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## **EXPERTISE ON IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVES DEVICES (IEDs)**

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has primary responsibility for the investigation of criminal bombings utilizing IEDs. ATF has the training, experience and ability to detect, prevent, protect against and respond to explosives incidents involving IEDs.

Approximately 99 percent of all bombings in the United States fall under the jurisdiction of ATF. ATF also responds to and helps investigate the remaining explosives incidents that are classified as “terrorist bombings.” These include incidents classified as domestic terrorism, such as acts by animal- or environmental-rights extremists.

Since 1978, ATF has investigated more than 25,000 bombings and attempted bombings, more than 900 accidental explosions and more than 21,000 incidents involving recovered explosives or explosive devices. The majority of these criminal bombings involved the use of IEDs, which are customized explosives weapons, or “homemade” bombs.

### **IED Detection and Prevention**

ATF’s technical experts conduct assessments of sensitive public venues, such as state government buildings and courthouses, to determine their vulnerability to attack by IEDs and other threats. ATF prevents the criminal misuse of explosives by regulating the explosives industry and investigating thefts and losses of explosives. Generally speaking, no person may obtain, transfer, transport or cause explosives to be transported without an ATF license or permit. All explosives must be stored in a secure and safe manner as required by ATF regulations. Licensees and permittees have specific recordkeeping and conduct of business requirements that ensure security, accountability and traceability of explosive materials used in IEDs.

ATF conducts outreach and partnership activities with members of the explosives and chemical industries, as well as those industries’ organizations. These outreach efforts provide information and raise awareness among industry members, which enhances national security.

ATF gathers intelligence data and shares information through the U.S. Bomb Data Center Data Center. The Center has the largest collection of explosives and fire incident-

based information in the world with more than 185,000 arson and explosives incident reports obtained from federal, state and local fire and law enforcement agencies. This information is shared with federal, state and local partners through the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS), providing real-time incident-based information.

### **IED Expertise and Training**

ATF has a cadre of special agents, trained as certified explosives specialists (CESs), and explosives enforcement officers (EEOs) who provide technical expertise in explosives investigations and expert testimony in judicial proceedings. As part of their intensive training on explosives investigations, handling and disposal, these specialized professionals receive more than 100 hours of instruction on IEDs. EEOs have extensive experience in explosives and bomb disposal and are considered experts in all aspects of explosives technology. ATF's Explosives Technology Branch is the primary point of technical assistance and support in all matters involving explosives. CESs provide training to law enforcement and military personnel on post-blast investigations, IED recognition, disposal of explosives and command-and-control of investigative scenes.

ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research (NCETR) delivers training programs to students from federal, state and local law enforcement, U.S. military and foreign governments. Training is conducted on post-blast investigations, IED and explosives recognition, safe explosives handling and disposal methods, as well as clandestine/homemade explosives laboratories.

ATF has trained, certified and deployed more than 1,500 canines that can detect explosives in IEDs for state, local, other federal and foreign law enforcement agencies. Additionally, ATF has regulated the explosives industry since 1970 and provides expert testimony on federal explosives laws and regulations. ATF also conducts research involving explosives, ammonium nitrate and other potentially dangerous chemicals.

### **Response**

ATF's National Response Team (NRT) consists of highly trained and experienced special agents, forensic chemists, EEOs, electrical engineers, fire protection engineers and canine handlers. Since 1978, the NRT has responded to more than 600 significant incidents throughout the United States. ATF's National Laboratory Center also conducts explosives examinations of evidence collected at scenes of explosions to identify the type of explosives and the pieces of the explosives device. Finally, ATF provides technical and operational analysis of IEDs by serving within the Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell (CEXC) in Iraq, participating in the Joint Improvised Explosives Devices Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) and sharing information on IEDs from Iraq and Afghanistan at the Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center (TEDAC).

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