

Identifying mitigation measures: capability, motive, opportunity, targeting essay...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



(Capability Assessment)The answer lies in understanding capability dimensions that would be involved in the likelihood of terrorist attacks with unconventional weapons. Different types of unconventional weapons need differing skills to build and use: A radiological dispersal device is radioactive material packed around a conventional explosive. There are thousands of different radioactive sources that could potentially be used making this the most likely form of attack. Fortunately many radioactive sources do not present great risks if used in an RDD (and would be less dangerous than the explosion itself), and highly radioactive sources that would be dangerous in an RDD are much more difficult for terrorists to get and to handle safely. A chemical attack at its simplest could be the release of toxic gas caused by attacking an industrial facility, or releasing a chemical that has been stolen from its legitimate users. The anthrax used in the attacks in the US in the autumn of 2001 appears to have come from the US government bio-weapons research programme itself.

This shows the ever present possibility of weapons being diverted by an 'insider', but Al Qaeda's attempts at using biological weapons have been less successful. Getting highly enriched uranium, HEU is very difficult. A number of state programmes have either failed or made very slow process in enriching uranium, and the amount of infrastructure, time and resources necessary puts it out of the reach of any non-state group. This leaves Al Qaeda with only the possibility of either buying or stealing a readymade nuclear weapon or enough HEU to make one for them.

There is clear evidence from the mid-1990s that Osama bin Laden sought to do this, but was on a number of occasions swindled by confidence tricksters who sold bin Laden something other than Uranium. (Motive) The Egyptian Midhat Mursi Al Sayyid Umar, chemical engineer and known as Osama bin Laden's "sorcerer", with a \$5m US bounty on his head, is still alive and working in secret laboratories across the badlands of the tribal zone to develop chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological weapons for Al Qaeda. He also worked on developing a pathogen identified as Agent X, which terrorism experts believe is almost certainly anthrax, although US officials have long warned that Al Qaeda was seeking to produce botulinum toxin, smallpox, plague or Ebola. There have been at least six Al Qaeda operations involving chemical weapons that have all been thwarted. Ron Suskind claimed Al Qaeda had successfully developed a portable device to disperse cyanide gas, which kills when it is inhaled (Suskind. R, The One Percent Doctrine, 2006).

US security officials confirmed that a plot had been foiled, but gave no details. The factors that would determine Al Qaeda's decision to seek weapons of mass destruction (WMD) can be split in these levels:-Tactical: Certain types of unconventional weapon might be used purely because the opportunity presents itself, or that the situation leaves few other options.- Strategic: What it aims to achieve will affect its choice of weapon. Up to this point it was clear that al-Qaeda saw traditional methods as the most appropriate for reaching their goals. There may also be theological considerations for jihadi groups as to whether the use of WMD can be

justified according to the Quran.(Opportunity)Following the fall of the Taliban government in late 2001, intelligence agencies scrambled to find documents and other information about al Qaeda and its next potential targets.

Al Qaeda views the acquisition of WMD as a religious obligation. However, it could develop only limited technological capabilities in Afghanistan to produce WMD, and few believe al Qaeda obtained nuclear weapons while it was entrenched there. On the other hand, al Qaeda's determination to get nuclear weapons along with its increased ability to obtain outside technical assistance, leads to the conclusion that if al Qaeda had remained in Afghanistan, it would have likely acquired nuclear weapons eventually.

Although al Qaeda's WMD efforts are in disarray, it remains determined to get WMD. As a result, preventing al Qaeda and other terrorist groups from getting nuclear weapons or other WMD is an overarching goal of the United States and the international community. General Tommy Franks, commander of American forces in Afghanistan, mentioned that detailed searches had been conducted at over 50 sites suspected of being involved in the production of weapons of mass destruction in 2002 ¹. The captured documents reinforce assessments that al Qaeda is highly determined to obtain nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In November 2001, an Arabic document was found in the home of Abu Khabbab titled ' Superbomb'. Over 25 neatly hand-written pages, the author discusses various types of nuclear weapons, the physics of nuclear explosions, properties of nuclear materials needed to make them and the effects of nuclear weapons. There are sections on plutonium and uranium

which are relatively detailed. Other records discussed about hydrogen bombs and nuclear weapons of chemical and biological in nature.

Some contained detailed information about making and using conventional explosives, including one called RDX. Knowing what terrorists can do is instrumental in developing an accurate and comprehensive plan of action to combat and prevent nuclear terrorism. One step is re-evaluating the type of nuclear explosives a terrorist may seek. The design may differ significantly from that sought by a nation.

More needs to be learned about al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, particularly about who they recruit, and their potential approaches to building nuclear weapons. This information is critical to determining how terrorists may assemble the necessary materials, equipment, infrastructure, and expertise to obtain or build a nuclear explosive. (Targeting) Terrorist attacks involving a weapon of mass destruction (by sea) are as follows: First, it is likely to be a one-time operation and most private company security measures are not designed to prevent single event infractions.

Instead, corporate security officers try to detect infractions when they occur, and conduct credible investigations after the fact that support imposing sanctions in order to foster a culture of compliance within the workplace. This approach tends to work in deterring most employees from being drawn into an ongoing criminal enterprise. Second, terrorists are likely to find it particularly attractive to target a legitimate company with a well-known brand name precisely because they can count on these shipments

entering the United States with only a cursory look or no inspection at all. Third, terrorists would be more willing to exploit the supply chains of well-established companies to generate far greater economic disruption. This is because once a dirty bomb arrives in the United States via a trusted shipper, the risk management system that customs authorities are relying on will come under withering scrutiny. Special security attention already is being focused to the US's rail, subway and bus lines. Some 2,300 Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents are being deployed to prevent terrorists from coming in through the borders and to assist in security for high-profile events ^3. Al-Qaeda's prime targets for launching nuclear terrorist attacks ('American Hiroshima') are the nine U.

S. cities with the highest Jewish populations, according to captured leaders and documents. The series of attacks is designed to kill 4 million, destroy the economy and fundamentally alter the course of history. The cities of optimal targets are New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Boston and Washington, D. C.

At least two fully assembled and operational nuclear weapons are believed to be hidden in the United States already, according to G2 Bulletin intelligence sources and an upcoming book, 'The al-Qaeda Connection: International Terrorism, Organized Crime and the Coming Apocalypse,' by former FBI consultant Paul L. Williams ^4. The attacks are believed to take place in daylight, so that the whole world will be able to see the images of a mushroom cloud over an American city.; Footnotes: 1. 'Al Qaeda's Nuclear

Program: Through the Window of Seized Documents', David Albright, November 6, 2002. (<http://nautilus.org>). 2.

' Wrath of God. Osama Bin Laden lashes out against the West', Time Magazine, 11 January 1999, Vol. 153, No. 1.

3. Feds: Al Qaeda Plans to ' Hit the U. S. Hard', Thursday, May 27, 2004.

(<http://www.foxnews.com>). 4. Farah. J, Al Qaeda's U.

S. nuclear targets, July 18, 2005, WorldNetDaily. com. Works Cited

PageThe Limitations of the Current U.

S. Government Efforts to Secure the Global Supply Chain against Terrorists Smuggling a WMD and a Proposed Way Forward, Stephen E. Flynn, Ira A. Lipman Senior Fellow for Counterterrorism and National Security Studies, March 28, 2006.; Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin, Al-Qaeda's nukes already in U.

S, Terrorists, and bombs smuggled across Mexico border by MS-13 gangsters, July 11, 2005, 12: 22 pm Eastern. ([http://www. WorldNetDaily. com](http://www.WorldNetDaily.com)); Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin, Al-Qaeda's U. S.

nuclear targets: Captured documents, terrorists reveal bin Laden's preferred dates, places for ' American Hiroshima', July 18, 2005, 1: 00 am Eastern. (<http://www. WorldNetDaily. com>)