

International police body backs 'shoot-to-kill'



Jean Charles de Menezes in a family picture. Photograph: AP

James Sturcke

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The organisation that represents police chiefs around the world published a report recommending that suicide bombers be shot in the head two weeks before Metropolitan police officers killed an innocent man at a London underground station.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) produced the guidelines on tackling suspected suicide bombers on July 8. Two weeks later, officers from the Met repeatedly shot Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes at Stockwell station after mistaking him for a suicide bomber.

The shooting of Mr De Menezes, seven times in the head and once in the shoulder, provoked international concern over the Met's so-called shoot-to-kill tactics when dealing with potential suicide bombers in public places.

However, the IACP's report indicates widespread international agreement on dealing with new forms of terrorist threat. The president of Britain's Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo), Chris Fox, and his Brazilian counterpart, Paul Roberto d'Almeida, both sit on the IACP's international policing steering committee.

The report carries detailed information how to identify and disable a suspected suicide bomber. Indicators of potential bombers include heavy clothing whatever the season, walking with an unusual gait or showing signs of irritability, sweating or tunnel vision, it says.

If lethal force is justified for stopping suspects, the guidelines state that the usual police tactic of shooting at the torso is inappropriate when dealing with suicide bomb suspects, in You're viewing the Guardian's new website. We'd love to hear what you think.

----- 's head -
specifically, at the tip of the nose when facing the bomber, at the point of the ear canal from the side, or about one inch below the base of the skull from behind," the guidelines state.

Acpo consults internationally and takes on board policing guidelines produced by the IACP, a spokeswoman said today. Acpo's policies must fit into the UK's legal framework, she added.

Mr De Menezes, 27, was shot dead the day after four would-be suicide bombers tried to blow up three tube trains and a bus in London. He was tailed by Met officers with the aid of the newly formed special reconnaissance regiment, after he emerged from a south London property under surveillance in connection with the attempted attacks.

An inquiry has been set up to investigate the circumstances that led to the shooting amid conflicting reports about whether Mr De Menezes tried to flee when officers moved to arrest him. He had overstayed his visa by two years, the Home Office said last week.

Tony Blair and the Met commissioner, Sir Ian Blair, have both apologised for the mistake and police representatives have been negotiating compensation with the family of Mr De Menezes.

His killing provoked condemnation in Brazil. Julio de Souza, the mayor of Mr De Menezes' home town, Gonzaga, described the death as an "assassination". Over 6,000 mourners attended his funeral last week.

Acpo guidelines state that "police officers will shoot to immediately disable and remove the threat to their lives or those of other members of the public".



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Tuesday, April 28, 2009

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Suicide bomber attacks station

Attack was first since evacuation from Gaza Strip

- [Amy Teibel/The Daily](#)

Sunday, August 28, 2005

BEERSHEBA, Israel - A Palestinian suicide bomber struck outside an Israeli bus station during morning rush hour Sunday, critically wounding two guards and raising tensions following Israel's eviction of settlers from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas condemned the attack as terrorism and urged Israel to show restraint. It was the first suicide attack since Israel completed the pullout, and Palestinians linked it to Israel's deadly arrest raid in a West Bank refugee camp last week.

Nearly 12 hours after the attack, an Islamic Jihad official claimed responsibility and said the bomber came from Beit Umar, a village near the southern West Bank city of Hebron.

Israeli media reported that the bomber came from the southern Hebron hills, the section of the West Bank across from Beersheba. After a double suicide bombing killed 16 in the city a year ago, work on a separation barrier along the West Bank in that area was to be speeded up, but the line there remains largely unfortified.

The suicide blast was in a dirt parking lot about 100 yards from the bus station, which was crowded with morning commuters.

The bomber was carrying a heavy bag instead of wearing a vest filled with explosives as most previous suicide attackers have. Witnesses said two security guards halted the bomber, preventing a much larger attack. The guards were critically injured.

Taxi driver Itzik Ohana said he was waiting for customers in the lot when he saw the bomber, a man of about 20 with short hair who was dragging a heavy bag and sweating. The man frequently stopped to put the bag down and rest.

Ohana said he told a security guard about the suspicious-looking man and called the police.

"While I was talking to the police there was an explosion," he said.

After the attack, police raised the alert level across the country.

Abbas denounced the bombing as a "terror attack."

"We condemn such attacks. We don't accept them, and we call on everyone to refrain from retaliation," he said.

In a statement, the official Wafa news agency quoted Abbas as linking the bombing to Israel's arrest raid in the Tulkarem refugee camp last week, killing five Palestinians. Abbas said a February truce must be maintained "despite all the Israeli provocations."

Israel demanded action from Abbas.

"Israel has taken the necessary steps to further the prospects of peace with the Palestinians," said David Baker, an official in Sharon's office.

"This bombing ... is another indication that the Palestinian Authority must take proper steps against terror, and without these steps, there will be no progress between both sides."

During Sunday's Cabinet meeting, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said the West Bank is becoming the focus for Israel's war against militants. He said Israel has made it clear that the Palestinians must fulfill their pledges to act against violent groups.

Despite the bombing, Israel pushed ahead with arrangements to complete its pullout from Gaza.

The Cabinet approved an agreement with Egypt to post 750 Egyptian border guards along the frontier between Gaza and Egypt. Israel's parliament votes on the accord Wednesday.

Israel has been patrolling the border, trying to prevent Palestinians from smuggling weapons and other contraband through tunnels into Gaza. Deployment of the Egyptian force would allow for an Israeli pullout, expected by the end of the year.

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