



Federal Bureau  
of Investigation



Homeland  
Security

JOINT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

## (U//FOUO) Information Regarding the Devices Likely Used in Boston Marathon Explosions

16 April 2013

### (U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This Joint Intelligence Bulletin provides information on the devices used in the 15 April 2013 Boston Marathon explosions. The information is intended to provide aid in identifying devices and to support the activities of DHS and FBI and to assist federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government counterterrorism and first responder officials and the private sector to deter, prevent, preempt, or respond to terrorist attacks in the United States.

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**(U//FOUO) Incident Details**

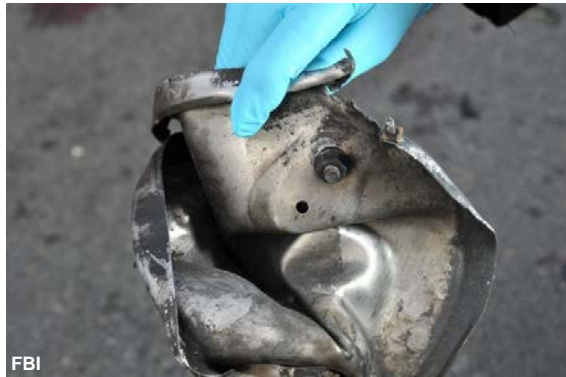
(U) On 15 April 2013, at approximately 2:50 p.m., two explosions occurred in quick succession near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing at least three people and causing numerous injuries. Preliminary findings reveal the two devices were located less than a block apart, and functioned within approximately 10-15 seconds of each other. Both devices were concealed in backpacks and placed where spectators were gathered.



(U//FOUO) Remains of the backpack

**(U) Preliminary Device Details**

(U//FOUO) Based on preliminary examination of photographs and on-scene reports, one improvised explosive device (IED) consisted of a pressure cooker concealed in a backpack with an as of yet determined main charge (possibly a low explosive) and improvised fragmentation, possibly including nails, BBs, and ball bearings. The other device was also housed in a metal container, but currently there is insufficient evidence to determine if it was also a pressure cooker. The fuzing system and method of initiation for the two devices are unknown at this time.



(U//FOUO) Remains of pressure cooker



(U) Pressure cooker

(U//FOUO) Further post-blast analysis and chemical analysis is necessary to confirm the presence of these components and the identity of the main charge explosive. Collection of evidence is ongoing and forensic and technical analysis will be forthcoming.

**(U) Ongoing Concerns with Terrorism in the Homeland**

(U//FOUO) The activities in Boston highlight the use of IEDs to target large gatherings, such as special events, in order to inflict mass casualties. Pressure cooker bombs are extremely common in Southwest Asia and have been used in a number of high profile bombings in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. They have also been referenced in extremist publications such as *Inspire* and the *The Anarchist Cookbook*. Examples of previously attempted or plotted IED attacks using pressure cookers include:

- (U//FOUO) One of three devices used in the 1 May 2010 attack in Times Square incorporated a pressure cooker containing approximately 120 firecrackers.
- (U//FOUO) On 24 May 2012, PFC Naser Jason Abdo<sup>USPER</sup> was convicted of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and, on 10 August 2012, was sentenced to two consecutive sentences of life in prison, plus 60 years. He was in possession of bomb-making components, including two pressure cookers.

### **(U//FOUO) Indicators of Pressure Cooker Devices**

(U//FOUO) Terrorists can exploit the innocuous appearance and transportability of pressure cookers to conceal IED components. Pressure cookers can also be concealed in bags or other containers, offering few if any indicators of an impending attack. Alertness and quick reaction to the discovery of such concealment devices in unusual locations or circumstances can improve chances of early detection and prevention of an attack. Potential indicators of a pressure cooker configured as an IED include:

- (U) Protruding wires or fuses;
- (U) Unusual smells such as chemical odors;
- (U) Wetness or unusual stains on a container; and
- (U) Apparent abandonment of a pressure cooker in a high traffic, unusual, or otherwise strategic location.

(U//FOUO) We continue to urge federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners to remain alert, maintain vigilance, and report potential indications of pre-operational and suspicious activity. First responders should also remain vigilant of secondary devices, especially at anticipated evacuation routes.

#### **(U) Report Suspicious Activity**

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

#### **(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response**

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(U) For comments or questions related to the content or dissemination of this document, please contact the FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section at (202) 324-3000 or [FBI\\_CTAS@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:FBI_CTAS@ic.fbi.gov) or the I&A Production Branch by e-mail at [IA.PM@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:IA.PM@hq.dhs.gov).

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**(U) Tracked by:** HSEC-8.1, HSEC-8.8, HSEC-8.10