

Homegrown Violent Extremism An Emerging Threat to the Homeland

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Department of Homeland Security
Office of Intelligence and Analysis

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Directorate of Intelligence

National Counterterrorism Center

March 2011



Defining Homegrown Violent Extremism

A Homegrown Violent Extremist (HVE) is a U.S. Person who has been radicalized predominantly within the United States, who intends to conduct terrorist attacks inside the United States, and who is inspired by a foreign terrorist group.

Secretary Napolitano has taken a personal interest in HVE, which she sees as “a new and changing facet of the terrorist threat.” In recent Congressional testimony she described HVE as “terrorist operatives who are U.S. Persons and who were radicalized in the United States and learned terrorist tactics either here or in places such as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan.”

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The Task

Following the 12/25 airline attack and Times Square attack the DNI directed a joint NCTC, FBI, and DHS effort to:

- Increase analysis of Homegrown Violent Extremism (HVE)
- Increase HVE-related reporting
- Improve sharing of HVE-related information between federal, state, and local partners

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on information not formally shared or made



State and Local Support

We assess:

- State and Local Law Enforcement has the opportunity to observe and identify suspicious activity before the federal government and IC

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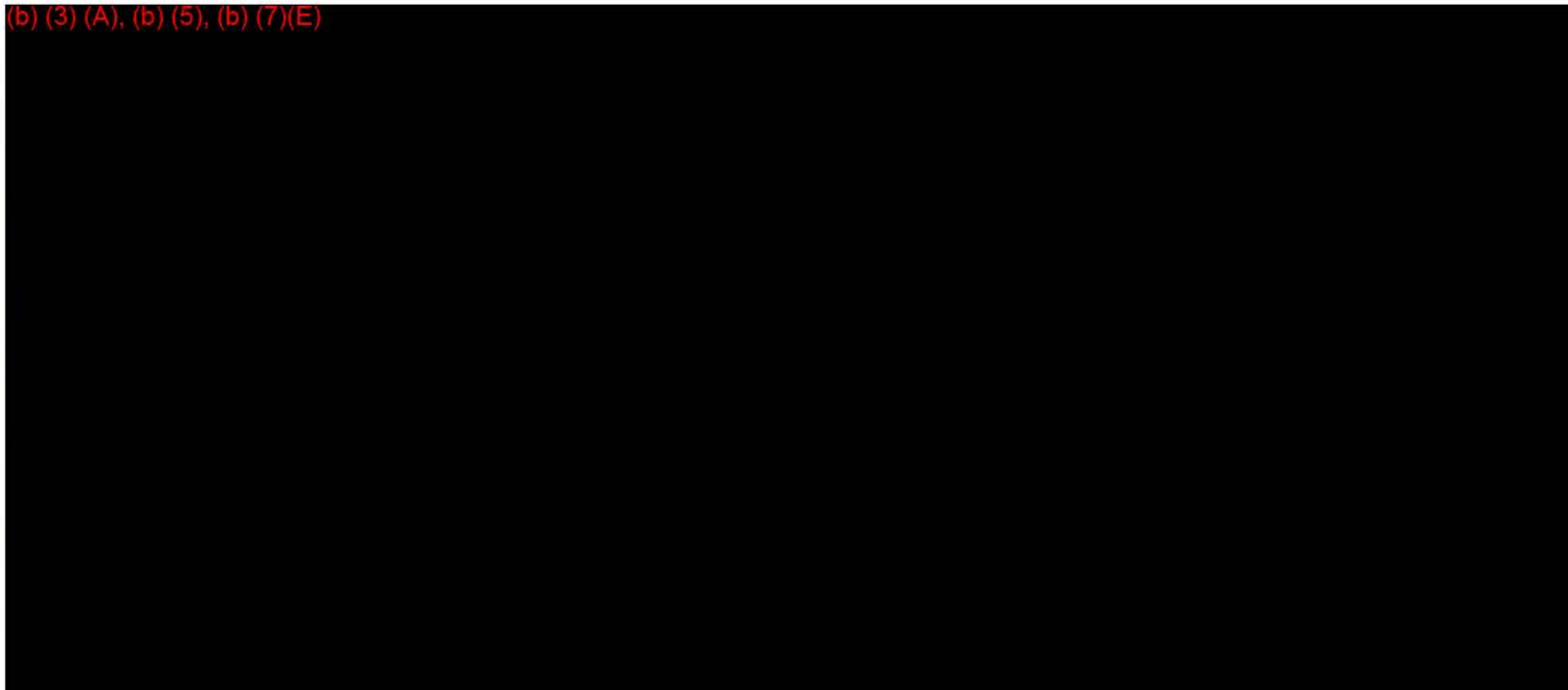
(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



Plan of Action

(b) (3) (A), (b) (5), (b) (7)(E)

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Home Land Threat Update: FBI

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Current Threat Reporting

- AQ and AQ-affiliated groups demonstrated the capability to deploy trained operatives to the US
- AQ-affiliated groups targeted the US Homeland
- AQ-affiliated operatives with Page 07 of 37
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- Successful lone actor attacks inside the US



Dynamics of Evolving Threat

- AQ's capability to deploy trained operatives for Homeland attacks
- AQ's strategic reach is increasing; AQ affiliates' intent and capacity to support attacks in the US

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- Use of explosive devices **modified to evade detection or constructed in the US from commonly available components**
- Operatives with legal access to the US and a history of overseas travel



AQ's Safehaven

- AQ has maintained its foothold in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)
- The FATA is comprised of 7 tribal agencies and 6 smaller frontier regions in northwest Pakistan with considerable autonomy from the rest of Pakistan.

- Bajaur
- Mohmand
- Khyber
- Orakzai
- Kurram
- North Waziristan
- South Waziristan

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Training + Top Leadership intact + attack capability despite losses
 = *Continued ability to plot and train operatives*



Fall 2009: AQ Targets NYC

- Admitted AQ trainee Najibullah Zazi
- Adis Medunjanin
- Zarein Ahmedzay
 - High school friends
- Resided together in Flushing, NY
- Traveled to Pakistan together in 2008
- Zazi constructed explosives in the US from commonly available materials
- Intended to conduct an attack on the NYC subway in September 2009



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Fall 2010: AQ Threat to Europe

- Europe has been the target of attacks by AQ and other extremist groups
 - March 11, 2004 bombing of commuter trains in Madrid
 - July 7, 2005 attacks on London's underground train system and a city bus
 - June 30, 2007 attack on Glasgow International Airport
- FBI and USIC are aware of, and closely monitoring, recent reporting indicating a terrorist threat to Europe
- No indication at this time that the reported threat is directed specifically toward the US, its citizens, or its infrastructure
- However, AQ and its affiliates continue to plot against the Homeland and US allies

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Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

- TTP historically has focused efforts within the Af/Pak region
- In March 2009, TTP leader publicly threatened to “take revenge, not in Afghanistan but in Washington...in retaliation for the ongoing drone attacks in the tribal areas”
- In August 2009, TTP leader publicly vowed to avenge Baitullah Mahsud’s death and “give our reply to this drone attack to America”
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- Following 1 May 2010 Times Square attack, TTP leadership released video statement via YouTube vowing future attacks on US cities



TTP and Times Square

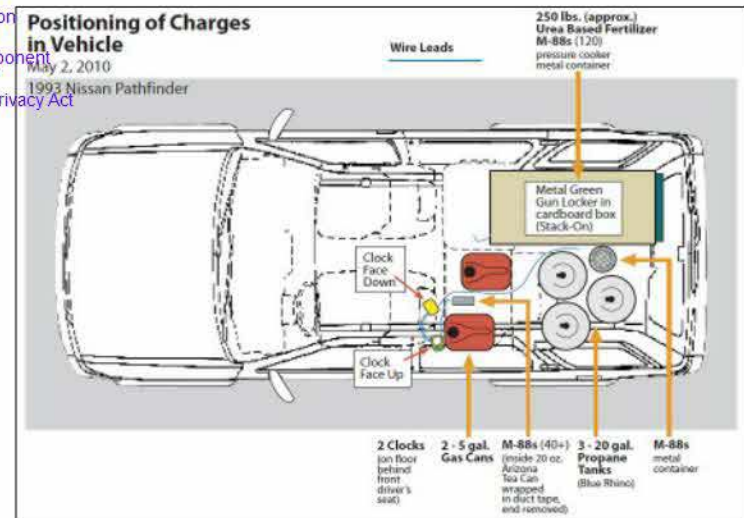
- Faisal Shahzad was born in Pakistan, became a naturalized US citizen
- Receiving explosives training from TTP in Pakistan
- Received money sent by TTP in support of his operation
- May 1, 2010: Parked VBIED in Times Square
- May 2, 2010: TTP claimed responsibility for attempted attack via posting on YouTube
- October 5, 2010: Sentenced to life imprisonment after pleading guilty



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AQAP

- In January 2009, AQAP publicly announced alignment with the larger AQ network
- AQAP became one of the first AQ affiliates to target the US
- Attempted attack on Northwest Flight 253 indicates:
 - AQAP's intent and capacity to attack the US
 - AQAP's interest in targeting commercial aircraft
 - AQ-affiliate based outside of the FATA with global reach

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AQAP and NW Flight 253

- On December 25, 2009, Nigerian national Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to ignite an explosive device on Northwest Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit

- Maintained a valid US visa and spent time in the UK

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- Trained in Yemen

- AQAP publicly claimed responsibility

- Appeared in an AQAP training video released in April 2010 during which he indicated his desire to become a martyr

- Currently in FBI custody and was



Shipment of Packages to US

- Individuals in Yemen sent packages via US commercial shipping companies such as UPS and FedEx that were found to contain explosives
- Packages were addressed to two Chicago-area synagogues; however, no synagogues currently present at locations
- Packages contained various clothing items along with laser printer, and explosives were found in printer's toner cartridge

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Evolving Tactics

Historical Methods

- VBIEDs
- Conventional explosives
- Hard and soft targets

Recent Trends

- Small-arms, Suicide bombers
- Homemade explosives (fertilizers and hydrogen peroxide) prepared locally
- Soft targets

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- *Attack planning evolves in response to law enforcement and security countermeasures*
- Abdulmutallab's explosive device was designed to evade detection
- Zazi and Shahzad constructed explosives in the US from commonly available materials



AQ Homeland Infiltration

- Concern about efforts to recruit US citizens and permanent residents for its support network
- Operational advantages from recruiting US citizens who are much less likely to come to the attention of law enforcement

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- Legal access to US
- Knowledge of language, culture
- Familiarity with targets
- No operative profile



Identifying Covert Operatives

- *Finding operatives once they have entered the US and had time to establish themselves is our most serious intelligence and law enforcement challenge*

(b) (7)(E) per FBI



Homegrown Violent Extremists

- Homegrown violent extremists generally struggle to develop a capability to match intent to carry out attacks; however, successful use of small arms could portend a shift to less sophisticated tactics
- Since outside assistance is largely unavailable domestically, homegrown violent extremists may travel overseas for training or reach out to an online extremist community
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- Majority of individuals never directly engage in violence; numerous extremists involved in supporting the global jihadist movement through fundraising, recruitment, propaganda
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- However, the ad hoc nature of these threats demands a vigilant effort to identify emerging threats and radical rhetoric may encourage others to participate in terrorism in the future



Homegrown Violent Extremism An Overview: NCTC

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Becoming a Terrorist

- Process of involvement
 - With discrete phases
- Becoming involved, remaining involved, engaging in terrorist offenses, disengaging from terrorism.
- Treat each case independently as involvement can be in flux
- Different factors are relevant in different phases

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Personal Factors

- Personal needs
- Personal context

Group Factors

- Collective identity
- Peer network

Community Factors

- Insularity
- Marginality

Sociopolitical Factors

- Grievances
- Global incidents

Ideological Factors

- Influential ideologues
- Claim to exclusive authority



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Catalysts

- Social media
- Encouragement by family and friends

Readiness to Act

- Motivation
- Intent

Targets

- Symbols of Western dominance
- Military, civilian

Inhibitors

- Credible voices
- Positive family engagement

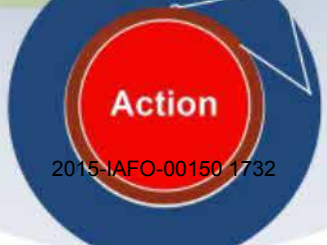


Opportunity

- Access to training
- Resources

Capability

- Acquired training
- Personal experience



Perceptions are Powerful

- Events have become increasingly “*glocal*”
 - Muslims in one country are exposed to crises affecting Muslims throughout the world
- Common grievances cited as evidence:
 - Military aggression
 - Economic exploitation
 - Moral pollution
- Some media present graphic material to shock Muslim audiences

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Community Context

- Frustrated socioeconomic expectations
- Distrust of law enforcement
- Weak civil society, mistrust of government
- Mosques unresponsive to youth or questions about jihad
- Discrimination

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Detroit Islamic Center Vandalized



Group Dynamics

- Highlight group identity
- Foster group cohesion
- Replace moral sanctions
- Provide sense of purpose and meaning

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Attraction of Power, Jihadi Cool



Radical Media and Messaging

- AQAP released the first issue of *Inspire*, its English-language online magazine in July 2010:
 - Encourage Western supporters to conduct independent attacks in their Homelands
 - Encourage Western supports to travel overseas for terrorist training
 - Radicalize Western audiences using jihadist propaganda
 - Facilitate supporters' communication with AQAP
- AQAP released in November a special edition of *Inspire* after the attempted cargo plot and two other editions
- Extremists using social media to spread message



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Homegrown Violent Extremism Preliminary Findings: DHS I&A

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Homeland Extremist Support Networks

- Reports by (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) indicates that several individuals and groups with violent extremist connections are involved in illicit activity possibly in support of terrorist groups overseas
- (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) and other identification remain key activities among individuals with transnational terrorist associations Page 30 of 37
Without subsequent exemption
- The use of (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) within the United States generate interest from our State and local partners, and are of further concern
- (b) (3), (b) (7)(E) continues to be a key area of analysis for DHS and assists in potentially identifying individuals who have escalated their behavior from radicalization to direct engagement and support

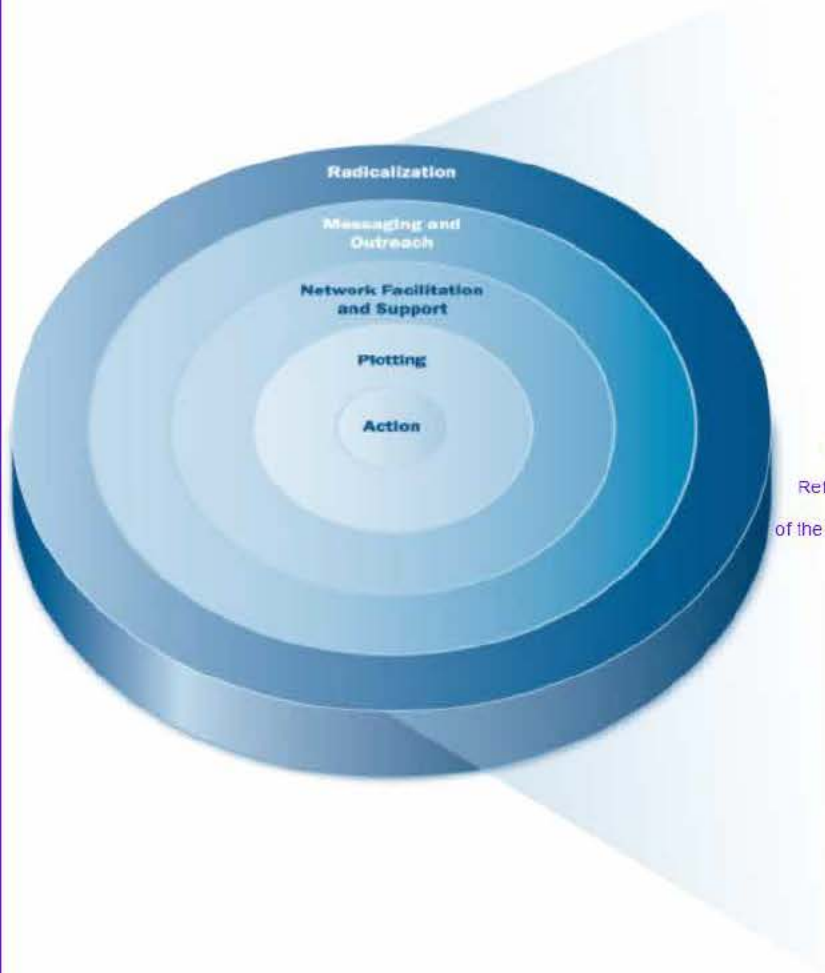


Homeland Extremist Support Networks

- In certain locations, foreign terrorist organizations may draw support—wittingly or unwittingly—from (b) (3), (b) (7)(E)
(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)
- The 2009 arrest of several individuals within the Minneapolis area for providing support to the Somalia-based terrorist organization al-Shabaab highlighted (b) (3), (b) (7)(E)
(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)
- Recruitment and fundraising activities were often directed by
(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



Indicators



Radicalization

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)

Messaging and Outreach

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)

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Network Facilitation and Support

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)

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Plotting

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



Indicators of Homegrown Violent Extremism



Faisal Shahzad



Bryant Neal Vinas



Najibullah Zazi

Radicalization and Messaging

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



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Indicators of Homegrown Violent Extremism



Faisal Shahzad



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Network Facilitation and Support

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



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Plotting

(b) (3), (b) (7)(E)



Signpost Caveats

- Typically, a number of different factors have to converge before a person becomes radicalized to the point of accepting violence as the means to achieve his or her goals

- Based on analysis of individuals who conducted or attempted terrorist attacks, many factors are discovered after the fact
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- There is no single profile or checklist**

- Defer to your expertise and existing laws and guidelines on what kinds of information can be collected, how, and when!**



State and Local Reporting Successes

Report Detail

Analytic Impact

In January 2010 a mother contacts a fusion center to report her fear that her son is being radicalized.

Source: (b) (3) (A)
 (b) (3) (A)

Interagency discussions produced an analytic product that was later disseminated to State, local, and tribal partners.

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A June 2009 report indicates that an individual affiliated with Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT) was appointed youth director of an identified organization.

Source: (b) (3) (A)

DHS analysts referenced this report in conversation with State and local colleagues. Updated information from the (b) (3) (A) was provided along with the (b) (3) (A) to fusion center partners.



Questions

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