

ISIS/Extremism Community Briefing

Eric Vought

Lawrence County Sheriff's Auxiliary

Mount Vernon, Missouri 09 August 2016



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Psalm 27:1 (NIV)

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*The LORD is my light and my salvation—
whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the stronghold of my life—
of whom shall I be afraid?*

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Warrant Officer Jimmy Garrett, the Auxiliary's Intelligence and Security Chief (S2), prepared LE-targeted ISIS briefings for the Sheriff's Office and provided text for an early draft. Errors are my own, not his. LT Cathleen Vought assisted with editing.

LCSA Intelligence Section

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- Sheriff's Auxiliary are non-peace-officer volunteers;
- Our mission includes providing emergency preparedness training;
- Our intelligence section performs research and analysis for LCSO;
- We also prepare briefings for LCSO, mutual aid partners, and public on request;

Current Events

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- Paris Attacks¹ and San Bernardino² caught public attention;
- 40% of Americans think we are losing 'War on Terror'³;

¹November 2015

²December 2015

³ORC International 2015

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- Paris Attacks¹ and San Bernardino² caught public attention;
- 40% of Americans think we are losing 'War on Terror'³;
- Recent suspicious activity in Missouri:
 - Will it happen here?
 - How do we understand the threat of terrorism and ISIS?

¹November 2015

²December 2015

³ORC International 2015

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- Paris Attacks¹ and San Bernardino² caught public attention;
- 40% of Americans think we are losing 'War on Terror'³;
- Recent suspicious activity in Missouri:
 - Will it happen here?
 - How do we understand the threat of terrorism and ISIS?
- How does the community keep itself safe?
 - What should we be looking for?

¹November 2015

²December 2015

³ORC International 2015

The Bottom Line

For Missouri and Lawrence County

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- 1 Some reports are due to heightened attention (this is *good*);
 - 1 They may not indicate a change from normal patterns;
- 2 *Some* of the activity is concerning or cannot be ruled out as concerning;
- 3 Likelihood of an attack in Lawrence County is *near zero*;

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- 3 Likelihood of an attack in Lawrence County is *near* zero;
- 4 We may see preparatory activity in Lawrence County for attacks *elsewhere*;

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- 4 We may see preparatory activity in Lawrence County for attacks *elsewhere*;
- 5 If we can discover and interrupt plots, we can save lives;

The Purpose of Terrorism

A Caution

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- Goal of terrorism: cause fear and mass-panic for an ideological purpose;
- When we overreact we do terrorists' work for them;

The precautionary approach toward the danger of terrorism is justified on the grounds that it represents a threat to our existence. In light of such a grave threat, policy-makers feel entitled to abandon traditional forms of evidence-based policy-making.⁴

The precautionary approach does not necessarily encourage cautious behavior. In its search for worst-case scenarios, it continually raises the stakes and fuels the demand for action.⁵

⁴Furedi, 2007, pp 72

⁵Furedi, 2007, pp 71

Paris/Brussels

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- 13 Nov 2015, 7 (+1) attackers at 6 sites in Paris;
- 129 dead, 352 wounded⁶;
- Hostage standoff at Bataclan Concert Hall;
- 30 dead, many wounded in related attacks in Belgium⁷
- Russian airliner and Beirut bombing same week⁸;
- New type of attack for ISIS⁹;
- Female suicide bomber¹⁰?

⁶Mullen et al., 2015

⁷BBC, 2016

⁸Fitsanakis, 2015

⁹Jenkins, 2015, pp 4

¹⁰Sawer and Samuel, 2015

Colorado Springs (Abortion Clinic)

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- 27 November 2015 Planned Parenthood Clinic;
- 3 killed, 9 wounded in standoff, shooter surrendered;
- Claims he was “warrior for the babies”¹¹;
- Not competent to stand trial¹²;
- Attack involved firearms and propane tanks¹³;

¹¹Steffen, 2015, Benzel, 2016

¹²Grinberg, 2016

¹³El Paso County Arrest Records for Robert Lewis Dear [2015, pp 10 of PDF, in 'Attachment A']

San Bernardino

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- 2 Dec 2015 at San Bernardino California Inland Regional Center;
- 2 attackers (husband and wife) killed 14, wounded 17;
- Mass shooting, built bombs, but **did not detonate**;
- Attackers killed in later gunfight with police¹⁴;
- Wife, Tashfeen Malik, lied on “fiancé” visa;
- Marriage may have been to further the plot¹⁵;

¹⁴BBC, 2015a

¹⁵Serrano and Bennett, 2015

Rochester New Year's Eve Plot

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- 31 Nov 2015 plot to attack sportsbar with machete;
- Alleged ISIS foreign fighter aspirant asked to prove himself;
- FBI sting involving multiple paid informants¹⁶;
- Accused may be mentally ill¹⁷;
- FBI bought weapons, may have provided plan, drove him to site¹⁸;
- *May* represent a new twist in tactics;

¹⁶Reuters, 2015, Kalpec, 2015

¹⁷AP, 2016

¹⁸Kalpec, 2015

Philadelphia Attack on Police Officer

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- 7 January 2016, attacker ambushed officer at point-blank range;
- Fired 13 shots into vehicle at stoplight, critically wounding officer;
- Officer got out of vehicle and returned fire, attacker wounded, arrested;
- Edward Archer claims attack was for ISIS;
- Investigation ongoing for three possibly connected individuals¹⁹;

¹⁹Esposito et al., 2016

Terrorists Often Lack Skill In Explosives

Bombs Fail To Detonate

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- Propane tanks did not explode at Planned Parenthood shooting;²⁰
- One Paris attacker's vest did not detonate²¹;
- Explosives failed to detonate in San Bernardino²²;
- Boston Marathon Bombing only killed 3²³;
- Times Square Bomb did not explode²⁴;

²⁰El Paso County Arrest Records for Robert Lewis Dear [2015, pp 10 of PDF, in 'Attachment A']

²¹Drozdiak et al. [2015]

²²Serrano et al. [2015]

²³CNN [2015]

²⁴Baker and Rashbaum [2010]

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- Times Square Bomb did not explode²⁴;
- Attempts to buy explosives often result in arrests;

²⁰El Paso County Arrest Records for Robert Lewis Dear [2015, pp 10 of PDF, in 'Attachment A']

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²²Serrano et al. [2015]

²³CNN [2015]

²⁴Baker and Rashbaum [2010]

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- One Paris attacker's vest did not detonate²¹;
- Explosives failed to detonate in San Bernardino²²;
- Boston Marathon Bombing only killed 3²³;
- Times Square Bomb did not explode²⁴;
- Attempts to buy explosives often result in arrests;
- Terrorists often resort to more crude methods;

²⁰El Paso County Arrest Records for Robert Lewis Dear [2015, pp 10 of PDF, in 'Attachment A']

²¹Drozdiak et al. [2015]

²²Serrano et al. [2015]

²³CNN [2015]

²⁴Baker and Rashbaum [2010]

Safya Roe Yassin

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- Buffalo, MO resident arrested 18 February 2016;
- Christian convert to Islam;
- Charged with “communicating threats of violence over the Internet”;
- Allegedly re-tweeted from ISIS accounts, including threats against FBI agents;
- Trial set for September;

Pulaski County Explosives Cache

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- Found 17 October 2015 by deer hunter in Mark Twain;
- Explosives buried in box in woods;
- Unstable, disposed of in place;
- Commerical-grade, not military or recreational;
- No suspects as of the time of this writing²⁵;

²⁵KY3, 2015a

²⁶KY3, 2015b

Pulaski County Explosives Cache

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- Explosives buried in box in woods;
- Unstable, disposed of in place;
- Commerical-grade, not military or recreational;
- No suspects as of the time of this writing²⁵;
- Pulaski County Sheriff: not likely connected with terrorism²⁶;

²⁵KY3, 2015a

²⁶KY3, 2015b

Propane Tank Thefts

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- Nov-Dec 2015 multiple thefts, ~50 tanks, multiple locations;
- Lee's Summit, near Kansas City;
- 2 CVS locations, 1 BP²⁷;
- Propane tanks can be incendiary/explosive devices;
- Propane explosives tend to work poorly;

Bulk Cell Phone Purchases

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- Reports of late-night bulk purchases of prepaid phones;
- Macon, Columbia, Jefferson City, Lebanon, Ava, Jackson and Cape Girardeau;
- Ranging from a dozen to 60 phones at a time²⁸;
- Cell phones *can* be used as remote detonators²⁹;
- **More often** legal, shady, or more mundane criminal uses;

Fact

*Ziyad Khaleel purchased satellite phone used by bin Ladin in Columbia Missouri*³⁰.

²⁸Rusell and Hartley [2015]

²⁹e.g. the 2004 Madrid Bombings AP [2007]

³⁰Kohlmann, 2003

Possible Scouting Incidents

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- Suspicious activity around major events or facilities;
- e.g. Tourists asking unusual questions about Bagnell Dam³¹;
- Such activity may be preparatory to attack;
- Often difficult to sort threatening from non-threatening;
- Some of the 4Q activity probably concerning;
- DHS Video;

³¹Wilson, 2015

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 - 1 They may not indicate a change from normal patterns;
- 2 *Some* of the activity is concerning or cannot be ruled out as concerning;
- 3 Likelihood of an attack in Lawrence County is *near* zero;
- 4 We may see preparatory activity in Lawrence County for attacks *elsewhere*;
- 5 If we can discover and interrupt plots, we can save lives;

What Can We Expect?

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Conclusion

- ISIS/jihadi recruitment will continue to expand over next few years;
- Low possibility of small-scale dispersed violence;
- Foreign fighter recruitment can happen anywhere;
- Again, preparatory activity;

Refugee Crisis

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- 10,000 Syrian refugees to be resettled in next year;
- Some already settled near St. Louis³²;
- Chance of threat from any individual very low;
- **But** we know that ISIS is trying to slip people through that pipeline;
- Problems in screening process³³;

³²KY3, 2015c

³³Jones, 2015

Positive Steps

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Conclusion

- Understand the problem;
- Continue to pay attention;
- Stronger Communities:
 - Community Policing works and can be effective against terrorism³⁴;
 - Lawrence County Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) discussion;
 - Community emergency training and organization to respond to no-notice events³⁵;

³⁴sub-presentation: Vought, 2016

³⁵Article:Vought, 2015

Community Emergency Training

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- Active Shooter/Hostile Events are still rare;
- But we cannot predict when/where they will happen;
- Law Enforcement **cannot** protect every sportsbar in the country from machete attacks;
- Dispersed, trained responders in the community is best defense:

Definition (Survival Triad)

- 1 First Aid
- 2 Communications
- 3 Self-Defense

Community Organizations

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- Lawrence County Sheriff's Auxiliary;
- Lawrence County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and MO-CERT 1;
- Barry/Lawrence Amateur Radio Emergency Services;
- Neighborhood watches;
- Lawrence County Community Organizations Active In Disaster

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- Terrorism works through fear, fear of the unknown and uncontrollable;
- Better information and resilient communities reduces threat;
- There is cause for concern, but not panic;
- We have tools to respond;
- Resilience cannot be built top-down: it has to come from the whole community;

Mohammed Cartoon Incidents

- Three related incidents:
 - Charlie Hebdo attack in France, 7-9 January 2015;
 - 12 killed³⁶;
 - Garland, Texas Shooting 4 May 2015;
 - 2 attackers killed, one security guard wounded³⁷;
 - Boston Beheading Plot June 2015
 - Knife-wielding attacker shot by police plotted to kill Pamela Geller³⁸;

³⁶BBC, 2015b

³⁷AP, 2015, Conlon and Sgueglia, 2015

³⁸Sanchez et al., 2015

Changelog

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- 0.9 First partial draft 2016-01-22;
- 1.0 First partial draft 2016-01-24;
- 1.01 Updated logo 2015-02-04;
- 1.1 2015-06-20 Updated for presentation in Springfield; Brussels, Orlando updates, editorial changes.
- 1.1.1 2015-08-06 Added Robert Dear mugshot. Dist for 2016-08-09 presentation in Mount Vernon.
- 1.1.2 2015-08-08 Made Seahorse default color theme instead of Beetle to be more resilient to room lighting.

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