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Federal Bureau of Investigation



Joint Homeland Security Assessment

(U) Glasgow Airport Illustrates Varied Terrorist Tactics to Attack Transportation Infrastructure

2 July 2007

(U//FOUO) Prepared by the DHS/Critical Infrastructure Threat Analysis Division and the FBI/Threat Analysis Unit. Coordinated with the Transportation Security Administration.

(U) Key Findings

(U//FOUO) The 30 June 2007 car crash at the Glasgow International Airport in Scotland demonstrates the varied tactics terrorists have at their disposal to attack commercial aviation. The majority of previous aviation-related terrorist plots involved attempts to destroy aircraft and harm passengers, whereas others focused on other elements of aviation infrastructure such as jet fuel storage and passenger terminals. Such incidents emphasize the need to consider all aspects of commercial aviation as potential targets.

- (U) DHS and the FBI view the recent terrorist-related incidents in the United Kingdom with concern, although no specific or credible intelligence indicates transnational terrorist groups are planning imminent attacks against commercial aviation targets in the Homeland.
- (U) DHS and the FBI urge recipients to maintain their high level of vigilance because terrorists remain determined to strike the West, especially the United States.

(U//FOUO) Glasgow Tactics to Disrupt Commercial Aviation Are Not New

(U//FOUO) On 30 June 2007 an SUV loaded with compressed gas cylinders crashed into the doors of Glasgow International Airport's main terminal, setting fire to the entrance. This incident was the most recent example of a terrorist attack apparently targeting an element of commercial aviation.

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- (U//FOUO) In early June 2007 four men were arrested on charges of plotting to attack New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport's jet fuel storage and transportation infrastructure.
- (U//FOUO) In 2006 in Spain the Basque separatist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) detonated a bomb at a Madrid Barajas International Airport parking facility.
- (U//FOUO) In 2006 in Jordan at the Queen Alia International Airport al-Qa'ida terrorist operatives focused on attacking passengers as they exited the customs arrival area and walked through the foyer of the terminal. This plot, disrupted by Jordanian authorities, was designed to attack Western and Jewish passengers, inflicting mass casualties through the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) containing high explosives.
- (U//FOUO) In Switzerland in 2006 al-Qa'ida supporters plotted initially to acquire a surface-to-air missile to down an Israeli airliner. As the plot progressed and difficulties were encountered, however, the operatives shifted their tactics. Having failed to acquire the necessary missiles, they eventually moved to a multi-airport attack—Zurich and Geneva—planning to use backpacks filled with IEDs. Swiss authorities subsequently interdicted and disrupted the plot.
- (U//FOUO) In July 2002 a gunman killed two people at the El Al airline ticket counter at Los Angeles International Airport.

(U//FOUO) The Glasgow attack is the most recent example of terrorists apparently targeting the aviation sector in the West and serves as a reminder that all elements of the sector must be considered potential targets.

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