died and thirty children were orphaned in the Murrah Building's collapse. More than 400 individuals were left homeless in the area. When the bomb detonated, about 600 Federal and contract employees and about 250 visitors were in the building. Additionally, 7000 people lost their workplace. Approximately 16,000 people were in the downtown area in Oklahoma City at the time of the explosion. Beyond the physical devastation and death or injury to initial victims, the terrorist attack caused significant psychological and emotional impacts on a much larger population.<sup>68</sup>

## **Learning Objectives**

Learning objectives focus on analyzing case study information in order to synthesize and evaluate the insight of reflective experiences, discern patterns of terrorist method and means, and determine likely trends in future terrorist activities. Comparing and contrasting conditions, circumstances, and options available to the terrorist will enhance the ability to recognize vulnerabilities and identify threats.

The objectives for this case study are:

- Describe intelligence indicators that would have alerted law enforcement to the threat.
- Understand the motivation of Timothy McVeigh for choosing the Murrah Building as a terrorist target of high value, as well as his selection of a symbolic date for the attack.

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<sup>67</sup> Photo Image; available at <http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/pubs/aug01/murrah.jpg>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2004.

<sup>68</sup> Turman, Department of Justice, *Responding to Terrorism Victims*, 1.

- Recognize the domestic terrorist threat to U.S. forces and citizenry in the United States homeland.
- Explain the terrorist organizational structure and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) used for the Murrah Building bombing.
- Deduce a trend for terrorist acts with the objective of an increased combination for mass casualties and mass destruction.

**“Terrorism has now exploded into middle America.”<sup>69</sup>**

Louis J. Freeh  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

### **Case Study Overview - Murrah Federal Building (1995)**

At 9:02 the morning of April 19, 1995 a catastrophic explosion ripped the air in downtown Oklahoma City. A truck bomb instantaneously demolished the entire front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. Tons of crashing concrete and metal disrupted governmental functions and destroyed scores of lives. These innocent Americans included clerks, secretaries, law enforcement officers, credit union employees, citizens applying for Social Security, and children.<sup>70</sup>

The Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was used by various agencies of the United States, including the Agriculture Department, Department of the Army, Defense Department, Federal Highway Administration, General Accounting Office, General Services Administration, Social Security Administration, Housing and Urban Development, Drug Enforcement Administration, Labor Department, Marine Corps, Small Business Administration, Transportation Department, United States Secret Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and Veterans Administration.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Louis J. Freeh, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Congress, House of Representatives; Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime; Opening Statement Before the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, 104th Congress, 3 May 1995, 2; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cur13.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>70</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Timothy James McVeigh, Defendant. The McVeigh Trial’s April 24, 1997 Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government; 3; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/bomb.html>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>71</sup> U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma. Case No. M-95-105-H, United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Terry Lynn Nichols, Defendant. “Terry Nichols Criminal Complaint,” Affidavit; 1995, 2; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cur18.htm>; Internet; accessed 16 February 2004.

The primary preparation for this criminal act began on or about September 13, 1994 and culminated on April 19, 1995 in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.<sup>72</sup>

A chronology of terrorist activities displays an obsessive hate for the U.S. government, and a deliberate methodology for planning, preparing, and executing this terrorist attack.

## Background

Surveying the lifestyle of Timothy McVeigh in the years prior to the bombing, he experienced mixed success at a series of minor jobs. He worked at a fast food restaurant in the fall of 1986 until the spring of 1987. Then he switched jobs and went to work as an armored car driver for a commercial security company in Buffalo, New York from the spring of 1987 to the spring of 1988.

McVeigh joined the U.S. Army in May, 1988 and remained in the Army until late 1991. He was a successful gunner on a mechanized infantry vehicle during the Gulf War and was decorated with several Army awards for actions in combat and commendable service.<sup>73</sup> Yet, McVeigh's dislike for the Federal government was revealing itself in this same period. Some of his discussions with acquaintances related to reading a book and the exploits of a group of well-armed men and women who called themselves "patriots" that sought to overthrow the Federal government by use of force and violence. In one book, a group makes a fertilizer bomb in the back of a truck and detonates it in front of a Federal building in downtown Washington, D.C. during business hours that kills hundreds of people.<sup>74</sup>

As a guard for a commercial security company, he distributed white supremacist pamphlets and a book to co-workers on how to avoid paying taxes, and commented that it would be easy to steal firearms from a military base.<sup>75</sup> From March 1992 to early 1993, McVeigh worked at another commercial security service. He visited his friends Mike and Lori Fortier who lived in Arizona. McVeigh worked at a hardware store in Arizona, and also worked as a security guard. Eventually, he started buying and selling books, as well as survivalist items at numerous gun shows throughout the United States.

McVeigh was fixated on personal rights and individual freedom. He studied history, the U.S. Constitution, and the amendments to the Constitution. He carried them on his person, he carried them in his car, and he carried them in his briefcase. He stacked them in his house, and he displayed them on tables at gun shows.

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<sup>72</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 95-CR-110 United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Timothy James McVeigh and Terry Lynn Nichols, Defendants. "8/95 Grand Jury Indictment of McVeigh and Nichols," Indictment Count One (Conspiracy to Use a Weapon of Mass Destruction); 1995, 1; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cas44.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 2004.

<sup>73</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Timothy James McVeigh, Defendant. The McVeigh Trial's April 24, 1997 Opening Statement by the Defense; 5 and 6; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/bomb.html>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>74</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government; 6 and 7; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/bomb.html>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>75</sup> Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 2001), 113.

He also wrote letters to newspapers with his viewpoint on personal rights and freedoms. He voted as a U.S. citizen. His politics were openly expressed and known to everyone that spent time with him.<sup>76</sup> In touring gun shows throughout the United States, he eventually visited forty of fifty states. As he sold books and survival items at gun shows, he often met people with similar concern about Constitutional rights and the perceived Federal government's zeal in gun control.<sup>77</sup>

McVeigh viewed the Federal raid at Ruby Ridge in 1992 as another incident of government attack on individual freedoms. Incidents between U.S. citizens and Federal agents such as at Ruby Ridge [1992] and Waco [1993] greatly concerned McVeigh. Citizens could have distinctly different beliefs and commitment to how individual rights<sup>78</sup> and obedience to and enforcement of law<sup>79</sup> are expressed in the United States. According to McVeigh's defense attorney at his trial after the Murrah Building bombing, McVeigh was angry about Ruby Ridge. He believed that the ATF had entrapped Randy Weaver into committing a crime so that they could then pressure Weaver into being an informant for the ATF [Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms] in a community in northern Idaho. McVeigh believed that the Federal government had acted very unjustly in the incident that resulted in the death of a Federal agent, the killing of Randy Weaver's wife, and the killing of a ten-year-old boy as he was running towards the Weaver's house. A court jury acquitting Randy Weaver of murder in the Ruby Ridge incident further convinced McVeigh of the correctness of his belief.

McVeigh also strongly opposed to the Brady Bill and gun control, so he wrote angry letters and talked about freedom and citizen's constitutional rights. In McVeigh's mind, the Brady Bill was just the first step to effectively repeal the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment by taking away from people their right to own guns and to protect themselves against abuses of the Federal government.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to his concerns on the Ruby Ridge incident and the Brady Bill, McVeigh became obsessed with the outcome of the Waco, Texas incident between a religious group known as the Branch Davidians and Federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. An attempt to serve a search warrant for illegal weapons resulted in a gunfire exchange that resulted in several deaths and a group of Branch Davidians barricading themselves inside their ranch compound. He traveled to the Waco site and distributed anti-governmental literature. On April 19th, 1993, the United States experienced another tragedy when the siege of the Branch Davidian compound resulted in several deaths and destruction of the compound. McVeigh believed that the Federal government executed 76 people at Waco, including 30 women and 25 children. He believed that the Federal law enforcement at Waco deployed in a military fashion against American citizens and children living as a religious group in a

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<sup>76</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the Defense, 8.

<sup>77</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 121.

<sup>78</sup> "Ruby Ridge Federal Siege, Bibliography" [bibliography on-line]; available from [http://users.skynet.be/terroism/html/usa\\_ruby\\_ridge.htm](http://users.skynet.be/terroism/html/usa_ruby_ridge.htm); Internet; accessed 16 March 2004.

<sup>79</sup> "Waco – Branch Davidian Files," available from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/waco.html>; Internet; accessed 16 March 2004.

<sup>80</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the Defense, 9.

compound, who had committed no crime.<sup>81</sup> McVeigh visited Waco during the siege and went back after the compound's fire and final events of the siege.

As time passed, he became more outraged at the government. McVeigh told people that the U.S. Federal Government had intentionally murdered people at Waco, and described the incident as the government's declaration of war against the American people. He wrote letters declaring that the government had drawn "first blood" at Waco, and predicted there would be a violent revolution against the American government.

McVeigh's anger and hatred of the government kept growing, and in late summer 1994, he told friends that he was done distributing antigovernment propaganda and talking about the coming revolution. He said it was time to take action, and the action he wanted to take was something dramatic, something that would shake up America [United States]. McVeigh expected and hoped that his action would be the "first shot" in a violent, bloody revolution in this country.<sup>82</sup>

### **Planning and Preparation: Oklahoma City Target**

The action he selected was a bombing, and the building he selected was the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. McVeigh had two reasons for bombing that particular building. First, he thought that the ATF agents, whom he blamed for the Waco tragedy, had their offices in that building. Second, McVeigh described the Murrah Federal Building as "an easy target."<sup>83</sup>

McVeigh selected the Murrah Building from a list of sites he developed as potential targets. He wanted his attack to target Federal law enforcement agencies and their employees. He recognized that many innocent people would be injured or killed. Primary targets included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Drug Enforcement Administration. Besides the Oklahoma City site, McVeigh considered locations in Arkansas, Arizona, Missouri, and Texas. Another possible site may have included Washington, D.C. McVeigh considered targeting specific Federal individuals or their family members, but decided that a bombing would cause more notoriety.<sup>84</sup>

The Murrah Building was conveniently located just south of Kansas where McVeigh resided. Its close proximity to an interstate highway (Interstate 35) assured easy access to and egress from the bombing target. The building design allowed for easy delivery or pickup of packages and people due to indented curbing in front of the building, which allowed vehicles to park directly in front of the building. You could drive a truck directly up to the front of the building.<sup>85</sup> McVeigh assessed the damage that would occur based on the extensive amount of

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<sup>81</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the Defense; 8.

<sup>82</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government, 7.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>84</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 167 and 168.

<sup>85</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government, 9.



glass windows in the Murrah Building and considered the probable collateral damage to surrounding structures. He recognized that the open parking lot space across the street from the building may dissipate some concussion from the explosion, but would allow good photograph coverage of a stark, horrifying image. Killing a large number of Federal employees was part of his plan to ensure major media attention.<sup>86</sup>

McVeigh conducted detailed personal reconnaissance of his target and routes of approach and routes of escape.<sup>87</sup> McVeigh memorized his sequence of actions for this bombing, rehearsed his route, and prepared mentally for contingencies such as flat tires or meeting with police.<sup>88</sup>

McVeigh practiced bomb construction and observed bomb effects on a small scale by using a plastic jug and detonating the explosive-packed device at a desert location near a friend's home.<sup>89</sup> The bomb concept McVeigh was planning consisted of more than 5000 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer mixed with about 1200 pounds of liquid nitromethane, 350 pounds of Tovex explosive, and the miscellaneous weight of sixteen 55-gallon drums, for a combined weight of about 7000 pounds.<sup>90</sup> The truck bomb was relatively inexpensive to construct. A truck rental would be about \$250. Fertilizer would cost about \$500. The nitromethane cost about \$3000. A used car for his escape vehicle would cost about \$250. His estimate was a bomb project costing approximately \$5000.<sup>91</sup>

McVeigh and Nichols obtained 4,000 pounds – two tons – of ammonium nitrate fertilizer. They bought it at a farm supply store in central Kansas where Nichols was living at the time and where McVeigh visited him. This was in the fall of 1994, at least six months before the bombing; giving an indication of the deliberate planning that went into process and premeditation.<sup>92</sup> To get some of the other chemicals they needed for the bomb, McVeigh and Nichols used a commercial phone book and simply called dozens of companies and individuals in search of ingredients.<sup>93</sup>

McVeigh and Nichols got the detonators for the bomb by stealing them. Near Marion, Kansas, they broke into several storage lockers for explosives at a rock quarry, and stole hundreds of blasting caps and sausage-shaped explosives known as Tovex.<sup>94</sup> They rented storage lockers in the central Kansas area near Nichols home and in Arizona to store supplies and stolen items, using phony names to preclude easy tracing of their real identities.<sup>95</sup>

During this period when McVeigh and Nichols were acquiring the components for the bomb, McVeigh periodically drove to Arizona and visited two of his friends, Michael and Lori Fortier. He had met Michael in the Army. They had shared similar antigovernment ideas,

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<sup>86</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 168 and 169.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 214 and 215.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 176 and 207.

<sup>92</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government, 9.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

and McVeigh had come to trust Michael and Michael's wife, Lori. In the fall of 1994, he confided his plan to both of them. Sitting in their living room in Kingman, Arizona, McVeigh drew a diagram of the bomb that he intended to build. He outlined the box of the truck and drew circles for the barrels inside the truck. He described how the barrels of fertilizer and fuel oil would be positioned in the truck to cause maximum damage. McVeigh demonstrated his design to Lori Fortier by taking soup cans from her cupboard and placing them on the floor. The layout displayed the shape of the bomb inside the box of the truck that he described as a shape charge. He explained that by putting the barrels of explosives in a particular shape, he would increase the blast effects in a particular direction.<sup>96</sup>

In addition to what McVeigh told Fortier about his bombing plans, he took Fortier to Oklahoma City and showed him the building months before the bombing. McVeigh told Fortier during the trip that Nichols would help McVeigh mix the bomb and would help McVeigh get away after the bombing. When McVeigh and Fortier were in downtown Oklahoma City, they drove around the Murrah Building. McVeigh showed Fortier the alley where he planned on parking his car. He explained to Fortier that he would park there because he wanted to have a tall building between himself and the blast.<sup>97</sup>

McVeigh also told Fortier about how he and Nichols planned to raise money to finance their illegal activities. They were going to do it by robbing a man who was a gun dealer that McVeigh knew from Arkansas. McVeigh had previously observed the man's home in a remote area of Arkansas.<sup>98</sup> Since the man knew McVeigh, Nichols was going to do the actual robbery. The stolen weapons and property were eventually sold to finance the bombing plot.

**Table 2-1. Conspiracy Timeline for Murrah Building Bombing**  
 (“On or About Dates”<sup>99</sup>)

<u>Chronology</u>	<u>Event</u>
September 22, 1994	McVEIGH rented a storage unit in the name of “Shawn Rivers” Herington, Kansas.
September 30, 1994	McVEIGH and NICHOLS purchased forty fifty-pound bags of ammonium nitrate in McPherson, Kansas under name of “Mike Havens.”
Late September 1994	McVEIGH made telephone calls in an attempt to obtain detonation cord and

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 95-CR-110 United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Timothy James McVeigh and Terry Lynn Nichols, Defendants. “8/95 Grand Jury Indictment of McVeigh and Nichols,” Indictment Count One (Conspiracy to Use a Weapon of Mass Destruction); 1995, 2 to 4; available from

<http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cas44.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 2004.

	<p>racing fuel.</p> <p>October 1, 1994 McVEIGH and NICHOLS stole explosives from a storage locker (commonly referred to as a magazine) in Marion, Kansas.</p> <p>October 3, 1994 McVEIGH and NICHOLS transported the stolen explosives to Kingman, Arizona.</p> <p>October 4, 1994 McVEIGH rented a storage unit in Kingman, Arizona for the stolen explosives.</p> <p>October 16, 1994 NICHOLS registered at a motel in Salina, Kansas under the name "Terry Havens."</p> <p>October 17, 1994 NICHOLS rented storage unit No. 40 in Council Grove, Kansas in the name "Joe Kyle."</p> <p>About October 18, 1994 McVEIGH and NICHOLS purchased forty fifty-pound bags of ammonium nitrate in McPherson, Kansas under the name "Mike Havens."</p> <p>October 1994 McVEIGH and NICHOLS planned a robbery of a firearms dealer in Arkansas as a means to obtain moneys to help finance their planned act of violence.</p> <p>November 5, 1994 McVEIGH planned and NICHOLS robbed, at gunpoint, a firearms dealer in Arkansas of firearms, ammunition, coins, United States currency, precious metals and other property.</p> <p>November 7, 1994 NICHOLS rented storage unit No. 37 in Council Grove, KS in the name "Ted Parker" and concealed property stolen in the Arkansas robbery.</p> <p>November 16, 1994 NICHOLS rented a storage unit in Las Vegas, Nevada and stored items.</p> <p>November 21, 1994 NICHOLS prepared a letter to McVEIGH, to be delivered only in the event of NICHOLS' death, in which he advised McVEIGH, among other matters, that storage unit No. 37 in Council Grove, Kansas had been rented in the name "Parker" and instructed McVEIGH to clear out the contents or extend the lease on No. 37 by February 1, 1995. NICHOLS further instructed McVEIGH to "liquidate" storage unit No. 40.</p> <p>December 16, 1994 McVEIGH, while en route to Kansas to take possession of firearms stolen in the Arkansas robbery, drove with Michael FORTIER to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and identified the building as the target.</p> <p>Early 1995 McVEIGH, NICHOLS, and FORTIER obtained currency from sale of firearms stolen in the Arkansas robbery.</p> <p>February 9, 1995, NICHOLS paid for the continued use of storage unit No. 40 at Council Grove, Kansas in the name of "Joe Kyle."</p> <p>March 1995 McVEIGH obtained a driver's license in the name of "Robert Kling" bearing a date of birth of April 19, 1972.</p> <p>April 14, 1995 McVEIGH purchased a 1977 Mercury Marquis in Junction City, KS.</p> <p>April 14, 1995 McVEIGH called the NICHOLS residence in Herington, Kansas from Junction City, KS.</p>
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April 14, 1995,	McVEIGH called a business in Junction City using the name "Bob Kling" to inquire about renting a truck capable of carrying 5,000 pounds of cargo.
April 14, 1995	McVEIGH rented a room at a motel in Junction City, KS.
April 15, 1995	McVEIGH placed a deposit for a rental truck in the name "Robert Kling."
April 17, 1995	McVEIGH took possession of a 20-foot rental truck in Junction City, KS.
April 18, 1995	McVEIGH and NICHOLS, at Geary Lake State Park in Kansas, constructed an explosive truck bomb with barrels filled with a mixture of ammonium nitrate, fuel and other explosives placed in the cargo compartment of the rental truck.
April 19, 1995	McVEIGH caused the truck bomb to explode by lighting fuses connected to the explosive device in the truck.
April 19, 1995	McVEIGH parked the truck bomb directly outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, during regular business and day-care hours.
April 19, 1995 9:02	<b>Truck bomb detonates next to Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.</b>

McVeigh learned some of his bomb making knowledge from pamphlets or books easily available on the open market. He learned how to mix different explosive ingredients, how to set up the bomb; and details such as how to drill a hole between the cargo box and the cab of the truck so that he could light the fuse from where he would be sitting as he drove the truck bomb.<sup>100</sup>

By the end of October 1994, McVeigh had most of the ingredients he needed to build the bomb. He was determined to take action when he thought it would have maximum impact. The anniversary of the tragedy at Waco would provide that kind of maximum impact. He thought that others in the U.S. were as angered at Waco as he was and that he could achieve tremendous impact – shake up the nation – by delaying his violent terrorist action until the April 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Waco incident.<sup>101</sup>

**“Something big is about to happen.”<sup>102</sup>**

Timothy McVeigh  
Letter to McVeigh’s sister

McVeigh had been regularly corresponding with his sister, Jennifer. In the fall of 1994, he visited her and created a file in her computer. He marked the file “ATF read,” as though he wanted the ATF to discover this file and read it after his dramatic action. One chilling

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 16.

declaration stated, “All you tyrannical [profanity] will swing in the wind one day for your treasonous actions against the Constitution and the United States.” The file entry concluded with these words: “Die, you spineless cowardice [profanity].”

On occasion, McVeigh used pre-paid debit cards or public pay telephones to avoid the possibility of calls being traced to him. For instance, on April 14th McVeigh called Terry Nichols, who was living at that time in nearby Herington, Kansas. McVeigh also called a company to reserve a rental truck. Both calls were made on a debit card in an attempt to preclude any trace of who actually called.

Later that day, McVeigh registered with his own name at a small motel in Junction City, Kansas. He resided at the motel through that weekend up until April 18th, Tuesday, the day before the bombing.<sup>103</sup>

To hide his true identity, McVeigh used a phony driver's license to rent a truck. He had obtained a blank driver's license form through an advertisement in a commercial magazine that sells fake identification kits. He selected the name Robert Kling. As McVeigh noted to Lori Fortier, he liked that name because it reminded him of the “Klingon” warrior characters on a popular television show “Star Trek.”<sup>104</sup>

Located about four miles from the motel, McVeigh arrived at a truck rental agency. The truck rental company attendant remembered a young man with a military demeanor who introduced himself as Robert Kling. Instead of simply making a cash deposit to reserve the truck in the name Kling, this man [McVeigh] wanted to pay for the truck in full. Kling [McVeigh] counted out several hundred dollars in cash and gave it to the attendant. After some administering of forms, Kling [McVeigh] departed the truck rental company, saying he would return to pick up the truck.<sup>105</sup>

As a sidenote, April 23d is McVeigh's real birthday. However, the birthday he gave Kling on the fake driver's license used to “prove” his identify was a special day -- April 19th -- the anniversary of the Davidian incident at Waco, and the date that McVeigh selected for the bombing in Oklahoma City.<sup>106</sup> McVeigh wanted to avenge the deaths that occurred at Waco. He also knew that April 19th in 1775 is considered by some people as the beginning of the American Revolution<sup>107</sup> and in his own mind, would be symbolic of defiance against what he believed to be an oppressive government.

On the morning of April 18, 1995, an individual at the Geary State Fishing Lake, approximately six miles south of Junction City, Kansas, observed a yellow truck parked next to a pickup truck for several hours. The individual described the pickup truck in some detail and recalled there was something white, possibly a camper shell, on the back of the pickup

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 19-21.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>107</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government, 9.

truck.<sup>108</sup> Little did the observing individual know that two men (McVeigh and Nichols) were constructing a massive truck bomb that would devastate the Murrah Building the next day in Oklahoma City.

### **The Attack with a High Yield Explosive**

Sleeping in the rental truck that night at a gravel lot near a roadside motel in northern Oklahoma, McVeigh awoke early the morning of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1995. As he entered downtown Oklahoma City, he placed earplugs in his ears and continued driving. He stopped briefly to light one of two fuses connected to the bomb. Shortly afterwards, he halted the truck for a stoplight and lit the second fuse. The Murrah Building and surrounding area, brimming with people, were about to become a macabre scene of devastation.

McVeigh positioned the truck at the delivery access point in front of the Murrah Building, got out of the truck and locked the vehicle. He walked casually on a route along sidewalks that he had previously reconnoitered. He wanted to be behind a building when the bomb detonated. As the roar of the explosion shattered the morning air, McVeigh was lifted a full inch off the ground by the blast and recalled his cheeks being buffeted by the concussion. He didn't look back. Within seconds, McVeigh was in his car and heading north out of the city.<sup>109</sup>

### **Supplemental Vignettes: The Immediate Aftermath**

After the bomb exploded, McVeigh calmly, at least outwardly, departed the bombing scene. McVeigh said he felt satisfaction of a mission accomplished. McVeigh had previously driven his car to Oklahoma City on Easter Sunday and prepositioned it near the Murrah Building as a means to depart the area after the bombing.<sup>110</sup> Within seconds of the detonation, McVeigh was driving his car north out of the city.<sup>111</sup>

About an hour after the bombing, an alert Highway Patrol trooper driving on Interstate 35 stopped a Mercury Marquis automobile because there was no car license plate on the back of the vehicle. He asked the driver (McVeigh) for his driver's license, and noticed a bulge under his clothing. McVeigh told the police officer that he had a loaded pistol and cooperated with the police officer as he was arrested. Yet, certain actions are puzzling about McVeigh. His post-trial reflections recount his thoughts when approached by the state trooper as McVeigh waited in his car by the side of the highway. McVeigh could have easily surprised and harmed the state trooper with a loaded pistol he was carrying on his person, but he chose not to do anything aggressive. At the time, the police officer made no connection with the bombing in Oklahoma City and McVeigh. He put McVeigh under arrest and drove to the county seat.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma. Case No. M-95-105-H, "Terry Nichols Criminal Complaint," 6.

<sup>109</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 220, 229-232.

<sup>110</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 95-CR-110 United States of America, 20.

<sup>111</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 232, 237.

<sup>112</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the Defense, 42.

On April 21, 1995, investigators learned that at approximately 10:20 a.m. on April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh had been arrested in Oklahoma on traffic and weapon offenses, and was incarcerated on those charges in Perry, Oklahoma. McVeigh's arrest occurred approximately 60-70 miles north of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, approximately one hour and 20 minutes after the April 19, 1995 bomb explosion.<sup>113</sup>

Inside McVeigh's car, law enforcement agents later found a large sealed envelope. It contained writings, magazines, and photocopies from magazines and from newspapers that indicate McVeigh's motivation, and premeditation. Other documents that McVeigh had with him on this day of the bombing describe the value of killing innocent people for a cause. One excerpt – as highlighted by McVeigh – “The real value of our attacks today lies in the psychological impact, not in the immediate casualties.” Another slip of paper that he had in that envelope in his car read, in part, “When the government fears the people, there is liberty.” And hand-printed beneath those printed words, in McVeigh's handwriting, are the words, “Maybe now there will be liberty.”<sup>114</sup>

### **Fortier**

Fortier was culpable in the bombing. Although he did not join the conspiracy and he didn't participate in the bombing, he did have knowledge of McVeigh's plans. He neither reported it to anyone who could have stopped it, nor made any effort to prevent the criminal acts. Additionally, Fortier participated with McVeigh in transporting guns stolen from a gun dealer in Arkansas.<sup>115</sup>

Mr. Fortier agreed to enter a plea bargain, was found guilty by a jury trial, and sentenced to 12 years in prison and fined \$200,000.<sup>116</sup>

### **Nichols**

On April 21, 1995, at approximately 3:00 p.m., after hearing his name on the radio in connection with the Oklahoma City bombing, Terry Nichols voluntarily surrendered to the Department of Public Safety in Herington, Kansas. Herington authorities took no action and awaited the arrival of the FBI. Thereafter, a Special Agent of the FBI arrived and advised Nichols of his Miranda rights, which Nichols agreed to waive.<sup>117</sup>

Although Nichols did not participate in the actual bombing, he was instrumental in assisting McVeigh in planning and preparing for the bombing. He helped rent storage lockers, purchase ammonium nitrate fertilizer and place McVeigh's get-away car in Oklahoma City. In a

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<sup>113</sup> U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma. Case No. M-95-105-H, “Terry Nichols Criminal Complaint,” 3.

<sup>114</sup> U.S. District Court, District of Colorado. Criminal Action No. 96-CR-68. Opening Statement by the [U.S.] Government, 4 and 5.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>116</sup> “Oklahoma Bombing Chronology,” *Washington Post*, available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/national/longterm/oklahoma/stories/chron.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>117</sup> U.S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma, Case No. M-95-105-H, “Michael Fortier’s Plea Agreement,” 3.

Federal Court, Nichols was convicted of conspiracy, and found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the death of eight Federal officers.<sup>118</sup>

After being found guilty in a Federal jury trial, Nichols was sentenced to life in prison without release for his role as the chief collaborator in the Oklahoma City bombing. In August 2004, Nichols was found guilty of murder on Oklahoma state charges. The District Judge ordered Nichols to serve life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Nichols was spared the death penalty when the jury became deadlocked.<sup>119</sup>

## **McVeigh**

McVeigh was convicted on all 11 counts of his Federal Indictment, including conspiracy to bomb the building and responsibility for the deaths of eight Federal law enforcement officers killed inside.<sup>120</sup> Timothy McVeigh was executed at a Federal prison in Terra Haute, Indiana on June 11, 2001.

## **Case Discussion Questions**

### **Intelligence and Threat Warning?**

What suspicious activities preceding the bombing attack might have indicated the tactical targeting of the Murrah building in an operational level U.S. intelligence estimate?

Why did McVeigh select the Murrah Federal Building for his terrorist attack?

### **Planning, Preparation, and Conduct?**

How did the terrorist cell obtain the major components of the improvised explosive device – the bomb?

How did the terrorist and support cell structure itself, communicate, and operate during the phases of planning and execution of the Murrah Building bombing attack?

How did the terrorist rehearse for the Murrah Building bombing?

What does the proximity of distance of the Murrah Building to the point of bomb detonation indicate for force protection measures?

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<sup>118</sup> Richard A. Serrano, "Terry Nichols Sentenced to Life With No Hope of Parole," *Los Angeles Times*, available from <http://www-tech.mit.edu/V118/N27/nichols.27w.htm>; Internet; accessed 16 February 2004.

<sup>119</sup> "Terry Nichols Gets Life, No Parole," CNN.com LAW CENTER, 10 August 2004; available on <http://www.cnn.com/2004/LAW/08/09/Nichols.sentence.ap/>; Internet; accessed 25 August 2004.

<sup>120</sup> Department of State, U.S. Department of State International information Programs, "Timothy McVeigh Executed for Oklahoma City Bombing," 11 June 2001; available on <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/01061101.htm>; Internet; accessed 16 February 2004.



## Physical Site Vulnerabilities and Risk Assessment?

What specific effects did the truck bomb detonation have on the structural integrity of the Murrah Building?

Given the same type of truck bomb and the scenario of a multi-level downtown office building, how could terrorists have increased mass casualty effects and devastation?

## Assessment

As the bombing in Oklahoma City makes clear, Americans – domestic terrorists - with dastardly aims and intentions such as McVeigh must be considered in any threats profile of the U.S. Homeland. Noted by the Director of the FBI, “We cannot protect our country, our way of life, our government and the democratic processes that ensure our freedoms and liberties if we fail to take seriously the threat of terrorism from all sources – foreign and domestic.”<sup>121</sup>

**“Terrorism is best prevented by acquiring, through legal and constitutional means, intelligence information relating to groups and individuals whose violent intentions threaten the public or our nation’s interests.”<sup>122</sup>**

Louis J. Freeh  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

McVeigh was a U.S. citizen with personal beliefs that festered into a growing mistrust and eventual hatred of the U.S. government.<sup>123</sup>

Awaiting execution, McVeigh remarked, “I like the phrase ‘shot heard ’round the world,’ and I don’t think there’s any doubt the Oklahoma blast was heard around the world.”<sup>124</sup>

A comprehensive FBI investigation determined that there was no larger conspiracy than McVeigh and Nichols in the Murrah Building bombing. Over 43,000 leads and over 7,000 people were eliminated from consideration in this official scrutiny. No involvement of a foreign government or militia organization materialized, even though numerous allegations arose in conspiracy theories.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Louis J. Freeh, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Opening Statement Before the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, 3 May 1995, 2.

<sup>122</sup> Louis J. Freeh, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Congress, House of Representatives; Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime; Opening Statement Before the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, 104th Congress, 3 May 1995, 3; available from <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cur13.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 March 2004.

<sup>123</sup> Michel and Herbeck, *American Terrorist*, 108.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 382.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 366.

In a May 1995 statement by the Director of the FBI, Mr. Louis Freeh stated, “I do not want my remarks to be interpreted as advocating investigative activity against groups exercising their legitimate constitutional rights or targeting people who disagree with our government. The FBI is entirely comfortable with the Constitution, due process rights, Congressional oversight, legal process, and the American jury system. They each protect the American people and the FBI...The FBI cannot and should not, however, tolerate and ignore any individuals or groups which advocate violence – which would kill innocent Americans, which would kill “America’s Kids.” They are not just enemies of the United States, they are enemies of mankind.”<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Louis J. Freeh, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Opening Statement Before the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, 3 May 1995, 4.

## Khobar Towers (1996)

### Chapter 3: Khobar Towers VBIED Bombing

The terrorist attack on Khobar Towers in 1996 highlights the importance of accurate and timely intelligence on terrorist activities and capabilities, the structure of a terrorist organization in action, and an emergent trend of mass casualty or mass destruction effects as a terrorist objective. This case study presents an unclassified summary of U.S. findings of intelligence shortfalls, force protection vulnerabilities, host nation operational sensitivities, and the calculated strategy and tactic of a specific terrorist act. In this case, a state sponsor assisted a surrogate group in order to influence U.S. policy in the Middle East.



Figure 3-1. *Above*, **Bomb Crater from VBIED**

(Source: U.S. House National Security Committee, Staff Report, *The Khobar Towers Bombing Incident* (1996).)



Figure 3-2. *Right*, **The Front View of Building 131 at Khobar Towers After the Blast**

(Source: U.S. House National Security Committee, Staff Report, *The Khobar Towers Bombing Incident* (1996).)

## Introduction

The terrorist bombing of the Khobar Towers complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia on June 25, 1996 exposed more than the physical vulnerability of Americans serving abroad. The attack exposed shortcomings of the U.S. intelligence apparatus that left Americans unprepared for the specific threat that confronted them. U.S. military organizations encountered significant internal problems of continuity and cohesion with the host nation while deployed for their mission. Risk increased for U.S. military members deployed on contingency operations where political and cultural sensitivities of the host country were significant factors.<sup>127</sup> A chronology of terrorist group activities in this case demonstrates a dedicated motivation and deliberate planning and execution cycle that applied phases of reconnaissance and surveillance, specific target selection and refined surveillance, staging and rehearsal, attack, and escape.

**“Terrorism is a tool of states, a vehicle of expression for organizations and even a way of life for individuals. We can expect the terrorists to continue to seek out vulnerabilities and attack. Terrorists normally prey on the weak, but even militaries have vulnerabilities and present targets with high publicity value.”<sup>128</sup>**

Honorable William J. Perry  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense, 1996

## Learning Objectives

Learning objectives focus on analyzing case study information in order to synthesize and evaluate the insight of reflective experiences, discern patterns of terrorist method and means, and determine likely trends in future terrorist activities. Comparing and contrasting conditions, circumstances, and asymmetric options available to the terrorist will enhance judgment to recognize vulnerabilities, identify threats, and minimize the ability of terrorism to impact on accomplishing a friendly force mission.

The objectives for this case study are:

- Describe intelligence indicators that might have created a more effective tactical estimate of terrorist intention and capability in the Khobar Towers bombing.
- Understand the motivation of Saudi Hizballah and their state sponsor (Iran) associated support groups for choosing Khobar Towers as a terrorist target of high value.

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<sup>127</sup> House National Security Committee, *Report on the Bombing of Khobar Towers* (14 August 1996), by Chairman Floyd D. Spence and Report, U.S. House National Security Committee, Executive Summary; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/saudi.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

<sup>128</sup> Department of Defense. Report to the President. *The Protection of U.S. Forces Deployed Abroad* (15 September 1996) by Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, 14; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report\\_f.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report_f.html); Internet; accessed 18 February 2004.

- Recognize force protection vulnerabilities at Khobar Towers that terrorists optimized in the bombing attack.
- Explain the terrorist organizational structure and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) used for the Khobar Towers bombing.
- Deduce a trend for terrorist acts with the objective of an increased combination for mass casualties and mass destruction.

### **Case Study Overview – Khobar Towers Bombing (1996)**

Shortly before 10:00 p.m. on the evening of June 25, 1996, a driver and one passenger drove a Datsun automobile into a public parking lot adjoining Khobar Towers building 131. This car acted as a scout vehicle and parked in a far corner of the lot. Soon after, a white four-door Chevrolet Caprice entered the parking lot and was staged for later use as escape transportation. The terrorists in the Datsun signaled that all was clear by blinking its lights. With that signal, a fuel truck converted into a truck bomb with an estimated 3,000-5,000 pounds of explosives approached the lot. The truck driver and his passenger entered the lot and backed the truck bomb against a perimeter fence in front of Khobar Towers building 131. After parking the truck, the truck driver and passenger quickly entered the back seat of the white Caprice. The Caprice, followed by the Datsun from the corner of the lot, sped away from the parking lot. Within minutes, the truck bomb exploded and devastated the north side of building 131, which was occupied by U.S. military members. The explosion killed nineteen U.S. military members and wounded 372 other Americans.<sup>129</sup> Many Saudi civilians and other third country citizens were injured in the attack.

The force of the explosion was so great that the effects heavily damaged or destroyed six high rise apartment buildings and shattered windows in virtually every other structure in the compound, leaving a crater in the ground 85 feet wide and 35 feet deep. The blast concussion was felt 20 miles away in the Persian Gulf state of Bahrain. At the time, this incident was the worst terrorist attack against Americans in more than a decade.<sup>130</sup>

### **Background**

From the 1980s and leading up to the Khobar Towers bombing, Hizballah, or “Party of God,” was the name used by a number of related Shia Islamic terrorist organizations operating in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Kuwait, and Bahrain. These Hizballah organizations were inspired, supported, and directed by elements of the Iranian government. Saudi Hizballah, also known as Hizballah Al-Hijaz, was a terrorist organization operating primarily in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The group promoted, among other things, the use of violence against nationals and property of the United States located in Saudi Arabia. Because Saudi Hizballah was an

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<sup>129</sup> U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division. Grand Jury *Indictment* of 46 counts against named and unspecified terrorists charged in the Khobar Towers bombing attack of 25 June 1996, 13; available from <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

<sup>130</sup> House National Security Committee, *Report on the Bombing of Khobar Towers* (14 August 1996), by Chairman Floyd D. Spence and Report, U.S. House National Security Committee, 1; Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/saudi.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

outlaw organization in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its members frequently met and trained in Lebanon, Syria, or Iran.<sup>131</sup>

In the 1990s, Saudi Arabia witnessed growing dissatisfaction by large segments of its population as social, economic, and political issues approached crisis proportion within the kingdom. Not surprisingly, religion provided a powerful influence in each of these other areas. The Saudi population was growing at a rapid pace, expectations and quality of life experienced in previous years was no longer feasible for many Saudi citizens due to changing economic conditions, and many Saudis considered the Saudi royal family an apostate regime due to the close relationship with the United States.<sup>132</sup>

U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia had been a contentious issue with many Saudis. Many Saudi citizens, and other people of the region with an Islamic fundamentalist viewpoint, were particularly critical of this non-Muslim presence in a country that is home to two holiest places in the Islamic religion, Mecca and Medina. This concern was part of a larger cultural struggle in Saudi Arabia.<sup>133</sup>

## Planning and Preparation

Saudi Hizballah began surveillance of Americans in Saudi Arabia in about 1993. Surveillance and reports continued to flow among Saudi Hizballah and officials in Iran. Potential targets included the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh and locales where Americans lived and worked. By 1994, Hizballah surveillance focused on eastern Saudi Arabia included Khobar Towers. In the months following, the terrorists recognized Khobar Towers as a lucrative target. The concentration of U.S. and coalition forces equated to between 2000 and 3000 people.<sup>134</sup> In mid-1995, terrorists began regular surveillance of Khobar Towers. Pre-attack surveillance was conducted with one vehicle. The vehicle was observed and reported ten times over 40 separate occasions of surveillance.

<sup>131</sup> U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division. Grand Jury *Indictment* of 46 counts against named and unspecified terrorists charged in the Khobar Towers bombing attack of 25 June 1996, 2; available from <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

<sup>132</sup> Joshua Teitelbaum and David Long, "Islamic Politics in Saudi Arabia," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policywatch: Special Policy Forum Report Number 259*, 9 July 1997, 1 to 3; available at <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/Policywatch/policywatch1997/259.htm>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2004. While Saudi Arabia attempted to balance modernization with its role as a protector of the holy places of Islam in the nation, U.S. military forces were an obvious secular presence in Saudi Arabia that offended many Saudi citizens. Aims of Islam and modernization were at odds. Disenchanted youth, ever increasing in size within the population, often vented their frustration with alliance or membership in radical, violent organizations. Young men recruited for the Saudi Hizballah would often be transported to Hizballah controlled areas in Lebanon for military training, weapons and explosives training, and indoctrination. Subsequent training and liaison occurred among terrorist members of the Saudi Hizballah and Lebanese and Iranian Hizballah organizations. Elements of the Iranian government sponsored forms of military training and other close association with terrorists.

<sup>133</sup> Alfred B. Prados, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Issue Brief for Congress, *Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations*, 15 September 2003; Order Code IB93113, CRS-1.

<sup>134</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. *Report of the Assessment of the Khobar Towers Bombing* (30 August 1996) by General (USA Retired) Wayne A. Downing, 16; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/unclf913.html>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2004; Alain Gresh, "The unsolved mystery of a Saudi bomb attack," *Le Monde diplomatique*, September 1997, 2; available from <http://mondediplo.com/1997/09/saudi>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2004.

By early 1996, the terrorists were identifying locations to hide explosives. Explosives were eventually hidden in the area surrounding Khobar for use in the bombing attack. Of note, an attempt to smuggle explosives for this attack into Saudi Arabia was discovered and foiled on March 28, 1996 as a terrorist attempted to cross the Saudi Arabian border in a car. Saudi authorities confiscated 38 kilograms of plastic explosives hidden in the car and arrested the driver. Subsequently, Saudi investigators arrested several other terrorists. Nonetheless, Saudi Hizballah replaced these terrorists in the cell by May 1996 to replace or cover for an original group member for this attack. Additional large amounts of explosives were covertly collected and hidden in the vicinity of Khobar.

In early June over a two-week period, the terrorists used plastic explosives to convert a tanker truck into a bomb – a vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED). Key members of the Saudi Hizballah and the attack cell met in Syria in mid-June 1996 to confirm tactical plans for the bombing. Early in the evening of June 25, 1996, the six members of the attack cell reviewed final preparations for the attack. Several hours later, Khobar Towers would become a terrorist incident of major proportion against U.S. military forces in Saudi Arabia.<sup>135</sup>

### The Attack with a VBIED

On June 25, 1996, at approximately 10:00 p.m. Dhahran local time, a fuel truck laden with an improvised explosive device approached the northwest end of the Khobar Towers compound from the north and turned east onto 31st Street just outside the perimeter fence separating the compound from a public parking lot. The truck bomb had an estimated explosive power equivalent of 20,000 pounds of TNT.<sup>136</sup> The truck, and a car that it was following, continued to travel along the perimeter fence toward the northeast corner of the compound.



Figure 3-3. **Bomb Crater at Khobar Towers**

*Note:* Note the proportion of crater to individuals along rim.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. 12 and 13.

<sup>136</sup> U.S Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 54; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordf.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordf.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

A U.S. military security guard, present at an observation site on the roof of Building 131, spotted the suspicious car and fuel truck as they continued to travel along the perimeter fence toward the eventual attack site. When the vehicles reached Building 131, they turned left, pointed away from the building, and stopped. The fuel truck backed up into the hedges along the perimeter fence, about 80 feet from, and directly in front of Building 131. When two men emerged from the truck, quickly entered the car, and sped away, the U.S. military security guard radioed the situation to the security desk and began, along with the other two guards on the roof, to evacuate the building.

Emergency evacuation procedures began for Building 131 as the three security personnel ran door to door, starting from the top floor and working their way down, knocking loudly on each door and yelling for the residents to evacuate. Three to four minutes after the truck had backed up against the perimeter fence, the bomb exploded, demolishing the entire front facade of the eight-story building.

Timely action on the part of the guards, who had only been able to work their way down several floors of the building, saved the lives of many residents of Building 131. Many residents evacuating the building were located in the building stairwells at the moment of the explosion. Given the injury and death caused by glass and other flying objects caused by the blast, the stairwells were probably the safest place to be at the time of bomb detonation.

However, the force of the blast destroyed building 131 and severely damaged five adjacent buildings. Most of the buildings in the U.S. occupied sector of the Khobar Towers complex suffered some degree of damage. Nineteen U.S. military members were killed with several hundred other people injured. Hundreds of Saudi and third country nationals living in the complex and immediate vicinity were also wounded. The bomb blast shattered windows throughout the compound and created a crater 85 feet wide and 35 feet deep. The blast was felt as far away as Bahrain, 20 miles to the southeast.

U.S. intelligence experts concluded that Americans were the targets of the terrorists. Although injury and death were extensive, an even greater number of casualties might have occurred had the driver positioned the truck differently against the fence and if at least one row of concrete barriers [“Jersey” barriers of the kind used in construction and on U.S. highways] had not been present to absorb or deflect part of the blast away from the lower level of building 131.

Senior leaders of the U.S. military unit, after consultation with engineers and investigators at the scene, concluded that this force protection measure helped to prevent the collapse of the lower floors of the building. Had the lower floors collapsed, the attack would have likely caused collapse of the entire building with a significantly larger number of casualties and fatalities.<sup>137</sup>

According to the terrorist plan, attack leaders immediately departed the Khobar Towers area and Saudi Arabia using false passports. Two terrorists remained in Saudi Arabia in their hometown. No Khobar Towers terrorists were captured immediately following the VBIED attack.

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<sup>137</sup> House National Security Committee, *Report on the Bombing of Khobar Towers* (14 August 1996), by Chairman Floyd D. Spence and Report, U.S. House National Security Committee, 1 and 2; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/saudi.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.



Figure 3-4. *Below*, **Photograph of Khobar Towers After the Bombing**  
 (Source: Report to the President and Congress on Protection of U.S. Forces Deployed Abroad (1996).)

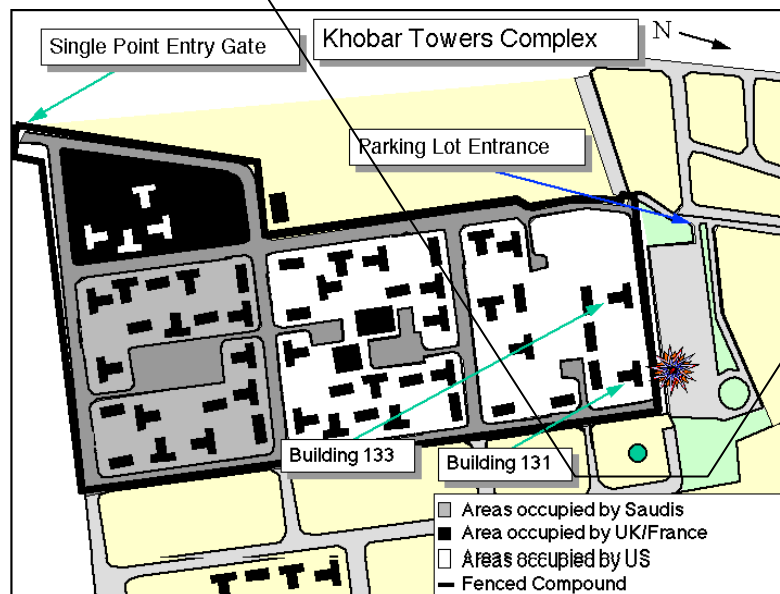


Figure 3-5. *Above*, **Diagram Sketch of Khobar Towers and Bombing Site**  
 (Source: Report to the President and Congress on the Protection of U.S. Forces Deployed Abroad (1996).)

## Supplemental Vignettes: The Immediate Aftermath

### Intelligence and Threat Warning

The U.S. Consul General in Dhahran at the time of the bombing stated, “No one really thought anything was going to happen in Dhahran. ...[I] never had a piece of paper or anyone else outlining any particular threat.”<sup>138</sup> In general, the U.S. presence allowed themselves to assume what the likely threats were, even in an absence of solid intelligence. A type of “tunnel vision” emerged that precluded an awareness of terrorist attack plans that were significantly greater than anything estimated.

The specific information U.S. officials in the region did have on terrorist capability consisted of evidence concerning the size of the 1995 car bomb terrorist attack in Riyadh that was equivalent to about 250 pounds of TNT, and numerous small pipe bombing incidents in nearby Bahrain. Senior U.S. officers in Saudi Arabia generally concluded that the upper limit of a terrorist bomb was no higher than what had been used in the 1995 car bombing. Likewise, the Saudis did not see terrorists using anything larger than the 1995 car bombing.

Other professional assessments did not estimate the damage potential of a bombing with the effects of the 1996 attack on Khobar Towers. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) at the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh related that a representative of his office had visited Khobar Towers prior to the bombing and was satisfied that the existing stand-off distance was adequate even though it was 20 feet less than the desired 100 foot State Department standard for fixed facilities. The RSO indicated that they would not have questioned an 80-foot stand-off distance even if the known threat had included a 1,000-pound bomb.

The Chief of the National Intelligence Support Team (NIST) in Riyadh indicated that they considered the threat to be a bomb the size of the one that exploded at Riyadh in 1995, “maybe 500 pounds but -- we never went above 1,000 pounds.” Additionally, the U.S. Consul General in Dhahran stated, “the thought of a 20,000 or even 5,000 pound bomb driving up was pretty inconceivable.”<sup>139</sup>

U.S. intelligence did not predict the precise attack on Khobar Towers. Commanders did have warning that the terrorist threat to U.S. military members and facilities was increasing. DOD elements in the theater had the authority, but were not exploiting all potential sources of information. Suspicious activities should have received more scrutiny. Human intelligence (HUMINT), had it been available, is probably the only source of information that could have provided the tactical details of a terrorist attack. In fact, a DOD report following the attack stated that the U.S. intelligence community must have the requisite authorities and invest more time, people, and funds into developing HUMINT against the terrorist threat.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> U.S. Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A; Appendix I, Comments Regarding the Downing Report* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 51. Available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordap.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordap.htm); accessed 9 February 2004.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. 50.

<sup>140</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. *Report of the Assessment of the Khobar Towers Bombing* (30 August 1996) by General (USA Retired) Wayne A. Downing, 6; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/prefuncl.html>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

## Security Measures in Effect

Although the U.S. intelligence community was providing coverage of terrorist and terrorist related activities, the intelligence support lacked in at least one key area. Intelligence did not provide timely tactical warning of the impending terrorist attack and the specific kind of attack on Khobar Towers. Yet, vulnerability analysis using general intelligence of threats resulted in improvements to physical security and force protection measures at Khobar Towers prior to the June 25, 1996 bombing. These actions did save lives and reduced injuries.<sup>141</sup>

Much of the force protection concentrated on precluding penetration of the complex perimeter by a car, truck, or suicide bomb. The commander responsible for the Khobar Towers complex was very proactive and aggressive in implementing improved security measures. Many complementing security measures were enacted such as an increased threat condition awareness, physical barriers and serpentine driving control patterns at checkpoints, restricted off-base travel, inspection procedures for parcels and commercial deliveries, and procedures for unannounced or suspicious visitors.<sup>142</sup> In the months preceding the Khobar Towers bomb attack, over 130 new security measures were implemented.<sup>143</sup>

The DOD task force report on the Khobar Towers bombing states a strong belief that "...to assure an acceptable level of security for U.S. forces worldwide, commanders must aggressively pursue an integrated systems approach to force protection that combines awareness and training, physical security measures, advanced technology systems, and specific protection measures tailored to each location. A comprehensive approach of common guidance, standards, and procedures will correct inconsistent force protection practices observed in the theater."<sup>144</sup>

Following the Khobar Towers terrorist attack, the U.S. Secretary of Defense directed a critical re-evaluation of U.S. force posture in the region, and empowered military commanders to examine mission tasks with force protection as an even more important consideration in its worldwide mission planning and operations.

## Physical Site Vulnerabilities and Risk Assessment

Ten suspicious incidents, including four of possible surveillance, were reported by U.S. members in April, May, and June 1996. Many of the incidents were during the period of the Hajj. The Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, is a central duty and one of the five pillars of Islam. However, U.S. military forces were concerned that this surge of thousands of worshippers

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<sup>141</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. Report to the President. *The Protection of U.S. Forces Deployed Abroad* (15 September 1996) by Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, 5, 11 and 12; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report\\_f.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/report_f.html); Internet; accessed 18 February 2004.

<sup>142</sup> U.S Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A; Appendix 1, Comments Regarding the Downing Report* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 11; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordap.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordap.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

<sup>143</sup> U.S Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 44 and 47; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordf.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordf.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

<sup>144</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. *Report of the Assessment of the Khobar Towers Bombing* (30 August 1996) by General (USA Retired) Wayne A. Downing, 5.

from around the world could be a likely period for extremist acts against U.S. presence in the vicinity of Islam's holy places in Saudi Arabia. The suspicious incidents in the vicinity of Khobar Towers were investigated by the U.S. military, Saudi military, and Saudi local police. Nothing in the investigations indicated an attack on Khobar Towers was imminent.

These incidents included one possible threat indicator – the suspected ramming of a “Jersey” barrier on the east perimeter of the Khobar Towers complex. Reported to Saudi authorities, they permitted U.S. military forces to secure the barriers by staking them into the ground. There were four incidents of possible surveillance, which were reported to local Saudi authorities for further investigation. These occurred on April 1, 4, 17 and 25, 1996, and all involved reports by U.S. military members of Middle Eastern men driving by the Khobar Towers compound, or parked and observing the compound. Of the five incidents, two were inconclusive and three were completely discounted.

These incidents were discussed with the Saudis, who did not view them as threatening. They attributed the incidents of possible surveillance to natural curiosity on the part of Saudi citizens about the activities of Americans inside the complex perimeter. A parking lot existed just outside the northern perimeter of Khobar Towers. Saudis used this lot as part of a community recreational area and to visit a nearby mosque. During the month-long period of the Hajj, it was normal for many people to congregate in this area during evenings. Most of the reported incidents took place during this time, and this may have caused the Saudi police to dismiss them as non-threatening. The Saudis said they had undercover security personnel in the area and they were not concerned.<sup>145</sup>

### **Host Nation Relationship**

Saudi Arabia, as the host nation, retained sovereignty both inside and outside the complex at Khobar Towers. Saudi Arabian authorities permitted U.S. military forces latitude in security measures within the installation, but any permanent change to facilities required Saudi approval. Security internal to the complex was a shared responsibility by U.S. forces, coalition forces, and Saudi Arabian military police. Security outside the fence was a Saudi responsibility.<sup>146</sup> This tenuous sharing of force protection and limited ability to optimize security measures between the host nation, U.S. military forces, and the U.S. State Department caused significant challenges in the risk management of the Khobar Towers complex.

A January 1996 vulnerability assessment conducted by U.S. military forces identified the north perimeter fence area and the adjacent public parking lot as a significant weak point for three reasons: (1) the size and relative remoteness of the parking lot, (2) the visual obstruction that limits the ability of U.S. forces to identify an oncoming threat, and (3) access to the parking lot was uncontrolled and open to anyone. Recommendations included cutting back the vegetation, installing bollards (half buried steel pipes) connected by chain or cable along the

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<sup>145</sup> U.S. Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 46 and 47; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordf.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordf.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

<sup>146</sup> U.S. Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 41; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordf.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordf.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

easement on the Saudi side of the fence or along the sidewalk on the U.S. side of the fence, reinforcing the existing concrete barrier line with one-inch steel cable, and parking heavy vehicles along the fence to limit high speed penetration of the installation. The vulnerability assessment noted the increased cooperation between U.S. and local Saudi police, and noted that Saudi military members would coordinate with local civilian authorities to increase the uniformed police presence outside the northwest and northeast fence lines.

An earlier 1995 vulnerability assessment addressed security measures to be taken around the perimeter fence, including the proper placement of concrete “Jersey” barriers, and removing or repositioning objects near the vegetation on the north perimeter to increase visibility. Comments noted successful efforts by the U.S. security police to establish liaison with the various local military and civilian police agencies and an increased willingness for cooperation between the U.S. military forces and local police.<sup>147</sup> The Saudi government, recognizing the need for U.S. military forces in the region since the Gulf War (1990-1991), encouraged a very urban presence of U.S. military forces. The Saudi royal family attempted to lessen the irritation of many Saudi to a “foreign presence” so near the holy places of Islam while simultaneously allowing the staging of U.S. military and coalition forces in their country. This tacit Saudi government aim exhibited itself in a methodical yet lethargic process for bolstering physical security measures suggested by U.S. military forces. In another practical limitation in an urban setting, expanding Khobar Towers security perimeters, emplacing more barriers, and clearing vegetation and foliage for better visibility along perimeters was counter to Saudi goals of minimizing Saudi citizen contact with U.S. forces. Expanding security distances in the area of the eventual attack site at Khobar Towers would have infringed on Saudi citizen access to a parking lot and park area near a local mosque.

### **Terrorist Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures**

The terrorists organized in a cellular structure for their command and control. The Saudi Hizballah recruited from primarily young men of the Sh’ite faith. Cell members participating in this terrorist bombing came primarily from the same region in eastern Saudi Arabia, and in many cases, came from the same hometown. Loyalties such as a common religious earnestness, family and social relationships, and general dissatisfaction with Saudi government policies created a strong bond among members of this small group within the Saudi Hizballah. All cell members sequenced through deliberate phases of recruitment, indoctrination, and military-like training by the Saudi Hizballah.

Leaders, cadre, and supporters of this cell were focused on this particular mission and target. As a norm, interaction occurred usually between two to three cell members, but could involve up to six cell members with personal contact and oral exchanges. At times, written reports provided assessments and requirements. Occasionally, meetings and liaison occurred with the leader of the “military wing” of Saudi Hizballah or other Hizballah supporters. When three members of the cell were compromised and arrested by Saudi authorities during the preparation phase for the attack, replacement cell members were quickly assigned from the same hometown area. This change in cell members disrupted, but did not dismantle the attack plan. Compartmenting knowledge within the cell had benefited the terrorists as they proceeded with coordination meetings, received final guidance from Hizballah leaders,

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid. , 49 and 50.

and set a timeline in motion to conduct the attack with a massive truck bomb at Khobar Towers.<sup>148</sup>

As noted earlier in the case study, planning and preparation included extensive surveillance. Pre-attack surveillance used one vehicle, which was observed and reported ten times of 40 separate uses as a surveillance means.<sup>149</sup> Reports and meetings with senior leaders of Saudi Hizballah supported planning in detail such as verifying the accuracy of a map of Khobar or the rehearsal of transporting explosives from Lebanon to Saudi Arabia.<sup>150</sup>

The DOD Task Force chartered to assess the Khobar Towers bombing estimated the bomb contained the equivalent of from 3,000 to 8,000 pounds of TNT, “most likely about 5,000 pounds.” The Secretary of Defense commissioned a special study by the Defense Special Weapons Agency (DSWA). The DSWA report estimated the bomb was much larger with a likely yield of 20,000 to 30,000 pounds of TNT-equivalent.<sup>151</sup>

DSWA compared physical attributes of the Khobar Towers crater and blast with physical attributes of craters formed by vehicle bomb tests conducted under terrain conditions similar to those at Dhahran. DSWA determined that the “...’best’ estimate for the Dhahran yield would be 11.5 tons or 23,000 pounds of TNT-equivalent explosive.” DSWA compared the 5,000-pound TNT-equivalent yield estimate against the physical information known about the Khobar Towers crater and the crater information generated by the vehicle bomb tests. DSWA found that the 5,000-pound value implausible because it “implies a cratering efficiency greater than that produced by any known conventional explosive.” DSWA’s analysis of glass breakage from the Khobar Towers bombing resulted in an even larger estimated TNT-equivalent yield of 31,000 pounds. This figure was derived by plotting the actual number of windows broken at Khobar Towers on a computer-generated graph that depicts the number of glass patio doors that would be broken by the blast pressures generated by various TNT-equivalent yields.

A peer review by a panel of outside experts concluded the “DSWA analysis credibly supports the conclusion that the explosive power of the bomb was in the 20,000 pounds of TNT equivalent class and probably larger.” The DSWA also noted that Building 133, located some 400 feet from the blast, sustained major structural damage. The weight of the evidence supports the DSWA estimate as to the size of the explosive.<sup>152</sup>

Terrorists recognize the media value of physical effects on a target but seek the psychological impact value of attack that often overshadows the act itself. The inability of enemies to

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<sup>148</sup> U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division. Grand Jury *Indictment* of 46 counts against named and unspecified terrorists charged in the Khobar Towers bombing attack of 25 June 1996, 3 to 12; available from <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

<sup>149</sup> Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, *State Department Diplomatic Security Surveillance Detection Program Course of Instruction* [CD-ROM], (Washington, D.C., October 1999).

<sup>150</sup> U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division. Grand Jury *Indictment* of 46 counts against named and unspecified terrorists charged in the Khobar Towers bombing attack of 25 June 1996, 7 to 9; available from <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2004.

<sup>151</sup> U.S. Air Force. *Independent Review of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Part A* (31 October 1996) by Lieutenant General James F. Record, 53; available from [http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar\\_af/recordf.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/khobar_af/recordf.htm); Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* 54.

challenge U.S. and allied military power directly will likely lead to their asymmetric use of force to deter U.S. initiatives, attack forward deployed forces, and attempt to drive a wedge between the United States and its coalition partners. Terrorist attacks are intended to weaken U.S. resolve to maintain a force presence in threatened regions and to influence U.S. public and congressional opinion. Asymmetric use of force could include employment of weapons of mass destruction. The target will be U.S. citizens. Creation of casualties, whether from attacks like the one on Khobar Towers or more discrete attacks designed to establish a pattern of insecurity and helplessness, allows an enemy to demonstrate U.S. vulnerabilities at overseas locations and achieve political aims through indirect means.<sup>153</sup>

### **The Immediate Aftermath**

International media attention spotlighted the terrorist attack on U.S. military forces in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Terrorists achieved objectives of notoriety with a worldwide audience and significant psychological trauma of mass casualties and horrific property damage. U.S. military forces suffered terrible injuries and loss of life; similar injuries and damage occurred to the surrounding Saudi community. U.S. military forces lost prestige when a compound considered relatively safe was easily attacked and devastated with a large bomb. The royal family of Saudi Arabia lost prestige because of its inability to prevent such a terrorist attack that affected Saudi citizens, civilians and government workers from other countries, and the U.S. military presence as their invited temporary guests. Regional and world attention weakened Saudi royal family prestige, from an Islamic perspective, due to the presence of a non-Muslim military force in its country of holy places for the Islamic faith.

### **Case Discussion Questions**

#### **Intelligence and Threat Warning?**

What suspicious activities preceding the bombing attack might have indicated the tactical targeting of the Khobar Towers complex in an operational level U.S. intelligence estimate?

#### **Security Measures in Effect?**

How did Saudi and U.S. force protection measures encourage the terrorists to select the Khobar Towers complex for attack?

What does the proximity of distance of the Khobar Towers building 131 to the perimeter of the residential complex suggest in force protection vulnerabilities?

#### **Physical Site Vulnerabilities and Risk Assessment?**

Why did terrorists detonate the VBIED at the specific point of the Khobar Towers complex?

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<sup>153</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. *Report of the Assessment of the Khobar Towers Bombing* (30 August 1996) by General (USA Retired) Wayne A. Downing, 5; available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/downing/unclf913.html>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2004.

Given the same bomb (VBIED) and scenario of Khobar Towers, how could terrorists have increased mass casualty effects?

### **Host Nation Relationship?**

How could the U.S. military unit chain of command and local Saudi security forces have cooperated more effectively in collective security of the Khobar Towers complex?

What impact did the urban location of Khobar Towers and a Saudi government aim of minimizing Saudi citizen contact and visibility with U.S. military forces have in hampering progressive physical security measures?

### **Terrorist Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures?**

Why did the terrorist group choose the Khobar Towers as a principal target in Saudi Arabia?

How did the terrorist group structure itself, communicate, and operate during the phases of planning and execution of the Khobar Towers bombing attack?

### **Assessment**

Intelligence gaps left the U.S. military organization and its leaders at the Khobar Towers complex largely unaware of the magnitude of the threat they faced. Intelligence support fell short in at least three ways. First, available intelligence was devoid of specific knowledge of terrorist and dissident activity inside Saudi Arabia. As a result, assessments were incomplete. Second, intelligence analysis did not examine vulnerabilities in the context of capabilities greater than those already demonstrated in the 1995 bombing in Riyadh. Formal threat assessments appear to have remained reactive to events. Third, intelligence assessments did not acknowledge their own limitations. They did not communicate a level of uncertainty that should have been appropriate considering the lack of specific knowledge available and the difficulty of understanding the complex environments of Saudi society. Based on such intelligence assessments, U.S. commanders in the theater of operations and in the region of Riyadh likely had a false sense of appreciating the level of threat they faced and the requisite level of security required to protect U.S. forces.

Problems stemming from such intelligence failures were further complicated by the organizational and operational shortcomings of the U.S. military mission characterized and conducted as a temporary mission. The provisional U.S. organization lacked continuity, cohesion, and adequate personnel resources. In particular, short-tour rotations — where 10 percent of the command was new to the theater every week — created an unacceptable level of unit instability. This constant turnover of people in duty positions placed a significant knowledge and coordination burden on officers and enlisted members of the command. The high turnover rate hampered any practical ability for U.S. military leaders to build a relationship of trust with their Saudi host.

Deference to Saudi cultural sensibilities, religious concerns, and domestic political concerns discouraged U.S. commanders in the field from aggressively pursuing more expansive security measures. While important, consideration of host country cultural sensitivities or



domestic politics should not have allowed any compromise to protection of U.S. forces, particularly in regions where a growing threat of terrorism focused against Americans.

The combination of situational factors resulted in terrorists being able to identify target site vulnerabilities, conceive a plan to attack a point of weakness, conduct methodical preparation, react to disruption of terrorist group membership, and effectively attack the designated target to achieve their objectives against the Saudi government and U.S. military forces.

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## USS Cole (2000)

### Chapter 4: USS Cole Bombing

The maritime attack on the USS *Cole* by two individuals in a small boat, loaded with explosives, demonstrated an effective means of terrorism against U.S. military forces. When the suicide terrorist attack occurred, the bomb explosion next to the ship caused 17 crewmember deaths, wounded 39 other crewmembers, and seriously damaged the ship. Two terrorists were also killed in the explosion.

The “boat bombing” of the USS *Cole* introduced a new tactic of terrorism attack against a U.S. warfighting ship in a contemporary operational maritime setting. This case study presents an unclassified summary of U.S. observations and findings of U.S. intelligence shortfalls, U.S. force protection vulnerabilities, U.S. and host nation operational sensitivities, and the calculated strategy and tactic of a specific terrorist act.



Figure 4-1. Above, USS *Cole* After the Attack  
(Source: <http://www.chinfo.navy.mil>)

Figure 4-2. Left, USS *Cole* (DDG 67)  
(Source: <http://federalvoice.dsc.dla.mil>)

Terrorists have the luxury of searching for a single vulnerability. Timing and method are tools of terrorist choosing and further complicate risk management and force protection of a target selected by terrorists. A primary underlying aim of terrorism is a demoralizing psychological effect on the target population and its leaders, often with explicit media coverage of mass casualty or mass destruction effects, to erode resolve and enhance terrorist objectives.

## Introduction

The 12 October 2000 attack on USS *Cole* in the port of Aden, Yemen, took advantage of a seam in the fabric of U.S. efforts to protect naval forces during an “in-transit” phase of deployment. The USS *Cole*<sup>154</sup> (DDG 67) is an Aegis missile equipped, Arleigh Burke class, destroyer. As a result of the attack, attention focused on implementing ways to improve U.S. policies and practices for deterring, disrupting, and mitigating terrorist attack on U.S. maritime forces in transit.

U.S. military forces support engagement elements of both the National Security Strategy and the National Military Strategy. This means continuous transit of U.S. ships, aircraft and military units. U.S. military forces operate on land, in the air, and on the seas in a world environment characterized by unconventional and transnational threats. Sovereign waterways, the high seas, or even a temporary berthing site are all possible locations for maritime terrorism.<sup>155</sup> Assessing a chronology of terrorist group activities verifies a dedicated motivation and deliberate planning and execution cycle that applied phases of reconnaissance and surveillance, specific target selection, staging and rehearsal, preparation, attack; and although this was a deliberate suicide attack, escape plans for terrorist support elements following the bombing.

## Learning Objectives

Learning objectives focus on analyzing case study information in order to synthesize and evaluate the insight of reflective experiences, discern patterns of terrorist method and means, and determine likely trends in future terrorist activities. Comparing and contrasting conditions, circumstances, and asymmetric options available to the terrorist will enhance judgment to recognize vulnerabilities, identify threats, and minimize the ability of terrorism to impact on accomplishing a friendly force mission.

The objectives for this case study are:

- Describe intelligence indicators that might have created a more effective tactical estimate of terrorist intention and capability in the USS *Cole* bombing.
- Understand the motivation of Yemeni extremists and their associated support groups for choosing the USS *Cole* as a terrorist target of high value.
- Recognize U.S. vulnerabilities to force protection measures at the USS *Cole* refueling site that terrorists optimized in the bombing attack.

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<sup>154</sup> Raphael Perl and Ronald O'Rourke, “*Terrorist Attack on USS Cole: Background and Issues for Congress*,” Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Order Code RS20721, 1, 30 January 2001; available from <http://news.findlaw.com/cnn/docs/crs/coleterrattck13001.pdf>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

<sup>155</sup> Department of Defense, *DoD USS Cole Commission Report* (9 January 2001) by U.S. Army Gen. (Ret) William Crouch and U.S. Navy Adm. (Ret) Harold Gehman, open-file report, U.S. Department of Defense, 1 (Washington, D.C., 9 January 2001); available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/cole.html>; Internet; accessed 16 February 2004.

- Explain the terrorist organizational structure and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) used for the USS *Cole* bombing.
- Deduce a trend for terrorist acts with the objective of an increased combination for mass casualties and mass destruction.

### **Case Study Overview - USS *Cole* (2000)**

U.S. military presence in the Mideast region demonstrates regional engagement while U.S. air, sea, and land forces deter aggression by anyone who would threaten U.S. critical national interests. In 2000, USS *Cole* was proceeding to join a carrier battle group in the Gulf region that formed a key part of an immediate ready force. This began with the ship's deployment from Norfolk on August 8<sup>th</sup>. The trans-Atlantic Ocean crossing lasted until August 20<sup>th</sup> when the ship and crew started conducting operations in the Mediterranean Sea. These operations, along with several port visits, lasted from August 20<sup>th</sup> until October 9<sup>th</sup>. Then, USS *Cole* transited the Suez Canal in order to conduct maritime operations in the northern Arabian Gulf in support of enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

Yemen plays a key part in the ability for U.S. and coalition maritime forces to operate in the region. Yemen controls the eastern side of the Bab al Mandeb choke point at the southern end of the Red Sea, and is geo-strategically positioned approximately 1400 miles south of Suez and 1400 miles southwest of the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>156</sup>

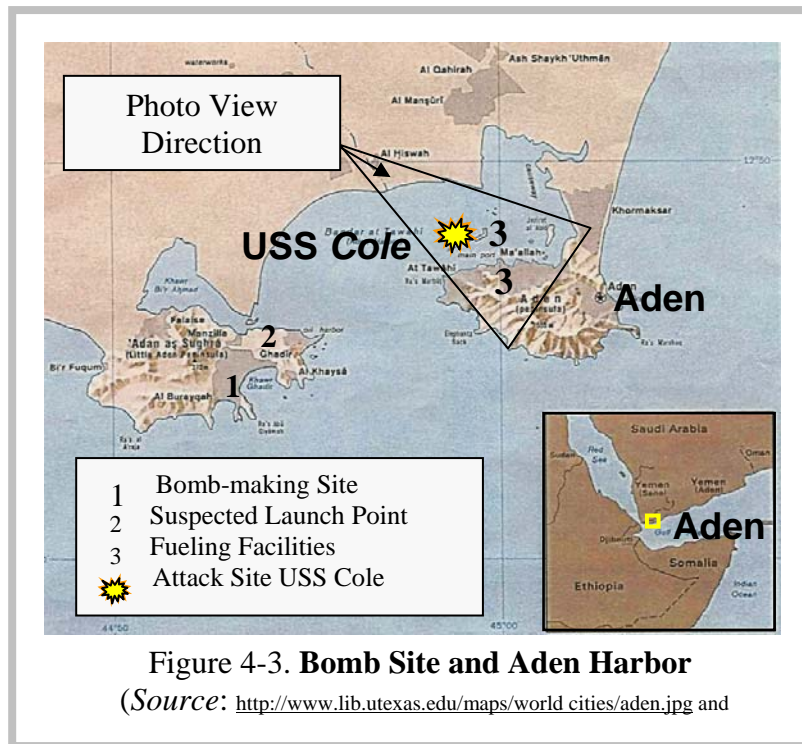
Given the pending 3300-mile movement from the Suez Canal to the Northern Arabian Gulf, USS *Cole* required refueling. According to U.S. Navy policy, an oiler [fuel ship] does not accompany a single ship during transits, so the decision was made that USS *Cole* would conduct a brief stop for fuel (BSF) in Aden, Yemen.

The operational requirement to refuel necessitated the development of: (1) a force protection plan for the refueling operation at Aden, (2) a logistics request for husbanding services at the port, and, (3) a request for the necessary diplomatic clearances. USS *Cole* met these requirements and continued the route down the Red Sea entering the port of Aden on October 12<sup>th</sup>. She moored to the starboard side of a refueling platform at 8:49 a.m. (local Yemen time).<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Tommy Franks, "General Tommy Franks Testimony on USS *Cole*" [database on-line] (Washington, D.C., 25 October 2000); 5; available from <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/ship/docs/man-sh-ddg51-001025zd.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.



**Figure 4-4. Aerial View of Port at Aden**  
 (Source: <http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib>)

## Background

The U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of operations is a large, dangerous, and complex region, consisting of 25 countries, with over half a billion people from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds. The region is historically unstable, yet remains vital to U.S. national interests. It contains vast energy resources, key air and sea lines of communication, and critical maritime choke points. Economic and political disruptions can have profound global consequences. Sources of instability within the region include hegemony, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and ballistic missiles. Conflict is a norm in this region. Between USCENTCOM forming in 1983 as a U.S. military command and the USS *Cole* bombing in 2000, USCENTCOM responded to crises on 23 occasions.<sup>158</sup>

U.S. Navy ships began making brief stops for fuel at Aden in January 1999. The decision to go into Aden for refueling was based on operational as well as geo-strategic factors and included an assessment of the terrorist and conventional threats in the region. The Horn of Africa was in great turmoil in 1998, as exemplified by continuing instability in Somalia, the U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, an ongoing war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and an internal war in Sudan. In December 1998, combat strikes were conducted against Iraq for non-compliance with UN Security Council Resolutions. As of December 1998, 14 of the 20 countries in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR) were characterized as “High Threat” countries.

Djibouti, which had been the U.S. Navy refueling stop in the Southern Red Sea for over a decade, began to deteriorate as a useful port because of the Eritrea-Ethiopia war. This war caused increased force protection concerns for our ships, as well as congestion in the port resulting in operational delays.

Aden, Yemen was seen as a viable alternative for refueling operations. Although the terrorism threat is endemic in this region. While the intelligence community and USCENTCOM regularly monitored the threat situation of the region and locales, no specific threat information or warning for Yemen or Aden indicated a pending terrorist attack on a U.S. warship, however, since the U.S. Navy began refueling operations in Aden in January 1999, U.S. Navy ships had conducted 27 brief stops for fuel, two port visits, and one logistics visit without incident. Nonetheless, Yemen was acknowledged as a high threat environment.<sup>159</sup>

## Planning and Preparation – Maritime Bombing

A U.S. Federal Indictment issued in May 2003, describes a primary timeline of terrorist planning and preparation in 1999 and 2000 for the October 2000 terrorist attack. A U.S. Federal grand jury indicted two Yemeni nationals for plotting the October 2000 attack on the USS *Cole* in the harbor of Aden, Yemen. The Indictment alleges that Usama bin Laden’s 1998 fatwa authorizing the killing of Americans motivated the defendants to conduct the terrorist attack on the USS *Cole*. Although Usama bin Laden may not be linked to the specific direction of the USS *Cole* attack, several links exist among al Qaeda operatives and the terrorists in this attack.

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 6 and 7.

This Indictment charges Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Ali al-Badawi and Fahd al-Quso with various terrorism offenses, including murder of U.S. nationals and murder of U.S. military personnel. Badawi was also charged with attempting, with co-conspirators, to attack the U.S. destroyer USS *The Sullivans* in January 2000, while it was refueling in the port of Aden. The defendants, both alleged to be longtime al Qaeda associates, remain at large overseas. They had been in custody in Yemen until they escaped from prison in early 2003.

The table in this case study displays a timeline and series of actions leading to the terrorist attack on the USS *Cole*. Although not known by U.S. authorities at the time of the USS *Cole* attack, terrorists had attempted to attack USS *The Sullivans* on January 3, 2000, while the ship was berthed for servicing in Aden Harbor. Terrorists loaded a boat with explosives and launched the boat from the beach. However, the attack was aborted when the boat sank under the weight of the explosives. The May 2003 Federal Indictment alleges that the terrorists salvaged the explosives, refit the boat, and began plotting another attack.

Badawi was a key al Qaeda operative in Aden recruited by terrorists closely associated with Usama bin Laden. Badawi assisted in procuring safehouses in Aden for terrorists, obtained the attack boat, and provided the trailer and truck used to tow the boat to Aden harbor. Quso facilitated the plot to attack USS *Cole* and prepared to film the attack from an apartment on the hills overlooking Aden Harbor. Among several unindicted co-conspirators, one is Tafiq Muhammed Saleh Bin Roshayd Bin Attash, also known as Khallad, and Abdul Rahim Mohammed Hussein Abda Al-Nasheri, who are alleged to be veteran students and teachers in the al Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan. Saif al Adel, a member of al Qaeda's military committee, who allegedly participated in the planning of these attacks, is also indicted in the East Africa embassy bombing case. Badawi, at the direction of Khallad and Nasheri, went to Saudi Arabia, purchased a boat large enough to carry explosives, and a trailer and truck to tow the boat, and secured a safehouse in Aden to hide the boat until the attack.

Raed Hijazi was the man in charge of terrorist training for the USS *Cole* attack. According to U.S. sources, Raed Hijazi is a former Boston [USA] taxi driver and an American citizen of Palestinian origin. Jordanian security officials link him as a close associate of Mohammed Abu Zubayda, a member of Bin Laden's inner circle. Hijazi was arrested in Syria at the end of 2000 and later transferred to Jordan where he had been sentenced to death in his absence for involvement in Bin Laden's alleged millennium plot, which included targets in Jordan and the U.S. Some evidence exists that the suicide attack in Aden Harbor was originally planned as part of the al Qaeda millennium plot.<sup>160</sup>

According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Khalid al-Midhar, a hijacker aboard the plane that crashed into the Pentagon on September 11 had earlier been observed on a surveillance video in Malaysia meeting an unnamed man who is suspected of involvement in the USS *Cole* attack. According to Abd al-Karim al-Iryani, who was Yemen's prime minister at the time of the attack, "Khalid al-Midhar was one of the *Cole* perpetrators, involved in preparations...He was in Yemen at the time and stayed after the *Cole* bombing for

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<sup>160</sup> "Attack on the USS *Cole*," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 April 2004.



a while, then he left.”<sup>161</sup> Association of al Qaeda operatives to members of this terrorist act in Aden Harbor appears conclusive.

**Table 4-1. Timeline for USS *Cole* Maritime Bombing**  
 “On or About Dates”<sup>162</sup>

Chronology	Event
Spring 1999	NASHERI <sup>163</sup> enlists BADAWI <sup>164</sup> with a letter from KHALLAD <sup>165</sup> to assist in a terrorist operation.
Summer 1999	BADAWI locates a residence in Aden that provides privacy.
Summer 1999	NASHERI leases property in Aden for six-month period.
Summer 1999	NASHERI directs BADAWI to procure a boat and a truck to tow the boat to Aden Harbor.
Summer 1999	NASHERI and other individuals secure a boat on the property.
3 January 2000	NASHERI and other individuals transport an explosives-laden boat from the property to the Aden Harbor beachfront.
3 January 2000	NASHERI and other individuals launch an explosives-laden boat with intention of bombing USS <i>The Sullivans</i> in Aden Harbor. The explosives-laden boat sinks shortly after launching.
4 January 2000	NASHERI and other individuals return to the beachfront and salvage the sunken boat and explosives.
January 2000	QUSO <sup>166</sup> and NIBRASS <sup>167</sup> travel to Bangkok, Thailand. QUSO is directed to shave and wear western-style clothing so he doesn't attract attention on trip. They deliver approximately \$36,000 to KHALLAD in Bangkok, Thailand.
Spring 2000	NASHERI informs BADAWI of aborted attempt to bomb USS <i>The Sullivans</i> , and discusses ongoing plot to attack U.S. naval ship and comply with Usama Bin Laden edict to drive American forces from the Arabian Peninsula.
Summer 2000	HASAN <sup>168</sup> leases a lodging to act as a safehouse in Aden.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York. Indictment S12 98 Cr. 1023 (KTD). United States of America, Plaintiff, vs. Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Ali Al-Badawi and Fahd Al-Quso, Defendants; available from <http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/cole/usalbadawi051503ind.pdf>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2004.

<sup>163</sup> Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein Abda Al-Nasheri, aka NASHERI. S12 98 Cr. 1023

<sup>164</sup> Jamal Ahemd Mohammed Ali Al-Badawi, aka BADAWI. S12 98 Cr. 1023

<sup>165</sup> Tafiq Muhammed Saleh Bin Roshayd Bin Attash, aka KHALLAD. S12 98 Cr. 1023

<sup>166</sup> Fahd Al-Quso, aka QUSO. S12 98 Cr. 1023

<sup>167</sup> Ibrahim Al-Thawar, aka NIBRASS. S12 98 Cr. 1023

Summer 2000	HASAN leases an apartment to act as an observation post perched on the hills overlooking Aden harbor.
Summer 2000	KHALLAD and NASHERI meet with Usama Bin Laden and other individuals in Afghanistan. NASHERI tests explosives while in Afghanistan.
Summer-Fall 2000	NASHERI and other individuals refit the boat that had sunk in January 2000, and test the explosives that had sunk in the boat.
September 2000	BADAWI trains QUSO to film the planned attack on a U.S. ship in Aden Harbor from an area apartment and vantage point.
Sept - Oct 2000	BADAWI provides QUSO with a pager, and informs QUSO that he'll receive a predetermined code that would indicate the imminent attack on a U.S. ship. QUSO would depart to the area apartment and vantage point.
Sept – Oct 2000	KHALLAD returns from Yemen to Afghanistan.
October 12, 2000	NIBRASS, HASAN, and other individuals tow the explosives-laden boat with a truck to the Aden Harbor beachfront.
October 12, 2000	QUSO departs his residence to go to the vantage point.
October 12, 2000	NIBRASS and HASAN board the explosives-laden boat and launch the boat-bomb in the direction of the USS <i>Cole</i> .
October 12 11:18 a.m.	NIBRASS and HASAN offer friendly gestures to observing crew members of the USS <i>Cole</i> , and steer the boat alongside USS <i>Cole</i> . <b>Boat-bomb detonates next to USS <i>Cole</i>.</b> <sup>169</sup> 17 U.S. sailors killed; 39 U.S. sailors wounded. The terrorists NIBRASS and HASAN killed in suicide attack. The blast leaves a 40-foot diameter hole in ship's side with the ship in jeopardy of sinking.

## The Attack

As the USS *Cole* entered Aden harbor, the ship did not dock at the quayside. Refueling took place at a water-borne platform known as a dolphin. This fuel transfer point is a commercially run Yemeni operation and lies about 600 meters offshore. The U.S. Navy contracted for such refueling operations.

After verifying the refueling alignment, refueling operations commenced at 10:31 a.m. At 11:18, two suicide attackers detonated their explosives-laden boat against the side of the USS *Cole*.<sup>170</sup> The small boat was probably loaded with between 400 to 700 pounds of explosives, and the blast blew a 40-foot hole in the port side, amidships, of the USS *Cole*. U.S. analysis of explosive residues found at the blast site indicates that the terrorist bombers used C-4.

<sup>168</sup> Hassan Awadh Al-Khami, aka HASAN. S12 98 Cr. 1023

<sup>169</sup> Franks, 7.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

## Supplemental Vignettes: The Immediate Aftermath

Shortly after the boat suicide attack, three groups claimed responsibility for the Aden attack – the Islamic Army of Aden-Abyan previously unknown in Yemen, the Army of Mohammed, and the Islamic Deterrence Forces (IDF). The Army of Mohammed also claimed responsibility for bombing the British embassy in Sana'a the following day. The Islamic Army has previously claimed responsibility for several incidents in Yemen which turned out not to have been terrorist acts. The IDF's statement said the attack was in "defence [defense] of the honour [honor] and dignity of the Islamic nation and to avenge the blood of the oppressed Muslim nation in Palestine with the blessing of the American regime for that enemy ... This operation will not be the last, as such attacks will continue against our enemy, and the enemy of our Arab and Muslim nation: America and its artificial Zionist entity in Palestine."<sup>171</sup>

In stark contrast to terrorist announcements, many governments and allied military forces provided immediate responsive support during the aftermath of the USS *Cole* bombing. The Government of Yemen provided initial medical support and security forces to protect U.S. Government officials arriving in the area. France and Djibouti helped with initial medical evacuation and treatment. Royal Navy ships HMS *Marlborough* and HMS *Cumberland* provided damage control and other assistance. Expedited overflight clearances were approved, as well as the use of air bases from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar.<sup>172</sup>

### Intelligence Threat and Warning

The threat situation was monitored regularly in Yemen and throughout the U.S. military area of responsibility (AOR). The U.S. intelligence community and USCENTCOM considered this area a High Threat environment. A number of threat assessments had been conducted in the port and throughout the area. However, leading up to the attack on USS *Cole* on October 12th, no specific threat information for Yemen or for the port of Aden was reported that would cause a change to the assessment.<sup>173</sup>

The *DOD USS Cole Commission Report* (9 January 2001) states that intelligence priorities and resources have shifted from a Cold War focus to new and emerging threats only at the margins. Contemporary events indicate that intelligence resources need to be reprioritized for collection and analysis, including human intelligence and signal intelligence, against terrorism. Intelligence production must be refocused and tailored to safeguard transiting units in order to mitigate the terrorist threat. Furthermore, a requirement exists for an increase in counterintelligence (CI) resources dedicated to combating terrorism and development of clearer CI assessment standards.<sup>174</sup>

The investigation by the DOD Commission identifies that the commanding officer of the USS *Cole* did not have the specific intelligence, focused training, appropriate equipment or on-scene security support to effectively prevent or deter such a determined, pre-planned assault

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<sup>171</sup> "Attack on the USS *Cole*," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 April 2004.

<sup>172</sup> Franks, 3.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>174</sup> *DoD USS Cole Commission Report*, 1.

on his ship.<sup>175</sup> In-transit units require intelligence support tailored to the terrorist threat in their immediate area of operations. This support must be dedicated from a higher echelon with focused analysis and tailored production.<sup>176</sup> Independent transiting units must be better trained and resourced to submit appropriate requests for information to force intelligence organizations. This will allow these intelligence activities to be responsive to the transiter's anti-terrorism/force protection (AT/FP) requirements.

### Security Measures in Effect

Military sources and several news agencies reviewed the actions conducted, as well as actions not conducted, by the ship and crew as the USS *Cole* entered the harbor. Clearly, the terrorists were able to observe patterns that previous ships displayed during their visits to Aden Harbor. For example, terrorists could easily see if U.S. forces attempted to control the movement of small boats near a warship in the harbor, as well as what crewmember presence and actions were visible on deck.<sup>177</sup>

The USS *Cole* had a crew trained in force protection and was conducting a force protection plan for the particular circumstance of a refueling operation in Aden Harbor when the terrorists attacked. Not all Threat Condition measures were being implemented during the refueling task. While refueling was ongoing, a small boat appeared about 09:20 a.m. to remove garbage from the USS *Cole*. This boat and two men were turned away without conducting trash removal. However, a short time later, garbage removal was authorized and three garbage barges were expected. Two were tied up on the port side of the ship. Then, a small boat about 35 feet in length was observed coming quickly out from the city but slowed as it neared the USS *Cole*. The boat and two men showed no hostile intent, and were even waving to the crew and smiling. Some crew assumed this was a third garbage boat. This small boat continued to move toward the USS *Cole* from the 11 o'clock position relative to the ship's bow, pulled alongside the port side, amidships, of the USS *Cole*. The two-man boat crew detonated the explosives as a suicide attack.<sup>178</sup>

From post-attack analysis recommendations, U.S. military forces must create an integrated system of training that produces a unit that is clearly and visibly ready, alert and capable. To achieve this level of AT/FP proficiency, this type of training must be elevated to the same priority as primary mission training.<sup>179</sup> DOD and Service guidance on the content of anti-terrorism/force protection Level III commander-type training must be more definitive if senior field grade officer (O-5 and O-6) levels are to execute their AT/FP responsibilities.<sup>180</sup> Demonstrating visible force protection by transiting units can more effectively deter terrorist attacks.<sup>181</sup> In any case, all missions should include an

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<sup>175</sup> Department of Defense News Release Archive, "DoD News: Navy Announces Results of Its Investigation on USS *Cole*," available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2001/b011192001\\_bt031-01.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2001/b011192001_bt031-01.html); Internet; accessed 11 February 2004.

<sup>176</sup> *DoD USS Cole Commission Report*, 7.

<sup>177</sup> "Attack on the USS *Cole*," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>.

<sup>178</sup> *Case Study: USS Cole (DDG 67)*, U.S. Navy Center for Antiterrorism and Navy Security Forces, Antiterrorism Officer (ATO) Course, 2005. 1 and 9.

<sup>179</sup> *DoD USS Cole Commission Report*, 2.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

antiterrorism mission statement. Using a defense in depth concept for force protection with assessments, warnings, and threat zones can minimize vulnerabilities. Clearly understood friendly forces rules of engagement (ROE) and posted orders provide standards and guidance for conducting deliberate, and as required, instantaneous decisions and actions. Doctrine, with officers and crews trained and ready in tactics, techniques, and procedures, can enhance force protection postures.

### Host Nation Relationship

While classifying the diplomatic clearance and logistics requirement process may improve the operational security of transiting units, it is not practical due to the commercial nature of the process. Local providers of goods, services, and transportation must be employed to support these type operations. Consequently, they must be evaluated in ways that enhance the AT/FP posture of the in-transit unit.<sup>182</sup> According to Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, refueling arrangements had been made 10 to 12 days earlier through the U.S. Embassy in Yemen - a standard procedure.<sup>183</sup> Implementing proactive AT/FP measures must mitigate the real and potential effect of public knowledge of visits by U.S. military forces.

**“As I have previously stated in testimony before this [Senate and House Armed Services] committee, ‘Our men, women, DOD civilians, and Diplomats in the region are under constant observation, and, in some cases, being stalked, everyday, 24-hours-a-day, because the terrorist threat in this region is very real.’”<sup>184</sup>**

General Tommy Franks  
Commander  
U.S. Central Command

The U.S. criminal investigation into the attack was led by the U.S. FBI, which immediately deployed nearly 200 agents and technicians to begin the arduous work of putting together the pieces of the puzzle and finding who was responsible. The FBI worked closely with officials from the Naval Criminal Investigation Service, NYPD [New York Police Department] officers from the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, and Yemeni investigators.<sup>185</sup>

Yemen, while recognizing that it had to cooperate to some extent for the sake of its relations with the U.S., insisted on maintaining its independence and sovereignty in a case which had occurred within its national territory. Investigative disputes between Yemen and the U.S. resulted in a phone call from President Bill Clinton to President Salih. On November 6, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said: “We got good cooperation during the first

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>183</sup> “Attack on the USS Cole,” Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>.

<sup>184</sup> Franks, 7.

<sup>185</sup> Department of Justice, “Al Qaeda Associates Charged in Attack on USS Cole, Attempted Attack on Another U.S. Naval Vessel,” Public Relations Release #298: 05-15-03, 3; 15 May 2003; available on [Http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2003/May/03\\_298.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2003/May/03_298.htm); Internet; accessed 16 February 2004.

phase. ... We're in discussions with them [the Yemenis] on the modalities of how we will cooperate further in the future..."

### **Terrorist Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures**

Post-attack investigation revealed there may have been at least three previous terrorist attack attempts in Yemen. In the first attempt during November 1999, terrorists had planned to attack a convoy of U.S. military personnel heading to Yemen's National Center for the Removal of Land Mines. This was foiled when Yemeni security forces discovered explosives about a mile from the hotel where the Americans were staying. Suspects questioned in connection with the USS *Cole* bombing were said to have known details of the route taken by the Americans to and from the center. A second attempt allegedly targeted the Royal Hotel in Aden, where most of the 30 American servicemen were billeted. The third attempt was an intended attack on 3 January 2000 to bomb USS *The Sullivans*, a U.S. destroyer warship as it refueled in Aden.<sup>186</sup>

The U.S. Federal Indictment states that terrorists conducted their planning and preparations through many ruses and covert means. These included, but were not limited to, front [false] companies, false identity and travel documents, coded correspondence, and false information provided to authorities.<sup>187</sup>

The terrorists organized in a cellular structure for command and control. After recruitment, cell members received deliberate phases of indoctrination and training. Leaders, cadre, and supporters of this cell were focused on a particular mission and target of attacking a U.S. ship. When an unexpected sinking of the terrorist bomb-boat occurred and precluded the January 2000 attack, cell members regrouped and continued to prepare for a similar mission in Aden Harbor. The sequence of planning and preparation notes a very small cell that usually compartmented knowledge among two or three individuals, and insulated more senior terrorist leaders from the specific terrorist act against the USS *Cole*.

### **Operational Lessons Learned**

As noted in the *DOD USS Cole Commission Report*, the links between national policies and resources, and individual transiting units are the geographic Unified CINCs or military commanders-in-chief [since retitled as Combatant Commander] and their [Service] Component Commanders. A significant lesson learned is to recognize that transiting units do not have time or resources to focus on a series of locations while in transit. This requires these units to rely on others to support their efforts to deter, disrupt and mitigate terrorist attacks. The Component Commander has the operational war-fighting mindset for the region and is capable of controlling the resources to fight the fight and tailor specific anti-terrorism/force protection measures to protect transiting units.<sup>188</sup> U.S. military forces must get out of the purely defensive mode by proactively applying AT/FP techniques and assets to detect and deter terrorists. Second, an additional lesson learned is acknowledging that transfer

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<sup>186</sup> "Attack on the USS Cole," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>.

<sup>187</sup> Indictment S12 98 Cr. 1023, 6 and 7.

<sup>188</sup> *DoD USS Cole Commission Report*, 2

of transiting units between and within theaters must be better coordinated. Third, a discrete operation risk management model should be adopted and utilized in AT/FP planning and execution.

## **Case Discussion Questions**

### **Intelligence and Threat Warning?**

What activities preceding the bombing attack might have indicated the tactical targeting of the USS *Cole* in an operational level U.S. intelligence estimate?

### **Security Measures in Effect?**

How did U.S. force protection measures encourage the terrorists to select a U.S. Navy ship for attack?

What does the proximity of distance of the “boat bomb” detonation to the USS *Cole* suggest in force protection vulnerabilities?

Given the same bomb (IED) delivery means and scenario of the USS *Cole*, how could terrorists have increased mass casualty effects as even more devastating?

### **Host Nation Relationship?**

How could the U.S. military unit chain of command and local Yemeni have cooperated more effectively in harbor security and post-attack investigations?

What rationale existed for choosing Aden harbor as a refueling site in the region?

### **Terrorist Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures?**

In what other instances has al Qaeda created a vulnerability by employing innovative tactics?

Why did the terrorists use a small boat to attack the USS *Cole* in Aden harbor?

How did the terrorist group structure itself, communicate, and operate during the phases of planning and execution of the USS *Cole* bombing attack?

## **Assessment**

International media attention spotlighted the successful terrorist maritime attack on U.S. military forces in Yemen. U.S. military forces suffered loss of life and serious wounds, and about \$250 million in damage to a warship. Terrorists achieved objectives of notoriety with a worldwide audience and significant psychological trauma of a global audience through U.S. military casualties, a visibly damaged U.S. warship, and a significant escalation of maritime terrorism.

In January 2001, Usama bin Laden celebrated the bombing of USS *Cole* with a poem he recited at his son's wedding:

A destroyer: even the brave fear its might.  
 It inspires horror in the harbour [harbor] and in the open sea.  
 She sails into the waves  
 Flanked by arrogance, haughtiness and false power.  
 To her doom she moves quickly  
 A dinghy awaits her, riding the waves.<sup>189</sup>

U.S. military forces lost prestige when a berth for refueling considered relatively safe, was the site of a devastating attack by suicide terrorists. The Yemeni Government lost national prestige due to its inability to prevent such a terrorist attack in one of its principal harbors and seaports. The attack strained the credibility of selected Yemeni government officials with regional neighbors and commercial business associates. From an Islamic extremist perspective, the attack denounced Yemeni cooperation with U.S. military forces near the holy places of the Islamic faith.

Despite a long investigation by U.S. and Yemeni authorities there is still no conclusive proof that bin Laden specifically ordered the attack on the *USS Cole*. However, Badawi, regarded as the most senior of the *Cole* suspects who have been arrested, told his investigators that he received telephone instructions for the bombing from Mohammed Omar al-Harazi in the United Arab Emirates. Badawi said he had originally met Harazi in Afghanistan during the war.<sup>190</sup> Badawi indicated that Al-Harazi's tone and manner led him to believe that Al-Harazi was receiving orders and financing for the attack on the *USS Cole* from bin Laden.<sup>191</sup> A senior Yemen government official stated that Al-Harazi was the organizer for a foiled plot to blow up the U.S. embassy in India.<sup>192</sup>



**Figure 4-5. The USS Cole (DDG 67) Glides to Sea.**

(Source: U.S. Navy photo by Stacey Bynington.)

<sup>189</sup> "Attack on the USS Cole," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> "Yemen names 6 suspects in USS Cole bombing," CNN.com, World - Middle East, 13 December 2000. [database on-line]; available at <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/12/13/yemen.cole.ap/>; Internet; accessed 26 April 2004.

<sup>192</sup> "Attack on the USS Cole," Yemen Gateway [database on-line]; available from <http://www.al-bab.com/yeman/cole1.htm>.



The initial damage repair estimate to the USS *Cole* (DDG 67), a modern Aegis missile equipped warship, was just under \$250 million. In 2001 U.S. dollar value, this repair cost was equivalent to about one-fourth of the total construction and commissioning cost of the warship.<sup>193</sup> Following 14 months of repairs, the guided missile destroyer USS *Cole* (DDG 67) rejoined the U.S. Atlantic Fleet at sea in April 2002.

**“We have not forgotten this nation’s commitment to bring to justice all those who plot murder and orchestrate terror – no matter how long they run or how far they flee.”<sup>194</sup>**

Honorable John Ashcroft  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice

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<sup>193</sup> Perl and O’Rourke, 1.

<sup>194</sup> John Ashcroft, “Remarks of Attorney General John Ashcroft, Indictment for the Bombing of the U.S.S. Cole, [database on-line] (Washington, D.C., 15 May 2003); available from <http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/speeches/2003/051503agremarksucccole.htm>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2004.

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## Glossary

**Aleph:** name of former cult Aum Shinrikyo; cult renamed itself in January 2000.

**Ammonium nitrate fertilizer:** chemical mixture that can be used in manufacture of improvised explosive.

**anarchism:** A political theory holding all forms of governmental authority to be unnecessary and undesirable and advocating a society based on voluntary cooperation and free association of individuals and groups. (Webster's)

**anti-terrorism:** (AT) (JP 1-02) Defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts, to include limited response and containment by local military forces.

**AOR:** Area of responsibility

**ATF:** U.S. Federal Bureau of Alcohol, tobacco, and Firearms.

**Aum Shinrikyo:** Cult responsible for the 1995 sarin attack on population in the Tokyo subway system.

**biological agent:** (JP 1-02) A microorganism that causes disease in personnel, plants, or animals or causes the deterioration of materiel.

**biological weapon:** (JP 1-02) An item of materiel, which projects, disperses, or disseminates a biological agent including arthropod vectors.

**bioregulators:** (CBRN Handbook) Biochemicals that regulate bodily functions. Bioregulators that are produced by the body are termed "endogenous." Some of these same bioregulators can be chemically synthesized.

**blister agents:** (CBRN Handbook) Substances that cause blistering of the skin. Exposure is through liquid or vapor contact with any exposed tissue (eyes, skin, lungs).

**blood agents:** (CBRN Handbook) Substances that injure a person by interfering with cell respiration (the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between blood and tissues).

**CBRNE:** Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high yield explosive categories normally associated with weapons of mass destruction.

**chemical weapon:** (JP 1-02) Together or separately, (a) a toxic chemical and its precursors, except when intended for a purpose not prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention; (b) a munition or device, specifically designed to cause death or other harm through toxic properties of those chemicals specified in (a), above, which would be released as a result of the employment of such munition or device; (c) any equipment specifically designed for use directly in connection with the employment of munitions or devices specified in (b) above.

**chemical agent:** (CBRN Handbook) A chemical substance that is intended for use in military operations to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through its physiological effects. Excluded from consideration are riot control agents, and smoke and flame materials. The agent may appear as a vapor, aerosol, or liquid; it can be either a casualty/toxic agent or an incapacitating agent.

**choking agents:** (CBRN Handbook) Substances that cause physical injury to the lungs. Exposure is through inhalation. In extreme cases, membranes swell and lungs become filled with liquid. Death results from lack of oxygen; hence, the victim is "choked."

**conflict:** (Army) A political-military situation between peace and war, distinguished from peace by the introduction of organized political violence and from war by its reliance on political methods. It shares many of the goals and characteristics of war, including the destruction of governments and the control of territory. See FM 100-20.

**COCOM:** Combatant command, that is, command authority. See page 247 footnote of handbook. (JP 1-02)

**consequence management:** Traditionally, consequence management has been predominantly an emergency management function and included measures to protect public health and safety, restore essential government services, and provide emergency relief to governments, businesses, and individuals affected by the consequences of terrorism. The requirements of consequence management and crisis management are combined in the NRP.

**CONUS:** Continental United States

**counter-terrorism:** (CT) (JP 1-02) Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism.

**crisis management:** Traditionally, crisis management was predominantly a law enforcement function and included measures to identify, acquire, and plan the use of resources needed to anticipate, prevent, and/or resolve a threat or act of terrorism. The requirements of consequence management and crisis management are combined in the NRP.

**Cult:** A quasi-religious group, often living in a colony, with a charismatic leader who indoctrinates members with unorthodox or extremist views. (*Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*)

**cyber-terrorism:** (FBI) — A criminal act perpetrated by the use of computers and telecommunications capabilities, resulting in violence, destruction and/or disruption of services to create fear by causing confusion and uncertainty within a given population, with the goal of influencing a government or population to conform to a particular political, social, or ideological agenda.

**DSWA:** Defense Special Weapons Agency

**Defense Support of Civil Authorities:** (DSCA) An emergent term under consideration for inclusion to the 2004 National Response Plan that incorporates the Department of Defense support to domestic emergencies, law enforcement, and other activities. A traditional overarching term is Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA) which includes Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) and Military Assistance to Law Enforcement Agencies (MACLEA). See NRP.

**Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization:** (DFTO) A political designation determined by the U.S. Department of State. Listing as a DFTO imposes legal penalties for membership, prevents travel into the U.S., and proscribes assistance and funding activities within the U.S. or by U.S. citizens.

**DIRLAUTH:** Direct liaison authorized

**DHS:** Department of Homeland Security

**dysfunctional state:** A nation or state whose declared government cannot fulfill one or more of the core functions of governance, such as defense, internal security, revenue collection, resource allocation, etc.

**failed state:** A dysfunctional state which also has multiple competing political factions in conflict within its borders, or has no functioning governance above the local level. This does not imply that a central government facing an insurgency is automatically a failed state. If essential functions of government continue in areas controlled by the central authority, it has not "failed."

**force protection:** Security program designed to protect Service members, civilian employees, family members, facilities, and equipment, in all locations and situations, accomplished through planned and

integrated application of combating terrorism, physical security, operations security, personal protective services, and supported by intelligence, counterintelligence, and other security programs.

**force protection condition (FPCON):** There is a graduated series of Force Protection Conditions ranging from Force Protection Conditions Normal to Force Protection Conditions Delta. There is a process by which commanders at all levels can raise or lower the Force Protection Conditions based on local conditions, specific threat information and/or guidance from higher headquarters. The four Force Protection Conditions above normal are:

**Force Protection Condition ALPHA--**This condition applies when there is a general threat of possible terrorist activity against personnel and facilities, the nature and extent of which are unpredictable, and circumstances do not justify full implementation of Force Protection Conditions BRAVO measures. The measures in this Force Protection Conditions must be capable of being maintained indefinitely.

**Force Protection Condition BRAVO--**This condition applies when an increased and more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. The measures in this Force Protection Conditions must be capable of being maintained for weeks without causing undue hardship, affecting operational capability, and aggravating relations with local authorities.

**Force Protection Condition CHARLIE--**This condition applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist action against personnel and facilities is imminent. Implementation of measures in this Force Protection Conditions for more than a short period probably will create hardship and affect the peacetime activities of the unit and its personnel.

**Force Protection Condition DELTA--**This condition applies in the immediate area where a terrorist attack has occurred or when intelligence has been received that terrorist action against a specific location or person is likely. Normally, this Force Protection Conditions is declared as a localized condition.

**guerrilla warfare:** (JP 1-02, NATO) Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces.

**GWOT:** Global War on Terrorism

**Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS):** The advisory system provides measures to remain vigilant, prepared, and ready to deter terrorist attacks. The following Threat Conditions each represent an increasing risk of terrorist attacks. Beneath each Threat Condition are suggested protective measures, recognizing that the heads of Federal departments and agencies are responsible for developing and implementing appropriate agency-specific protective measures:

- **Low Condition (Green).** This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks. Federal departments and agencies should consider the following general measures in addition to the agency-specific Protective Measures they develop and implement: refining and exercising as appropriate preplanned Protective Measures; ensuring personnel receive proper training on the Homeland Security Advisory System and specific preplanned department or agency Protective Measures; and institutionalizing a process to assure that all facilities and regulated sectors are regularly assessed for vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks, and all reasonable measures are taken to mitigate these vulnerabilities.
- **Guarded Condition (Blue).** This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the Protective Measures taken in the previous Threat Condition, Federal departments and agencies should consider the following general measures in addition to the agency-specific Protective Measures that they will develop and implement: checking communications with designated emergency response or command locations; reviewing and updating emergency response procedures; and providing the public with any information that would strengthen its ability to act appropriately.

- **Elevated Condition (Yellow).** An Elevated Condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the Protective Measures taken in the previous Threat Conditions, Federal departments and agencies should consider the following general measures in addition to the Protective Measures that they will develop and implement: increasing surveillance of critical locations; coordinating emergency plans as appropriate with nearby jurisdictions; assessing whether the precise characteristics of the threat require the further refinement of preplanned Protective Measures; and implementing, as appropriate, contingency and emergency response plans.
- **High Condition (Orange).** A High Condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the Protective Measures taken in the previous Threat Conditions, Federal departments and agencies should consider the following general measures in addition to the agency-specific Protective Measures that they will develop and implement: coordinating necessary security efforts with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies or any National Guard or other appropriate armed forces organizations; taking additional precautions at public events and possibly considering alternative venues or even cancellation; preparing to execute contingency procedures, such as moving to an alternate site or dispersing their workforce; and restricting threatened facility access to essential personnel only.
- **Severe Condition (Red).** A Severe Condition reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks. Under most circumstances, the Protective Measures for a Severe Condition are not intended to be sustained for substantial periods of time. In addition to the Protective Measures in the previous Threat Conditions, Federal departments and agencies also should consider the following general measures in addition to the agency-specific Protective Measures that they will develop and implement: increasing or redirecting personnel to address critical emergency needs; signing emergency response personnel and pre-positioning and mobilizing specially trained teams or resources; monitoring, redirecting, or constraining transportation systems; and closing public and government facilities.

**HUMINT:** Human intelligence

**IED:** Improvised Explosive Device. Devices that have been fabricated in an improvised manner and that incorporate explosives or destructive, lethal, noxious, pyrotechnic, or incendiary chemicals in their design.

**incapacitating agent:** (CBRN Handbook) Produce temporary physiological and/or mental effects via action on the central nervous system. Effects may persist for hours or days, but victims usually do not require medical treatment. However, such treatment speeds recovery.

**Incident Command System (ICS):** A standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. The national standard for ICS is provided by NIMS.

**industrial agent:** (CBRN Handbook) Chemicals developed or manufactured for use in industrial operations or research by industry, government, or academia. These chemicals are not primarily manufactured for the specific purpose of producing human casualties or rendering equipment, facilities, or areas dangerous for use by man. Hydrogen cyanide, cyanogen chloride, phosgene, chloropicrin and many herbicides and pesticides are industrial chemicals that also can be chemical agents.

**insurgency:** (JP 1-02, NATO) — An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.

**international:** of, relating to, or affecting two or more nations (Webster's). For our purposes, affecting two or more nations.

**JSDF:** Japanese Self Defense Force [military forces].

**Khobar Towers:** Site of 1996 terrorist bombing attack on U.S. and coalition forces in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia by the terrorist group Saudi Hizballah, a la Hizballah Al-Hijaz.

**LFA:** Lead Federal Agency. See NRP.

**Matsumoto:** site in Japan of 1994 sarin attack by the Aum Shinrikyo cult.

**McVeigh:** First name Timothy; convicted and executed U.S. domestic terrorist/bomber of Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK.

**millenarian:** Apocalyptic; forecasting the ultimate destiny of the world; foreboding imminent disaster or final doom; wildly unrestrained; ultimately decisive. (Merriam –Webster's)

**Murrah Building:** Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building; site of 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

**narco-terrorism:** (JP 3-07.4) Terrorism conducted to further the aims of drug traffickers. It may include assassinations, extortion, hijackings, bombings, and kidnappings directed against judges, prosecutors, elected officials, or law enforcement agents, and general disruption of a legitimate government to divert attention from drug operations.

**nation:** A community of people composed of one or more [nationalities](#) and possessing a more or less defined territory and government or a territorial division containing a body of people of one or more [nationalities](#) and usually characterized by relatively large size and independent status.

**nation-state:** A form of political organization under which a relatively homogeneous people inhabits a sovereign state; especially a state containing one as opposed to several nationalities.

**nerve agents:** (CBRN Handbook) Substances that interfere with the central nervous system. Exposure is primarily through contact with the liquid (skin and eyes) and secondarily through inhalation of the vapor. Three distinct symptoms associated with nerve agents are: pin-point pupils, an extreme headache, and severe tightness in the chest.

**National Incident Management System:** (NIMS). See *National Incident Management System* published by the Department of Homeland Security, 1 March 2004. The NIMS represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, technology and organizational processes to enable effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management. Nationwide context is an all-hazards, all jurisdictional levels, and multi-disciplines approach to incident management.

**National Response Plan:** (NRP) The *National Response Plan* (December 2004) is an all-discipline, all-hazards plan that establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of domestic incidents. It provides the structure and mechanisms for the coordination of Federal support to State, local, and tribal incident managers and for exercising direct Federal authorities and responsibilities.

**Nichols:** First Name Terry; convicted for involvement with Timothy McVeigh in 1995 bombing of Murrah Federal Building.

**nuclear weapon:** (JP 1-02) — A complete assembly (i.e., implosion type, gun type, or thermonuclear type), in its intended ultimate configuration which, upon completion of the prescribed arming, fusing, and firing sequence, is capable of producing the intended nuclear reaction and release of energy.

**OPCON:** Operational control, that is, transferable command authority. See Appendix H of terrorism handbook. (JP 1-02).

**operations security:** (OPSEC) A process of identifying critical information and subsequently analyzing friendly actions attendant to military operations and other activities to: a. Identify those actions that can be observed by adversary intelligence systems. b. Determine indicators hostile intelligence systems might obtain that could be interpreted or pieced together to derive critical information in time to be useful to adversaries. c. Select and execute measures that eliminate or reduce to an acceptable level the vulnerabilities of friendly actions to adversary exploitation. Also called OPSEC. (Joint Pub 1-02)

**Pathogen:** (CBRN Handbook) Any organism (usually living) capable of producing serious disease or death, such as bacteria, fungi, and viruses

**physical security:** That part of security concerned with physical measures designed to safeguard personnel; to prevent unauthorized access to equipment, installations, material and documents; and to safeguard them against espionage, sabotage, damage, and theft. (Joint Pub 1-02)

**Radiological Dispersal Device:** (RDD) (CBRN Handbook) A device (weapon or equipment), other than a nuclear explosive device, designed to disseminate radioactive material in order to cause destruction, damage, or injury by means of the radiation produced by the decay of such material.

**Radiological Emitting Device:** (RED) A device designed to disseminate radioactive material in order to cause destruction, damage, or injury by means of the radiation produced by the decay of such material. RED dissemination techniques can include intense, short duration exposure or progressive, long term exposure to radiation.

**radiological operation:** (JP 1-02) — The employment of radioactive materials or radiation producing devices to cause casualties or restrict the use of terrain. It includes the intentional employment of fallout from nuclear weapons.

**Ruby Ridge:** Site of 1992 incident between U.S. citizens and Federal agents.

**sarin:** a colorless, odorless, tasteless, human-made chemical warfare agent.

**setback:** Distance between outer perimeter and nearest point of buildings or structures within. Generally referred to in terms of explosive blast mitigation.

**Shoko Asahara;** Self-named leader of the cult Aum Shinrikyo; convicted of ordering the 1995 sarin attack on the population in the Tokyo subway system.

**state:** A politically organized body of people usually occupying a definite territory; especially one that is sovereign.

**TACON:** Tactical control, that is, command authority with detailed limitations and responsibilities inherent to operational control. See Appendix H of terrorism handbook. (JP 1-02).

**terror tactics:** Given that the Army defines tactics as “the art and science of employing available means to win battles and engagements,” then terror tactics should be considered “the art and science of employing violence, terror and intimidation to inculcate fear in the pursuit of political, religious, or ideological goals.”

**terrorism:** (JP 1-02) — The calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.

**terrorist:** (JP 1-02) — An individual who uses violence, terror, and intimidation to achieve a result.



**terrorist goals:** The term *goals* will refer to the strategic end or end state that the terrorist objectives are intended to obtain.

**terrorist group:** Any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism (U.S. Dept of State)

**terrorist objectives:** The standard definition of *objective* is – “The clearly defined, decisive, and attainable aims which every military operation should be directed towards” (JP 1-02). For the purposes of this work, terrorist objectives will refer to the intended outcome or result of one or a series of terrorist operations or actions.

**toxic chemical agent:** (CBRN Handbook) Produce incapacitation, serious injury, or death. They can be used to incapacitate or kill victims. These agents are the choking, blister, nerve, and blood agents.

**toxin agent:** (JP 1-02) A poison formed as a specific secretion product in the metabolism of a vegetable or animal organism, as distinguished from inorganic poisons. Such poisons can also be manufactured by synthetic processes.

**transnational:** Extending or going beyond national boundaries (Webster’s). In this context, not limited to or centered within a single nation.

**underground:** A covert unconventional warfare organization established to operate in areas denied to the guerrilla forces or conduct operations not suitable for guerrilla forces.

**unified command:** As a term in the Federal application of the Incident Command System (ICS), defines agencies working together through their designated Incident Commanders at a single Incident Command Post (ICP) to establish a common set of objectives and strategies, and a single Incident Action Plan. This is NOT “unified command” as defined by the Department of Defense.

**UXO:** Unexploded ordnance

**VBIED:** Vehicle borne improvised explosive device

**Waco:** Site of 1993 incident between U.S. citizens of the Branch Davidian cult and Federal agents.

**WOT:** War on Terrorism

**WMD:** (JP 1-02) Weapons of Mass Destruction. Weapons that are capable of a high order of destruction and/or of being used in such a manner as to destroy large numbers of people. Weapons of mass destruction can be high explosives or nuclear, biological, chemical, and radiological weapons, but exclude the means of transporting or propelling the weapon where such means is a separable and divisible part of the weapon.

**WMD/E:** Weapons of mass destruction or effect is an emergent term referenced in the 2004 U.S. National Military Strategy to address a broader range of adversary capabilities with potentially devastating results.

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**“The battle is now joined on many fronts.  
We will not waiver, we will not tire,  
we will not falter, and we will not fail.  
Peace and freedom will prevail...  
To all the men and women in our military,  
every sailor, every soldier, every airman,  
every coast guardsman, every marine,  
I say this: Your mission is defined.  
The objectives are clear. Your goal is just.  
You have my full confidence, and you will have  
every tool you need to carry out your duty.”**

**George W. Bush  
The President of the  
United States of America**



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U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence  
Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence-Threats, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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