

Analysis: Train, Remote Detonation, Suicide Attack – Chechen Terrorists Kill 44

Dr. Boaz Ganor, Israeli Counterterrorism expert: "These attacks show a trend of women acting as the platform for the explosive. We also need to take into account the issue of remote detonation."

Summary

- Remotely detonated suicide bomb on Russian commuter train 750 miles S of Moscow
- Rush Hour Detonation: 7:42 a.m. local, 500 yards from the station
- Powerful Explosive: Train car was torn in half
- Bomber carried explosive in a bag, and strapped grenades to his legs; may also have strapped TNT to torso
- Repeat target: Chechens blew up another train on the same line in September killing six and injuring 32



Device

- Bomb carried in a bag
- Device contained 66 pounds of TNT
- Bomb was remotely detonated

- Packed with metal shrapnel
- Device was similar to other bombs used by Chechen Terrorist

Tactic

- The train had been swept for bombs before it left the station of origin. It appeared that the four bombers boarded the train at one of three stops along the way, evading the heightened security measures at main station
- A male bomber carried the bomb in a bag onto the second car of the train and placed it under his seat.
- Three female accomplices joined the male bomber on the car. Two of them are believed to have leapt from the train shortly before the explosion. A third woman, who is believed to have detonated the bomb by remote control, was seriously wounded in the blast, when she failed to jump from the train in time
- Several other women were posted along the train route as look-outs

Implications for Local Law Enforcement

- Suicide bombing is a well established tactic being used with increasing sophistication throughout the world (recently Chechnya, Turkey & Israel)
- Local responders must consider the possibility of remote detonation in deterring, preventing, and responding to all types of bomb threats—even suicide bombers
- Rise in women acting as suicide bombers and possible international training of women for the role. Russian authorities claim that Middle Eastern terror groups have trained more than 30 Chechen women



Trends in Remote Detonation

- Rarely seen before '70's or '80's
- Regular use of toy/hobbyist radio technology

- Can also use cell phones, pagers, and hand held radios

Typical Uses

- Roadside devices against convoys (Israel, Hizbollah)
- Placed on or under target such as a train (Chechnya, Israel)
- Bomber walks into crowded space and detonator observes and triggers from an opportune vantage point

Why Terrorists May Use More Remote Detonation

- Minimizes chance suicide bomber will change mind – the remote detonator is less likely to be squeamish
- Technology is easy to obtain and use and can be easily disguised as something innocent if discovered
- Even if police arrest or shoot suicide bomber, the third party detonator can still explode the satchel
- For non-suicide, remotely detonated devices: Allows terrorist to be a safe distance from pursuer

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