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Transportation Security Administration Office of Intelligence

(U) Transportation Suspicious Incidents Report



29 October 2008

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Executive Summary

(U) Purpose

(U//FOUO) The Transportation Suspicious Incident Report (TSIR) provides a weekly comprehensive review of suspicious incident reporting related to transportation. The TSIR includes incident reporting, analyses, images, and graphics on specific incidents. In addition, selected articles focus on security technologies, terrorism, and the persistent challenges of securing the nation's transportation modes. This product is derived from unclassified incident and law enforcement reporting and does not represent fully evaluated intelligence. The TSIR is the replacement for the former TSA Office of Intelligence weekly products, the Suspicious Incidents Report (SIR) and the Weekly Field Intelligence Summary (WFIS). Questions and comments may be addressed to the Transportation Security Administration, Office of Intelligence, Field Product Team at (703) 601-3231.

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(U) Sector Incidents and Trends

(U) Summary of Suspicious Incidents

(U//FOUO) Field reporting continues to capture incidents or activities in transportation sectors that may be construed as suspicious. The majority of aviation reports are aviation related, although there has been a decline in the overall number of reports of suspicious activities as defined by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

(U//FOUO) The vast majority of suspicious incidents are not terrorism related. Incident reporting continues to reveal the perpetrators of most incidents are members of the traveling public, who lack nefarious or threatening intent. Non-credible threats—intoxicated passengers, people traveling without proper identification, illegal aliens, attempts at drug concealment, propaganda materials, and emotionally unstable individuals—are generally not included in the weekly summary. However, some reported incidents are more serious, including weapons concealment, possible surveillance, laser targeting of aircraft, and some unusual behaviors at airports.

(U//FOUO) For this reporting period, 48 incidents were considered suspicious. The breakout of the reporting—tracked by possible tests of security, acts of surveillance, or suspicious incidents—continues the trend TSA-OI has seen the last four years.

(U) Aviation Incidents

(U//FOUO) New York: Passenger Arrested After Suspicious Items Detected During Checkpoint Screening at Islip. Police arrested



an identified passenger on 16 October after Long Island-MacArthur Airport (Islip – ISP) transportation security officers (TSOs) discovered a suspected pipe bomb

and a folding knife in his carry-on baggage. A search of the man's checked luggage revealed explosive fireworks, various electrical circuit boards and cell phones, and fourteen .22caliber rounds used in a nail gun to drive nails into concrete, according to law enforcement sources. One of the circuit boards had lightemitting diode lights with a battery taped to it. The passenger termed the fused device as fireworks, but officials declared it to be a pipe bomb. A Joint Terrorism Task Force federal air marshal noted the device was made out of 1-inch copper pipe, 8-inches long with a copper cap on one end, a hobby fuse, and a New Years Eve 'popper' tape in the other end. It was then wrapped in black electrical tape. The pipe was filled with an unidentified powder (lab results pending); subject claimed that the powder was derived from M-80 type fireworks. The passenger has been charged with carrying an explosive on board an aircraft.

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(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: At this point it is not believed that the passenger was engaging in terrorist activity, but at the very least displayed poor judgment. Similar incidents at airport security checkpoints involving homemade devices, fireworks, cell phone components, and circuit boards have been noted in previous incident reports; while suspicious and unusual, none have been linked to terrorism. Instructions for making pipe bombs and other types of improvised explosive devices are widely available on the Internet and in open source materials (e.g., The Anarchist's Cookbook). A Department of Justice report to Congress in April 1997 addressed concerns about the public availability of bomb making information (see www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/bombmakinginfo.html).

[Source: TSA-10-6396-08 and Open Source Research]



(U//FOUO) California: Suspicious Inquiry in Fresno. According to a transportation security officer (TSO) who was off-duty at the time, during his daily trip to a Fresno corner market on 1 October, the store's owner asked him "How do you get on a plane or get someone on a plane and bypass security without getting caught?" The TSO, believing that the owner was joking, responded "with a boat." The owner, a Yemeni citizen who was aware that

the TSO was a TSA employee, clarified that he was not joking and asked the question a second time. TSA Fresno reported the incident to the FBI, which is investigating.

(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: The store owner may have been inquiring about the unlawful movement of people—possibly illegal immigrants. Regardless of the owner's actual motives, this incident is an example of the need to report all such suspicious inquiries or activities, on or off airport, and on or off duty.

[Source: TSA-10-6129-08]

(U//FOUO) No-Fly Matches: There was one match to the No-Fly List of individuals transiting U.S. airspace for the period 16-22 October 2008.

(U) Pipeline Incidents





(U//FOUO) Canada: Pipeline Bombings in British Columbia. In mid-October, two natural gas pipeline bombings occurred near the town of Dawson Creek in northeastern British Columbia. The first bombing took place during the evening of 11 October, or the morning of 12 October, near a 12-inch pipeline. The blast damaged but did not rupture the pipeline and blew a 6-foot crater in the ground. The second bombing was discovered during the morning of 16 October near another pipeline of unknown diameter. The blast created a crater, and again damaged but did not rupture the pipeline. No claims of responsibility have been reported. Royal Canadian Mounted Police are investigating. At this time authorities have not identified the explosive material.

(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: Canadian authorities believe that the two bombings, which involved pipelines owned by the same Canadian oil company, may be connected and are possibly the work of elements opposed to oil and gas projects in the area. According to a Canadian assessment, during the 1990s, Western Canada's oil industry was the frequent target of attacks ranging from vandalism to bombings. From 1996 to 1998, more than 150 incidents targeting oil and natural gas facilities were reported. DHS and FBI believe that these attacks are not connected to transnational terrorism, and have no indications of further imminent attacks on U.S. or Canadian oil and natural gas infrastructure.

[Sources: Open source reporting; Canadian press reporting; TSA-OI TIG-80570-2008-10-17, 16 Oct. 2008; DHS I&A Note IA-0021-09, 22 Oct. 2008; Canada ITAC Threat Assessment, 20 Oct. 2008]

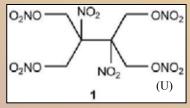
(U) Transportation Highlights

(U) Homeland Security

(U) United States: Melt-Castable Nitrate Ester with High Explosive

Energy. Since the discovery of nitroglycerin in 1846, the nitrate ester group

of compounds has been known for its explosive properties. A whole series of other nitrate esters have been subsequently put to use as explosives and fuels. A research team at the Los Alamos National Laboratory has now developed a novel tetranitrate ester. As reported in the journal *Angewandte*



Chemie, the compound has a particularly interesting characteristic profile—it is solid at room temperature, is a highly powerful explosive, and can be melt-cast into the desired shape.

- (U) Nitrate esters are organic nitric acid compounds that can contain enormous explosive force. However, their liquid physical state makes handling very difficult. By mixing in various other components, Alfred Nobel developed dynamite, a distinctly safer and easier to handle nitroglycerine-based explosive. The only solid nitrate ester used as an explosive before is nitropenta. Because of its high melting point of about 140° C, nitropenta must be pressed into the desired form.
- (U) The researchers have now made another nitrate ester to give nitropenta a run for its money. Thanks to its low melting point of only about 85° C, which is well below its decomposition point (141° C), it can be melted and poured into molds, a much easier process for the production of explosive components.
- (U) The new compound contains four nitrate ester groups (-ONO2) and two nitrate groups (-NO2) bound to a total of six carbon atoms. Its crystals demonstrate the highest density found for a nitrate ester so far. Computer calculations predict that the new tetranitrate ester should have an explosive power as high as that of octogen (HMX), currently one of the highest-performance explosives. The sensitivity of the new compound towardshocks, friction, and sparks is equivalent to that of nitropenta. The researchers also plan to use their new synthetic route for the development of other explosive materials.

[Source: http://www.chemistrytimes.com]

(U) United States: Visa Waiver Announcement for Seven Countries.

It was announced on 17 October that the United States was rescinding

visa requirements for citizens of six European countries and South Korea. Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and South Korea will be added to the U.S. visa waiver program in about a month. Each of those countries allows U.S. citizens to visit without obtaining a visa. Reportedly all of the countries added to the list agreed to take specific steps,

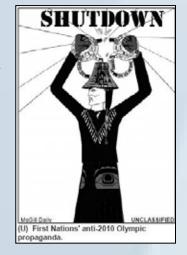


such as coming up with tamper-proof, biometric passports that are difficult to forge. The European Union's justice and interior affairs commissioner said in a statement that he welcomes the development and looks forward to the quick admission of remaining EU countries to the visa-waiver program. Support for efforts by Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Poland and Romania to win visa exemptions was also expressed. Before the announcement, the visa waiver program incorporated 27 countries, including most of Western Europe. Exclusion has been a sore point among some new NATO allies that have supported U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of those countries, including Poland, did not make the new list because they could not meet admission requirements. The seven countries added agreed to share information about security threats to the United States and that their citizens would use a new system that requires travelers to register online ahead of their visits to the United States.

[Source: The Associated Press, 17 October 2008]

(U) International Security

(U//LES) Canada: Protests Against Olympics
May Spill into the United States. On 13 February
2008, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers
encountered three subjects seeking entry into the United
States via the Peace Arch Port of Entry in Blaine,
Washington. The three subjects, all Canadian citizens,
were traveling to West Palm Beach, Florida, to meet
with an identified Native American group for one week.
The subjects were in a British Columbia (B.C.)-plated
vehicle, and all subjects had B.C. driver's licenses.



(U//LES) The vehicle was referred to a secondary inspection for further checks. Upon inspection, CBP officials found stacks of documents advocating the

NYM Warrior Society. Other documents found described the organizational structure of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), and the Viet Cong. Of special significance were documents calling for actions to stop the 2010 Olympics by militant action.

(U//FOUO) From the literature found in the vehicle, the following was revealed:

- (U//FOUO) The goal of the NYM is to "take direct action to stop destructive and negative practices inflicted against our people and territories." Some of the activities this group has self-proclaimed in its literature includes protests against Olympic promotions; protests against development for the 2010 Olympics, blocking highways; and interrupting and stealing from Olympic Organizing Committee Events.
- (U//FOUO) The language and artwork used in the NYM brochures includes statements such as: This war to stop the Olympics by other means than talking; Long live Zapatista; Riot 2010; I am an insurgent. I have all my life and time for the cause; take back the land or die trying.

Continued on next page

• **(U//FOUO)** An identified U.S. business in Washington is on the Pine Ridge reservation and was mentioned as building a hotel for people attending the Olympics (CBP FIELD COMMENT: There is no mention that this is a possible target or whether the reason it is mentioned is because they are disappointed that a Native group is catering to the Olympics.)

(U//LES) Upon completion of the inspection, all three subjects were admitted into the United States as Native Americans, pursuant to the Jay Treaty.

(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: It is noted that given the air traffic capabilities of the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) in comparison to Vancouver International Airport (YVR), the bulk of passengers arriving by air to attend the 2010 Winter Olympics will transit through the airport in Seattle. Despite Seattle's geographical location of being three hours' drive south of the principal Canadian border crossing points, it is anticipated that significant vehicular traffic will transit between Seattle and the Olympic sites in Canada. Law enforcement and industry stakeholders are encouraged to continue reporting threats—especially involving transportation modes—related to the 2010 Winter Olympics.

[Source: HIR 1338-08]

(U) Technologies and Tactics

(U) Airport Technologies

(U) United States: TSA Tests Electronic Boarding Passes. The Transportation Security

Administration (TSA) is testing electronic boarding passes readable from cell phones and handheld personal digital assistant devices at several U.S. airports, the agency announced. The paperless boarding pass is displayed on a cell phone or personal digital assistant as an encrypted two-dimensional bar code, along with passenger and flight information. TSA security officers use handheld scanners to validate the passes at the



checkpoints. Passengers also must show photo identification to verify that the name matches the one on the boarding pass. TSA began rolling out the program last year with Continental Airlines at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport. It now operates with Continental at several airports. TSA anticipates expanding the technology to all U.S. airports in one year. The agency will use the scanners to track wait times using standardized automated data collected at checkpoints.

[Source: TSA News Release, 15 October 2008]

(U) United States: TSA Canine Program Enhances Air Cargo Security. The TSA

canine program is enhancing explosive detection capabilities at air cargo facilities across the country. Through the program, TSA is deploying dozens of its own explosives detection canine teams to supplement more than 500 current law enforcement canine teams at airports nationwide. These teams, consisting of one dog and one handler, primarily search cargo bound for passenger-carrying aircraft at the nation's busiest cargo airports. The teams undergo a 10-week training course at Lackland Air Force Base



in San Antonio, Texas, and then must complete a certification process. In addition to physically searching cargo for explosives, TSA handlers are fully-certified cargo inspectors trained in compliance and enforcement techniques to effectively conduct inspections. The teams allow TSA to surge resources when there is a heightened threat in any transportation system.

[Source: TSA, Office of Public Affairs, 17 October 2008]

(U) Suspicious Objects, Dangerous Weapons, and Concealment Methods

(U//FOUO/LES) United States: Drugs and Thugs: Concealment Method. On 13 October, Customs Border and Protection (CBP) in Newark, New Jersey, arrested and identified a U.S. Person (USPER) and seized 2 kilograms of heroin. The USPER was returning from the Dominican Republic after a four-day stay. A search of the subject's luggage revealed numerous pairs of shoes that were abnormally heavy for their size. A probe of one pair revealed a brown, powdery substance that field-tested positive for heroin. The subject and the drugs were turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement for further processing.





(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: Drugs and other contraband concealed in footwear (e.g., shoes, sandals, etc.) is a recurring theme in suspicious incident reporting. Transportation security officers are reminded that terrorist groups have also modified footwear to conceal improvised explosive devices (IED) and IED components. Some notable examples:

- (U//FOUO) September 2007: European authorities discovered a pair of shoes that were used to smuggle electric blasting caps across international borders for use in a terrorist attack. Reporting indicates that the shoes were not worn, but were transported by bus in luggage across international borders.
- (U//FOUO) December 2001: Al-Qa'ida operative Richard Reid attempted to detonate an improvised explosive device concealed in the lining of his shoe aboard an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami. As Reid attempted to light a match to ignite the fuse protruding from the lining, a flight attendant noticed his unusual behavior and passengers interceded, foiling the bombing attempt.

[Source: CBP - SIR# 09-4601-101308000013; JHSA - Terrorist Use of Modified Footwear to Conceal Explosive Devices dtd 24 Oct 2007; and Open Source Research]

(U//FOUO) United States: Passenger Arrested After Artfully Concealed Prohibited Item Detected During Checkpoint Screening at Bradley (BDL).

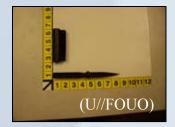
On 21 October, an artfully concealed Swiss Army knife was detected in the carry-on bag of an identified Southwest Airlines passenger. The knife was concealed inside the head of a hairbrush. Connecticut State Police responded, confiscated the prohibited item, and interviewed the passenger who stated that he was *purposely trying to bring the knife through the checkpoint*. He was subsequently arrested on a local charge of "Artfully Concealed Weapon."



(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: There have been several similar incidents

involving the artful concealment of a prohibited item (knife) in a hairbrush since 2004. Hairbrush disguised dagger knives and similar items are available for sale on the Internet.

• (U//FOUO) May 2008: A hairbrush with a removable handle (knife) was noted during a bag search at Fort Smith Municipal Airport (FSM).



- (U//FOUO) February 2007: Secondary screening of a passenger at San Jose International (SJC) revealed a plastic hairbrush with a cylindrical knife inside the handle.
- (U//FOUO) November 2005: A bag search revealed a black plastic knife artfully concealed inside the handle of a hairbrush at Shreveport Regional Airport (SHV).
- (U//FOUO) May 2005: An X-ray and physical inspection revealed a plastic hair brush that contained a knife (polymer) with a blade measuring approximately 3 inches in length at New Orleans International (MSY).
- (U//FOUO) November 2004: A bag check revealed a 4-inch dagger encased in a hair brush at Salt Lake City International (SLC).
- (U//FOUO) September 2004: An X-ray and physical inspection revealed an artfully concealed 3.5-inch sharp dagger/stabbing instrument as part of the hairbrush handle at Ontario International Airport (ONT).

[Source: TSA-10-6520-08; PARIS Database]

(U) Dangerous Weapon: Palm Pistol. The Palm Pistol is an ergonomically innovative single shot double action 9mm firearm that may be fired using either hand without regard to stock orientation. It is suited for home defense, and can be used as a back up gun or carried as a concealed weapon. It is also ideal for seniors, the disabled, or others who may have limited strength or manual dexterity. Using the thumb instead of the index



finger for firing, it significantly reduces muzzle drift, one of the principle causes of inaccurate targeting.

(U//FOUO) TSA Office of Intelligence Comment: Because of its unusual shape and design, the palm pistol might not be recognizable as a firearm when placed among the myriad of other things found in carry-on baggage. Transportation security personnel should be especially alert for such unusually shaped weapons when searching baggage.

[Source: Palmpistol.com]

(U) Appendix



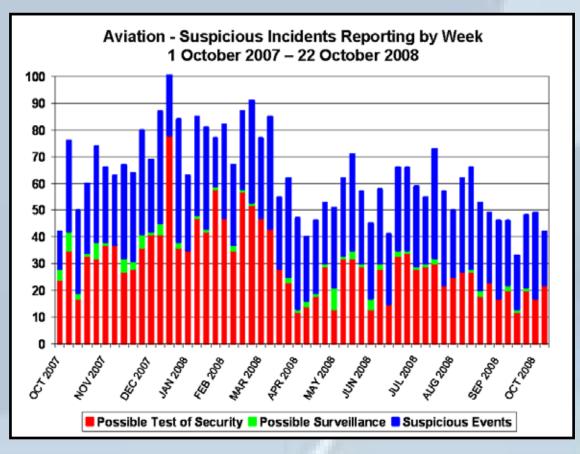
(U//FOUO) United States: Use of Lasers Against Aircraft. Twelve lasing incidents were reported against commercial or general aviation aircraft during this period. None of them have been linked to terrorism. The number of lasing incidents reported by the FAA since 19 November 2004 increased to 2,011. The total number of incidents reported by laser color is:

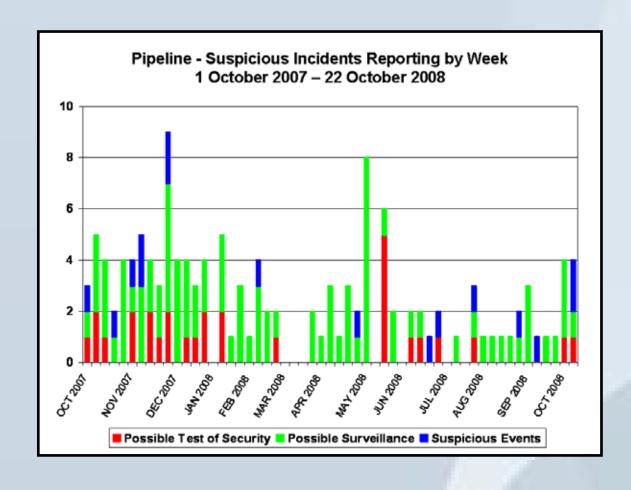
(U) LASER Incidents 2004-2008 by Laser Color									
Year	Green	Red	White	Blue	Yellow	Multi-Colored	Unknown	Totals	
2004	16	0	3	0	0	0	2	21	
2005	217	42	17	6	0	1	30	313	
2006	357	20	8	6	1	10	18	420	
2007	545	32	14	7	0	15	32	645	
2008	644	19	12	3	1	14	19	712	
Total	1,779	113	54	22	2	40	101	2,111	

(U) Suspicious Incidents - Monthly Averages the Last Year

Transportation Mode	Last Year 21 OCT 07 – 22 OCT 08	Last Quarter 17 JUL 08 – 22 OCT 08	Last Month 22 SEP 08 – 22 OCT 08	Reporting Status
Aviation	278	221	200	1
Highway	16	7	6	1
Pipelines	10	8	11	1
Rail/Mass Transit	9	7	3	1
Cargo/Supply Chain	1	0	0	←→







Suspicious Incident Reports Selection Standards Extracted from: DHS Information Sharing Environment (ISE), Functional Standard (FS), Suspi-

cious Activity Reporting (SAR), version 1.0 (ISE-FS-200), Part B – ISE-SAR Criteria Guidance

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Eliciting Information	Questioning facility personnel about facility/infrastructure/personnel; this includes individuals probing employees in person, on or off-site, over the phone, or via the Internet about particular structures, functions, and personnel procedures at the facility/infrastructure.
Misrepresentation	Presenting false or misusing insignia, documents, and/or identification, to misrepresent one's affiliation to cover possible illicit activity.
Photography	Taking pictures/video of facility/infrastructure/personnel or surrounding.
Observation	Showing unusual interest in facility/infrastructure/personnel; for example, observing it through binoculars, taking notes, drawing maps, or sketches.
Surveillance	Monitoring the activity of people, facilities, processes or systems.
Theft/Loss/Diversion	Stealing or diverting something associated with a facility/infrastructure (e.g., badges, uniforms, identification, emergency vehicles, technology or documents (classified or unclassified), which are proprietary to the facility).
Sabotage/Tampering/ Vandalism	Damaging, manipulating, or defacing part of a facility/infrastructure or protected site.
Testing of Security	Interactions with, or challenges to installations, personnel, or systems that reveal physical, personnel, or cyber security capabilities.
Cyber Attack	Compromising or attempting to compromise or disrupt an organization's information technology infrastructure.
Expressed or Implied Threat	Communicating a spoken or written threat to damage or compromise a facility/infrastructure.
Flyover	Suspected overflight of a facility/infrastructure; this includes any type of flying vehicle (e.g., airplanes, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles, hang gliders).
Materials Acquisition/ Storage	Acquisition of unusual quantities of precursor material (e.g., cell phones, pagers, fuel, timers), unauthorized/unlicensed individual/group attempts to obtain precursor chemicals/agents, or toxic materials, and rental of storage units for the purpose of storing chemicals or mixing apparatus.
Acquisition of Expertise	Attempts to obtain or conduct training in security concepts; military weapons or tactics; or other, unusual, capabilities, such as specialized transport or handling.
Weapons Discovery	Discovery of weapons or explosives.
Sector-Specific Incident	Actions associated with a characteristic of unique concern to specific sectors (such as the public health sector), with regard to their personnel, facilities.
Recruiting	Building of operations teams and contacts, personnel data, banking data or travel data.
Other	Incidents not fitting any of the above categories.