



# JOINT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



16 April 2015

## (U//FOUO) **Twenty Years after Oklahoma City Bombing, Domestic Extremism Remains a Persistent Threat**

### (U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This *Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB)* prepared by the FBI and DHS is intended to provide law enforcement with a summary of significant domestic extremist incidents occurring during the previous 15 months. This product highlights the breadth and frequency of current domestic extremist threats against Homeland targets, and places them in the context of the 20th anniversary of the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. This information is provided to support the activities of the FBI and DHS and to assist other federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial counterterrorism and law enforcement officials and private sector security officials in identifying existing or emerging threats to homeland security.

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**(U) Overview**

(U) On 19 April 1995, at approximately 9:02 a.m., an improvised explosive device placed in a rented truck destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, killing 168 people and wounding hundreds of others. Timothy McVeigh and co-conspirator Terry Nichols<sup>USPER</sup> were subsequently held responsible for the attack. McVeigh was convicted in federal court of a total of 11 counts, including murder and use of a weapon of mass destruction (WMD). He was executed in June 2001. Nichols was convicted in federal court of conspiracy to use a WMD and several counts of involuntary manslaughter. He received a sentence of life in prison.

(U//FOUO) Twenty years later, the Oklahoma City Bombing remains the deadliest mass casualty attack in US history carried out by domestic extremists on US soil.\* Domestic extremism, however, remains a persistent threat, and the United States has experienced violent ideologically-motivated criminal acts, both prior to and after the Oklahoma City attack. These acts include assaults, arsons, shootings, and use, or attempted use, of improvised incendiary and explosive devices, resulting in death, injury, and property damage. Many of the same motivations used by domestic extremists to justify their criminal acts in the mid-1990s—anti-government and anti-law enforcement sentiment; racial, ethnic, and religious hatred; and advocacy of violent conspiracy theories—continue to influence domestic extremists and their targeting choices in 2015.

(U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS have no specific, credible reporting to indicate domestic extremists are planning on conducting attacks on or related to the 19 April anniversary date of the Oklahoma City bombing.

(U//FOUO) To understand the scale of the current threat, FBI and DHS have compiled a list of significant domestic extremist incidents and disrupted plots occurring since January 2014. These events, conducted by individuals inside the United States in furtherance of political or social agendas without foreign direction, are criminal and violent in nature and caused, or could have reasonably caused death, grievous harm, or financial losses of at least \$1 million.

**(U) Significant Plots and Incidents Occurring from 1 January 2014 to 1 April 2015**

- » (U) **23 March 2015, Austin, Texas:** A suspected domestic extremist threw a bottle containing flammable liquid out of a car window into a small group of pro-life protestors gathered outside a reproductive healthcare center. The bottle landed in the grass and the resulting fire self-extinguished. The individual is being charged locally with aggravated assault.
- » (U//FOUO) **14 February 2015, Elkins, West Virginia:** The FBI arrested a domestic extremist for possession of stolen C-4 explosives after authorities received information that he allegedly planned to detonate it at various locations, including the Federal Courthouse in Elkins, West Virginia.

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\* (U) Please see the Appendix for a list of definitions of terms used in this JIB.

- » (U//FOUO) **6 February 2015, Chicago, Illinois:** Animal rights extremist(s) are suspected of setting fire to two separate horse carriage storage areas at a horse stable in Chicago, Illinois, causing damage to the building structure and completely destroyed 13 carriages. Losses were estimated at over \$130,000. The building was occupied by two people and four horses at the time of the arson, but no injuries were reported. A federal investigation is currently ongoing.
- » (U//FOUO) **30 December 2014, Dothan, Alabama:** Local police shot and killed Sovereign Citizen Extremist (SCE) Robert Earl Lawrence, whose apparent ideologically-driven conduct at a business led to a physical altercation with law enforcement officers.
- » (U//FOUO) **28 November 2014, Austin, Texas:** Larry Steven McQuilliams engaged in a late-night shooting spree that targeted a Federal Court House, a bank, the Consulate General of Mexico, and the Austin, Texas Police Department (APD) headquarters building, where he was shot and killed by an APD officer. The subject also attempted to set fire to camp-style gas cylinders at the Mexican Consulate. McQuilliams' criminal acts may have been in furtherance of ideologies associated with white supremacist extremism.
- » (U//FOUO) **7 November 2014, St. Louis, Missouri:** The FBI St. Louis Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) disrupted alleged plots by two domestic extremists, one of whom also claimed to be a Moorish sovereign citizen, to kill the Ferguson, Missouri police chief and a St. Louis County Prosecutor, and to conduct an explosives attack against the Gateway Arch. Federal authorities indicted both subjects in April 2015 for attempting to damage or destroy real or personal property by means of an explosive.
- » (U//FOUO) **23 October 2014, New York, New York:** Domestic extremist Zale H. Thompson attacked four white New York City police officers with a hatchet, striking one officer in the forearm and another in the head. Thompson was shot and killed by officers during the attack. Thompson may have been motivated by multiple ideologies, one of the most prevalent of which was black separatist extremism.
- » (U//FOUO) **25 September 2014, Moore, Oklahoma:** A suspected domestic extremist attacked co-workers with a knife, killing and beheading one individual and injuring a second person. The subject faces state murder and assault charges.
- » (U//FOUO) **23 September 2014, Snohomish, Washington:** Suspected environmental extremists attempted to topple a tower carrying power lines. Graffiti at the scene included the anarchist "A" symbol and the moniker "ELF" (a likely reference to the Earth Liberation Front). The tower was significantly damaged by the attempt but did not fall. If it had fallen, it likely would have landed on a busy highway and power for an estimated 1 million customers would have been disrupted for approximately three days. Repair costs are estimated between \$100,000 and \$1 million. No suspects have been apprehended at this time.
- » (U//FOUO) **12 September 2014, Blooming Grove, Pennsylvania:** A suspected domestic extremist ambushed and shot two state troopers, killing one trooper, as they exited the Pennsylvania State Police Blooming Grove Barracks. Current state charges include murder, attempted murder, use of a WMD, and terrorism.

- » (U//FOUO) **14 June 2014, Nevada County, California:** A SCE exchanged gunfire with a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ranger and California Highway Patrol Officer, likely in response to their attempt to impound a stolen motorcycle from an illegal campsite on BLM-administered land. All three individuals were injured during the incident. The subject was charged with assault and illegal discharge of a firearm. The subject was found guilty of federal charges in February 2015; sentencing is scheduled for May 2015.
- » (U//FOUO) **8 June 2014, Las Vegas, Nevada:** Domestic extremists Jerad and Amanda Miller shot and killed two Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department officers at a restaurant in Las Vegas, Nevada. The assailants subsequently entered a nearby retail store where they shot and killed a third person. One assailant was killed in an exchange of gunfire with Las Vegas police, the other died from suicide after sustaining gunshot wounds.
- » (U//FOUO) **13 April 2014, Overland Park, Kansas:** A white supremacist extremist allegedly shot and killed two individuals outside a Jewish community center and a third person at a Jewish retirement center. Responding officers arrested the individual, who is charged with capital murder. The case is currently being adjudicated in state court.
- » (U//FOUO) **12 April 2014, Bunkerville, Nevada:** Dozens of militia extremists converged on a Nevada ranch to prevent BLM from executing a court order to seize cattle in a dispute over unpaid grazing fees. These militia extremists joined non-violent militia groups—and individuals from across the country—who reacted to reports about altercations between BLM personnel and the rancher's family and supporters that alleged unnecessary excess on the part of the US Government. Domestic extremist efforts culminated in an armed standoff and the ultimate suspension of the BLM operation due to militia extremist threats.
- » (U//FOUO) **27 March 2014, Katy, Texas:** An FBI JTTF disrupted a militia extremist plot to attack mosques and public buildings and inflict multiple casualties in an attempt to restore America to a "pre-Constitutional" status. One individual, who hoped to purchase weapons and ammunition with funds generated from bank robberies, was arrested while en route to rob an armored car. The subject pleaded guilty in October 2014 to one count of attempted interference with commerce by robbery and one count of solicitation to commit a crime of violence.
- » (U//FOUO) **25 March 2014, Middleburg Heights, Ohio:** Sheriff's deputies shot and killed SCE Israel Rondon at his home after he brandished a .22 caliber rifle, likely in an attempt to avoid arrest during the execution of a warrant for a probation violation.
- » (U//FOUO) **22 March 2014, Seattle, Washington:** Suspected animal rights extremist(s) stole confidential information belonging to a biomedical research firm and provided the information to animal rights organizations, news media, and potential company clients. The theft and unauthorized data release occurred during a time when the company was developing new contracts, resulting in estimated losses exceeding \$1 million. The case remains unsolved.
- » (U) **15 February 2014, Rome, Georgia:** Federal, state, and local authorities arrested three militia extremists who attempted to illegally purchase explosives to

attack critical infrastructure supporting various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, including DHS and its component agencies. According to open source information, the group reportedly hoped the effort would lead other domestic extremist groups to conduct similar attacks, culminating in revolution. All three individuals have been charged with conspiracy to receive and possess unregistered explosive devices and conspiracy to use a WMD. The case is currently being adjudicated in federal court.

**(U) Outlook**

(U//FOUO) FBI and DHS assess with high confidence that domestic extremism will remain a persistent threat through the end of 2015 and beyond. This assessment is based on prior patterns of behavior, current investigations, and observation of factors significant to domestic extremists.

(U//FOUO) FBI and DHS assess with high confidence that lone offenders and those who pursue leaderless resistance continue to pose the greatest threat of violence, in part because it is difficult for law enforcement to detect and prevent violent actions taken by those who plan and act alone or in small cells. This assessment is based on recent patterns of extremist activity, and could change if domestic extremists begin to emphasize group-oriented tactics.

**(U) Appendix: Definitions Used in this Bulletin**

(U//FOUO) **Domestic Extremists:** individuals present in the United States who seek to further political or social goals, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected. This definition does not include or describe homegrown violent extremists, who are defined by the FBI as al-Qa'ida-inspired individuals based in the United States and radicalized primarily in the United States, and are not directly collaborating with a foreign terrorist organization.

(U//FOUO) **Animal Rights Extremists:** individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to further their opposition to people, businesses, or government entities perceived to be exploiting or abusing animals. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

(U//FOUO) **Black Separatist Extremists:** individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to attain separation from the non-black US population. This separation includes, but is not limited to, physical separation, political separation, or social separation as demonstrated by separate communities, political institutions, or social organizations. This desire for separation is typically based on either a religious or political belief system, which is sometimes formed around or includes a belief in racial superiority or supremacy. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

(U//FOUO) **Environmental Extremists:** individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to further their opposition to people, businesses, or government entities perceived to be destroying, degrading, or exploiting the natural environment. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

(U//FOUO) **Lone Offenders:** individuals who, operating alone or without the witting support of others, seek to advance, wholly or in part, a particular ideology or social agenda through unlawful acts of force or violence in violation of federal law.

(U//FOUO) **Militia Extremists:** individuals who seek, wholly or in part, to engage in unlawful acts of force or violence in response to perceived abuses of power or authority by government, perceived threats to Constitutional rights by government, or bureaucratic incompetence in attending to critical tasks. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

(U//FOUO) **Sovereign Citizen Extremists:** individuals who openly reject their US citizenship status, believe that most forms of established government, authority, and institutions are illegitimate, and seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to further their claim to be immune from government authority. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

(U//FOUO) **White Supremacist Extremists:** individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to support their belief in the intellectual and moral superiority of the white race over other races. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

**(U) Report Suspicious Activity**

**(U) To report suspicious activity, law enforcement, Fire-EMS, private security personnel, and emergency managers should follow established protocols; all other personnel should call 911 or contact local law enforcement.** Suspicious activity reports (SARs) will be forwarded to the appropriate fusion center and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force for further action. For more information on the Nationwide SAR Initiative, visit <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/resources.aspx>.

**(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response**

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**(U) Tracked by:** HSEC-8.1, HSEC-8.6, HSEC-8.8, HSEC-8.10