

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
**Intelligence**  
ASSESSMENT

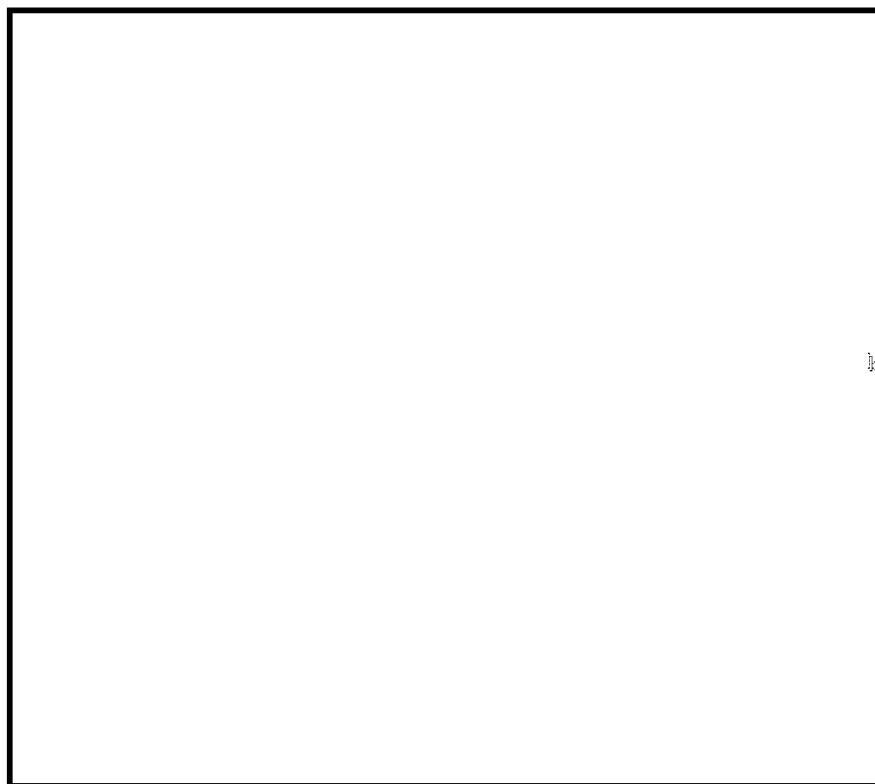
(U//FOUO)



b7E

16 November 2009

UNCLASSIFIED



b7E

Prepared by

**FBI**  
**Counterterrorism**  
**Division**

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

b7E

**(U) Scope Note**

(U//FOUO) This assessment satisfies the following [REDACTED]

b7E

(U//FOUO) Four significant plots and attacks against US aviation are examined in this assessment, which presents them in terms specific to the [REDACTED] in order to explore the future implications of terrorist plotting as related to aviation security.

b7E

(U//FOUO) This is the second in a series of intelligence assessments examining terrorist methodology in aviation attacks. The first assessment, (U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

b7E

(U//FOUO) Due to the numerous incidents of terrorism and criminal acts perpetrated against aviation worldwide, this assessment has restricted its analysis to the Manila Air/Bojinka Plot, the suicide attacks of 11 September 2001, American Airlines Flight 63 (SHOE BOMB), and the August 2006 UK Airliner Plot. This assessment does not cover aviation security vulnerabilities or the potential consequences of aviation attacks against them. In addition, it does not address the FBI's strategy for countering the terrorist threat to the aviation domain nor the effectiveness of US countermeasures in deterring attacks against aviation interests. The information cut-off date for this assessment is 22 December 2008.

**(U) Key Questions**

UNCLASSIFIED

**(U) Source Summary Statement**

(U) This assessment includes information derived from [REDACTED] US Government sources drawn primarily from an FBI Intelligence Bulletin, an FBI Intelligence Assessment, [REDACTED] the 9/11 Commission Report, and terrorist sentencing documents. [REDACTED]

(see appendix for definition of [REDACTED])

- (U) In regards to attacks against US aviation, to what extent are terrorists proceeding through the [REDACTED]?

b7E

- (U) How does the lack of resources affect a terrorist's progression through the [REDACTED]?

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- (U) From an historical perspective, have there been any shifts in [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

b7E

**(U) Key Assumptions**

- (U) Terrorists will continue to plot against US aviation interests.
- (U) Plots and attacks against the aviation domain will involve—if not all, at least a majority of—[REDACTED]
- (U) Understanding the methodology behind [REDACTED]  
other aspects of the [REDACTED] will assist organizations with [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] defend against future attacks from both  
domestic and international terrorism.

b7E

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U) Executive Summary

(U//FOUO) The FBI's analysis of the [REDACTED] (a.k.a. [REDACTED]) reveals that terrorists may not proceed through [REDACTED] sequentially, or may be forced to proceed through various [REDACTED] with limited or no time investment. In addition, the FBI's analysis reinforces previous findings that terrorists can be expected to adapt their tactics in response to changes made to aviation security.

b7E

(U//FOUO) The FBI assesses [REDACTED] that terrorists will continue targeting US aviation assets, both domestically and abroad, but will continue to adapt tactics and techniques, evolve operational security, and enhance denial and deception techniques in response to actual and perceived aviation security measures.

b7E

(U//FOUO) Given the evolution of aviation security, the FBI assesses [REDACTED] that plotters are likely to continue their reliance on [REDACTED]

b7E

(U//FOUO) Due to the continuing focus on aviation targets, plotters may begin to favor [REDACTED]

b7E

(U//FOUO) By examining the activities terrorists undertake [REDACTED] and thereby enhances our ability to [REDACTED] before they attack the aviation domain. However, [REDACTED]

b7E

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

**(U) Terrorist Methodology Analyzed in Four Aviation Attacks**

(U//FOUO) This is the second in a series of intelligence assessments examining terrorist methodology in aviation attacks,<sup>2</sup> with a special focus on the [REDACTED] as a framework [REDACTED]. The FBI analyzed four aviation plots—including the individual phases in which the plots were disrupted or defeated—to reveal how applying the [REDACTED] in future analysis of aviation plots can assist in tracking changes in terrorist targeting methods. These aviation plots were selected because they exhibited a [REDACTED] and were perpetrated by violent Islamic extremists, who remain intent on attacking US aviation interest worldwide:

b7E

- (U) *Manila Air/Bojinka Plot (1994 – 1995) (BOJINKA)*: In 1994 Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, and his uncle, Khalid Shaykh Mohammed (KSM), began planning the Bojinka plot, which involved the bombing of up to 12 US commercial airliners over the Pacific Ocean. The plotters, along with Abdul Hakim Murad and Wali Khan Amin Shah, intended to assemble timed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) during the first leg of US-bound flights originating in East Asia and subsequently depart the aircraft during a layover. The plot was discovered in 1995.
- (U//FOUO) *September 2001 Suicide Airborne Attacks (9/11)*: On 11 September 2001, 19 al-Qa'ida suicide operatives hijacked and crashed four US commercial aircraft (American Airlines flight 11, United Airlines flight 175, American Airlines flight 77, and United Airlines flight 93)—two into the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon near Washington, DC, while the fourth aircraft crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania—killing nearly 3,000 individuals.
- (U) *American Airlines Flight 63 (SHOE BOMB) (22 December 2001)*: On 22 December 2001, self-proclaimed al-Qa'ida operative Richard Colvin Reid attempted to detonate an IED hidden in his shoe onboard American Airlines flight 63 (AA63), a Paris to Miami flight. As Reid lit matches, flight attendants and passengers interceded, foiling his suicide attack.
- (U//FOUO) *The August 2006 UK Airliner Plot*: In August 2006 individuals planning to conduct suicide bombings of multiple commercial aircraft bound for the United States from London were arrested by United Kingdom authorities (UK's Operation Overt, or OP OVERT). The operatives planned on using IEDs consisting of a liquid explosive mixture disguised in sports drink bottles, and detonators fashioned from hollowed-out AA batteries hidden in disposable cameras. The operatives intended to proceed through airport screening with two apparently unopened sports drink bottles, both configured as IEDs. To allay any security personnel suspicions, they planned on drinking from purchased sports drink bottles of the same brand.<sup>3</sup>

(U) Analysis of [REDACTED]

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

[REDACTED]

b7E

(U) [REDACTED]

(U//FOUO) While the motivations for each of the selected terrorist plots varied, they all involved violent Islamic extremists targeting US-flagged commercial airliners bound for or in US airspace. Terrorists are likely to continue to select US-flagged and US bound non-US aircraft because of the high probability of killing US citizens and garnering worldwide media attention. However, terrorists will likely continue to adapt tactics and techniques in response to enhanced security measures.

- (U) BOJINKA: Bojinka targeted US-bound aircraft in response to US international policy that supports Israel.
- (U) 9/11: KSM, the principal architect of these attacks, stated they were in response to a US foreign policy favoring Israel.<sup>4</sup>

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- (U) SHOE BOMB: The Shoe Bomber plot was seen as a 9/11 follow-on attack motivated by US international policy that supports Israel and, according to Richard Reid, was in response to US bombing in Afghanistan.<sup>5</sup>
- (U) OP OVERT: The August 2006 UK Airliner Plot was thought to be motivated by al-Qa'ida's continued interest in attacking US targets.

b7E

(U) [REDACTED]

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

(U) [REDACTED]

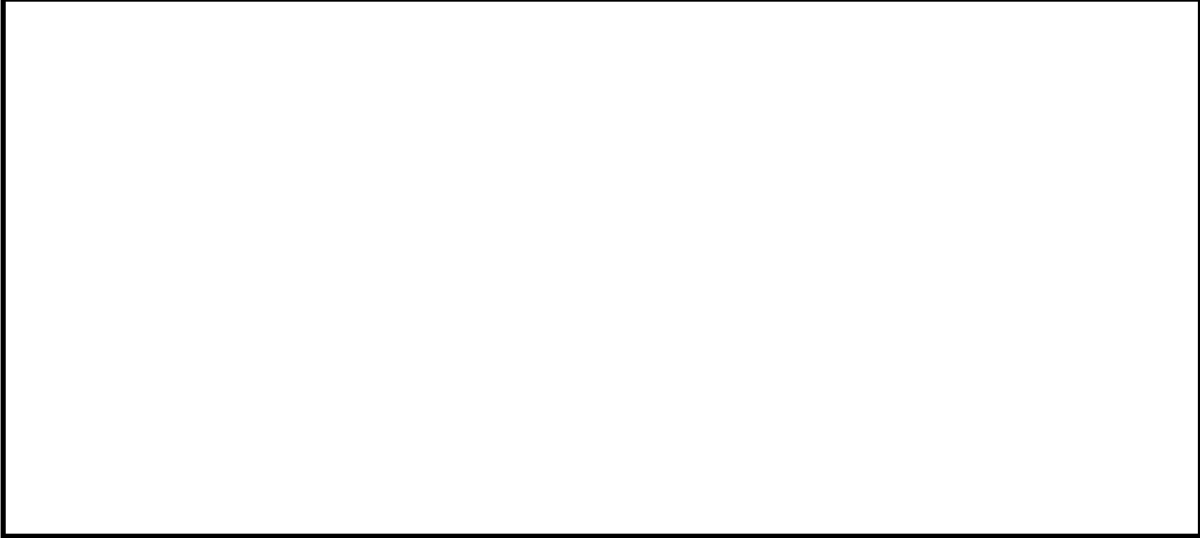
[REDACTED]

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U) The [redacted]: Improving Identification of [redacted]  
[redacted]

(U//FOUO) The FBI's analysis of the [redacted] reveals that [redacted]



b7E

(U//FOUO) This assessment was prepared by the FBI's Counterterrorism Division (CTD)/Domestic Terrorism Strategic Operations Section (DTSOS)/National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF) [redacted]  
[redacted] Comments and queries may be addressed to the NJTTF Unit Chief at [redacted]

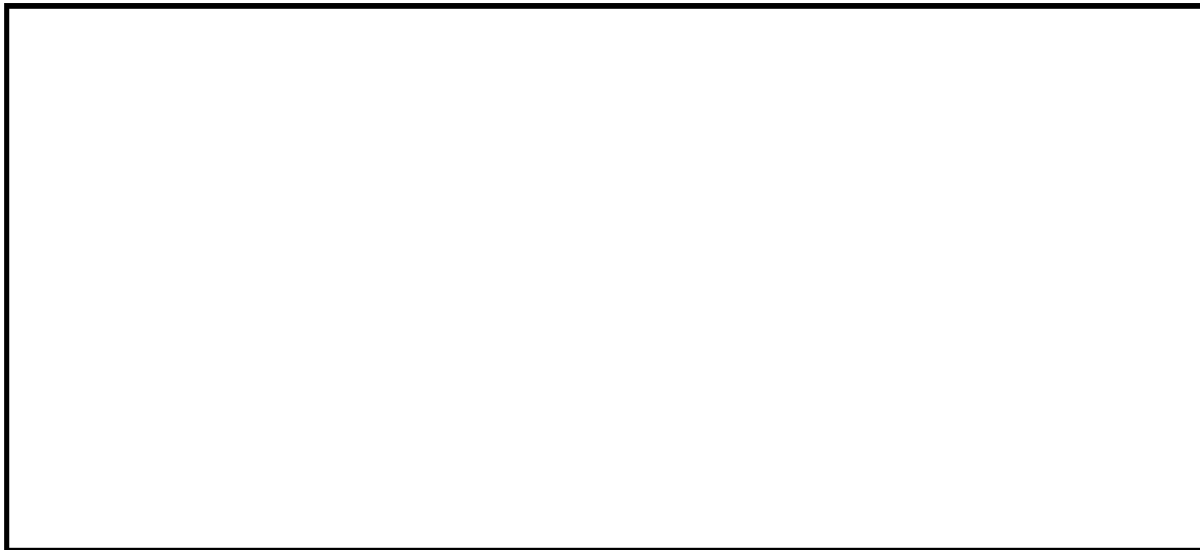
b6  
b7C  
b7E

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U) Appendix:



b7E

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Distribution

Executive Assistant Director, National Security Branch  
Associate Executive Assistant Director, National Security Branch  
Assistant Director, Directorate of Intelligence  
Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division  
Assistant Director, WMD Directorate  
Deputy Assistant Director, Directorate of Intelligence



Intelink



b7E

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

## FBI Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please take a moment to complete this survey and help evaluate the quality, value, and relevance of our intelligence product. Your response will help us serve you more effectively and efficiently in the future. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

**Return to:**  
**Federal Bureau of Investigation**  
**Production Services Unit**

b7E

### Customer and Product Information

Intelligence Product:

Title: (U//FOUO) Aviation Attacks: [REDACTED]

b7E

Dated: 16 November 2009

Customer Agency: Federal Bureau of Investigation

### Relevance to Your Intelligence Needs

1. The product increased my knowledge of an issue or topic. (Check one)

- ☐ 5. Strongly Agree
- ☐ 4. Somewhat Agree
- ☐ 3. Neither Agree or Disagree
- ☐ 2. Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ 1. Strongly Disagree

### PSU INTERNAL USE ONLY

Product Tracking #: \_\_\_\_\_

Return To: \_\_\_\_\_

## Actionable Value

2. The product helped me decide on a course of action. (Check one)

- \_\_\_ 5. Strongly Agree  
 \_\_\_ 4. Somewhat Agree  
 \_\_\_ 3. Neither Agree or Disagree  
 \_\_\_ 2. Somewhat Disagree  
 \_\_\_ 1. Strongly Disagree

### Timeliness Value

3. The product was timely to my intelligence needs. (Check one)

5. Strongly Agree  
 4. Somewhat Agree  
 3. Neither Agree or Disagree  
 2. Somewhat Disagree  
 1. Strongly Disagree

Comments (if any):

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOIPA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

No Duplication Fees are charged for Deleted Page Information Sheet(s).

Total Deleted Page(s) ~ 5

Page 8 ~ b7E

Page 9 ~ b7E

Page 10 ~ b7E

Page 11 ~ b7E

Page 14 ~ b7D, b7E