

## Jihadi attacks and alleged attack plots in the West, January 2011 - June 2015

*Appendix to Thomas Hegghammer and Petter Nesser, "Assessing Islamic State's Commitment to Attacking the West", Perspectives on Terrorism (2015). Last updated on 6 July 2015.*

This document contains brief descriptions of violent attacks and significant<sup>1</sup> alleged attack plots on Western soil involving militant Islamists between 1 January 2011 and 30 June 2015. Petter Nesser and Thomas Hegghammer compiled the list and produced the case descriptions using open sources.<sup>2</sup> The document was produced for research purposes only. None of the information has been vetted by law enforcement agencies, and our assessments do not represent those of the Norwegian government.

The list represents our best effort to summarize available open sources and should not be interpreted as an authoritative description of events. We may have missed cases that should be in here, and we may have included cases that should not. Our case descriptions may also contain inaccuracies, because our information is only as reliable as the media sources we cite. The descriptions of the most recent cases are particularly prone to inaccuracies and may need to be revised as investigations proceed.

Plots appearing to have some kind of link with the Islamic State (IS), either physically or by way of inspiration, are marked with "\*". These plots are also assigned a type (in parentheses behind the plot name) based on the typology described in the article.

### Europe

#### 2011

##### **Arid Uka shooting**

In January 2011, the German Kosovar Arid Uka shot and killed two American soldiers at Frankfurt international airport and wounded several others. He entered a shuttle bus and started firing at servicemen sitting in seats while shouting the jihadi slogan "Allahu Akbar". His gun jammed and Uka escaped, but was later hunted down and captured by two of the victimized soldiers. Uka was triggered by a sequence in an IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) propaganda movie showing clips from a feature movie, which displayed American soldiers raping a young Iraqi girl. He

---

<sup>1</sup> By "significant plots" we mean plots that 1) were cited in more than one media report, 2) involved intent to inflict serious physical harm on people, 3) involved one or more identifiable perpetrators with radical Islamist motivations, 4) were due to occur on Western soil, and 5) contained some evidence of weapons possession and a reasonably defined target. We have excluded several reported cases where we considered the available information to be too vague; the most prominent excluded cases are listed in the Excel spreadsheet that also accompanies our article.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the plot descriptions are reproduced from Petter Nesser, "Toward an Increasingly Heterogeneous Threat: A Chronology of Jihadist Terrorism in Europe 2008–2013," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37, no. 5 (2014): 440–56; and Petter Nesser, *Islamist Terrorism in Europe* (London: Hurst, forthcoming 2015)

also had contacts with well-known salafis in Frankfurt and other parts of Germany via social media, but did not seem to have belonged to an organized group. He came from a religious family and did relatively well in school, but suffered from some psychological problems. Reportedly he withdrew from social contacts in the months leading up to the attacks, spending much of his time surfing jihadi websites.<sup>3</sup>

### **El-Kebir plot**

In April 2011, German authorities disrupted an al-Qaida linked terrorist cell led by the Moroccan Abdeladim El-Kebir. El-Kebir had attended training in Waziristan, Pakistan, in 2010. He was tasked by al-Qaida handler Younis al-Mauritani to carry out mass casualty bomb attacks in Germany, most likely against a bus or other transportation. El-Kebir was said to have recruited and indoctrinated three other cell-members, and the plotters had started assembling bomb-making materials and scouting targets before the cell was disrupted. In May, one individual referred to as Halil S., who escaped the first arrests, pursued a “Mumbai-style” hand weapons-based attack on his own, seeking advice and receiving instructions from Anwar al-Awlaki and AQAP in Yemen.<sup>4</sup>

### **Irfan Naseer plot**

In September 2011, U.K. security services launched an operation against a terrorist cell composed of British-Pakistanis believed to be plotting a series of suicide bombings.<sup>5</sup> The cell was headed by Irfan Naseer, who had attended Harakat al-Mujahidin (HuM) training facilities in Pakistan in 2009 and later connected with al-Qaida handlers in Waziristan during the spring 2011.<sup>6</sup> Reportedly, the bombs were supposed to be made from ammonium nitrate.

## **2012**

### **Merah attacks**

In March 2012, the young French-Algerian Mohammed Merah executed a series of single actor shooting attacks in Montauban and Toulouse, Southern France.<sup>7</sup> Merah first killed three French soldiers in two separate assaults with an automatic pistol, approaching and escaping the attack scene on a motorbike. Using a similar modus operandi he then launched a horrendous attack on a Jewish school killing one teacher and three children. Merah was first portrayed as a lone wolf, but he had interacted with an extremist network in France, other European countries and the

---

<sup>3</sup> Guido W. Steinberg, *German Jihad: On the Internationalization of Islamist Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp 3 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp 236-237.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/feb/21/three-would-be-suicide-bombers-guilty-terror>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/9885967/Birmingham-plot-Missing-member-of-cell-could-be-plotting-second-attack.html>

<sup>7</sup> Virginie Andre and Shandon Harris-Hogan, “Mohamed Merah: From Petty Criminal to Neojihadist,” *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 14, no. 2 (2013): 307–19

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21567689.2013.792655?journalCode=ftmp21#.VZokvfmqqko>

Middle East, and he attended training camps associated with the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) in Waziristan, Pakistan, where he also is believed to have met al-Qaida handlers who told him to do something in France.<sup>8</sup> Merah was rounded up and killed by security forces after a 30-hour siege. He told police investigators he acted on behalf of al-Qaida.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, in 2015, media sources reported that Merah's stepbrother was believed to be one of the men featuring in a video where ISIS executed a man accused of being a Mossad spy.<sup>10</sup>

### **Milan synagogue plot**

In March 2012, Italian police arrested Mohamed Jarmoune in Brescia, Northern Italy, on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack against the Via Della Guastalla synagogue in Milan. He had conducted detailed research into the premises of the synagogue, and had discussed terrorist tactics for a "jihad mission" online, via fake Facebook-profiles. The incident also led to the arrest of a woman in the U.K., with whom Jarmoune shared extremist materials.<sup>11</sup>

### **Luton cell**

In April 2012, U.K. anti-terrorism police arrested five men, aged between 21 and 30, in Luton, who were suspected of plotting terrorist attacks. Three of them were of Pakistani origin, and one was from a Bengali background. According to media reports, those arrested had been involved in a wide range of activities, encouraging and supporting militancy, and they wanted to become foreign fighters in AfPak. However, there were also reports that they had pursued a concrete plan to launch an attack on a British military facility with an improvised explosive delivered by model car. The alleged leader of the cell communicated with an al-Qaida handler in Pakistan, whereas the "second-in-command" traveled to Pakistan, and appeared to be in charge of recruiting Britons for jihadi training abroad.<sup>12</sup> The plotters were in possession of several al-Qaida training manuals, including AQAP's Inspire Magazine promoting simple "do-it-yourself"-attacks.<sup>13</sup> The contact in Pakistan does not appear to have instructed the cell in connection with the UK attack plot, however.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2012/07/17/transcription-des-conversations-entre-mohamed-merah-et-les-negociateurs\\_833784](http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2012/07/17/transcription-des-conversations-entre-mohamed-merah-et-les-negociateurs_833784)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <http://rt.com/news/239857-isis-extremists-french-citizens/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2115431/Woman-40-arrested-London-terror-raid-police-probe-secret-Facebook-plot-blow-Italian-synagogue.html> and

<http://www.clarionproject.org/research/development-home-grown-jihadist-radicalisation-italy> and <http://www.clarionproject.org/research/development-home-grown-jihadist-radicalisation-italy> ("Living a secluded life between work and his parents' house, Jarmoune spent all his time –up to 15 hours a day– online, disseminating jihadist material and connecting with like-minded individuals around the world")

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/crime/luton-al-qaeda-inspired-terrorists-jailed-for-44-years-1-5013407>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/crime/luton-al-qaeda-inspired-terrorists-jailed-for-44-years-1-5013407>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/apr/18/four-jailed-toy-car-plot>

### **EDL plot**

In June 2012, a gang composed of British-Pakistani and British-Bengali extremists from Birmingham prepared a terrorist attack against a rally organized by the right-wing, anti-Islam extremist organization English Defence League (EDL) in Dewsbury, U.K. The group was discovered by coincidence during a routine traffic control, driving from Dewsbury to Birmingham after learning that the EDL rally had ended early. One of their cars contained a number of knives, machetes, swords and a sawn-off shot gun, in addition to an improvised explosive (pipe bomb) made out of fireworks and nails and ball bearings meant to function as shrapnel. The militants admitted intent to attack EDL on the grounds that the organization had insulted the Prophet Mohammed, and they received up to 19, 5 years sentences each.<sup>15</sup> They drew inspiration and advice from AQAP's Inspire magazine.<sup>16</sup>

### **Wootton Bassett plot**

In July 2012, U.K. authorities disrupted a plot by the jihadi convert Richard Dart (29) and two accomplices, Imran Mahmood and Jahangor Alom, to kill U.K. intelligence officials in Royal Wootton Bassett, including heads of MI5 and MI6.<sup>17</sup> Mahmood and Jahangor had received training in Pakistan over a two-year period and try to recruit others to Pakistan training camps. Dart's radicalization is believed to have begun through his interaction with an Islamist extremist group and website called "Muslims against Crusades".<sup>18</sup> The plotters were secretive and cautious, communicating in sign-language and codes so as to avoid detection. Investigators retrieved samples of nitroglycerin, RDX and PETN from Mahmood's rucksack.<sup>19</sup>

### **Gibraltar plot**

In August 2012, Spanish and French authorities made coordinated arrests of suspected terrorists hailing from Chechnya, Turkey and Dagestan. They were believed to be plotting terrorist attacks in Gibraltar, possibly using paragliders to bomb a shopping center. The suspects were in possession of explosives and suspicious videos. The purported ringleader, a Dagestani, former Russian special soldier, was believed to have connected with al-Qaida and the Uzbek Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) in Waziristan, Pakistan in 2010, and to have taken part in terrorism-related activities internationally, before he was captured.<sup>20</sup>

### **\*Cannes-Torcy attack (type 5)**

In September 2012, two jihadis threw a hand grenade into a Jewish bakery in a suburb of Paris. One of them, a former delinquent turned religious, was rounded up and shot dead in an exchange of fire with the police in

---

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/jun/10/six-would-be-terrorists-edl-jailed>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/apr/30/six-plead-guilty-plot-edl>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2314594/Muslim-convert-Richard-Dart-refuses-stand-dock-sentenced-years-prison-terrorism-offences.html>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/mar/15/muslim-convert-bbc-documentary-terrorism>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22294720>

<sup>20</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/01/world/europe/france-terrorism-arrests/>

early October. This man, Jeremie Sidney (33), had become radicalized in jail and joined a militant network dubbed the “Cannes-Torcy network” by French security officials. The network was involved in recruitment for al-Qaida’s wing in the Syrian jihad, Jabhat al-Nusra (JAN), and dissemination of jihadi propaganda. Members of the network later appear to have joined ISIS. From Sidney’s home, police investigators retrieved what appeared to be a target list of Jewish associations.<sup>21</sup>

## 2013

### **Echaabi plot**

In February 2013, the Moroccan Mohammed Echaabi was arrested in Valencia, Spain on suspicion of plotting a global jihad-inspired attack on public figures, or other targets in Spain or other European countries.<sup>22</sup> Some reports indicated that a high-ranking Arab official was one of the intended targets.<sup>23</sup> The suspect had attempted to obtain explosives and firearms, and Spanish officials underscored how his profile resembled that of Mohammed Merah, the man behind murders of French soldiers and Jewish children in Southern France in 2012.<sup>24</sup> Echaabi had tried, but failed to enter Gaza via Egypt, with a view to launching an attack on Israeli interests. He had also tried to enter Morocco with intention of carrying out an attack, according to media reports.<sup>25</sup> Echaabi has not been tied to specified terrorist networks, but has rather been described as an al-Qaida-inspired “Lone Wolf”, who appears to have radicalized and educated himself online.

### **Hedegaard attack**

In February 2013, an individual dressed as a mailman approached the home of former journalist and a fiercely outspoken Islam-critic Lars Hedegaard (70) in Copenhagen, and attempted to kill him with a handgun.<sup>26</sup> The attacker fired one shot that missed Hedegaard’s head, after which the gun malfunctioned in an attempt to fire another. The attacker then fled the scene. Investigations showed that the attack was pre-planned, and a car he had rented was placed outside Hedegaard’s two weeks before the attack, likely to conduct reconnaissance. Hedegaard has been a highly controversial figure in Danish public debate and even went to trial on racism charges based on his harsh Islam critique. However, he was freed from the charges by the Danish High Court. The suspected attacker was a 26-year-old Danish-Palestinian (addressed as BH) with ties to extremists in Denmark (for example people involved in the Glostrup cell disrupted in 2005).<sup>27</sup> There are indications that he spent time in Lebanon in the time before the attack (he told a friend he had married in Lebanon

---

<sup>21</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/28/world/europe/france-suspected-isis-link/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/02/08/world/europe/spain-terrorist-suspect-arrest/>

<sup>23</sup> [http://elpais.com/m/elpais/2013/02/12/inenglish/1360694924\\_039364.html](http://elpais.com/m/elpais/2013/02/12/inenglish/1360694924_039364.html)

<sup>24</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/02/08/world/europe/spain-terrorist-suspect-arrest/>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> <http://politiken.dk/magasinet/feature/ECE2282067/attentatmanden-ringede-to-gange/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.jyllands-posten.dk/protected/premium/indblik/Indland/ECE6691232/Den+mist%C3%A6nkte+attentatmands+to+ansigter/>

one month before the shooting).<sup>28</sup> After fleeing the scene of the attack he travelled to Lebanon. From there he appears to have traveled in and out of Syria via Turkey, where he is suspected of having joined the insurgency.<sup>29</sup> It is not known which group he was affiliated with, but after he was arrested in Turkey on his way to Denmark again on 14 April 2014. It was later rumored that he had been released from jail in exchange for Turkish ISIS prisoners.<sup>30</sup>

### **Marignane plot**

In March 2013, two suspected jihadi terrorists were detained in the South France city of Marignane near Marseilles, because it was believed that they were plotting a terrorist bomb attack on French soil.<sup>31</sup> Police said they uncovered a makeshift bomb laboratory in the house of one of those arrested. Government officials told reporters they believed the attack was supposed to be a tribute to Mohammed Merah. The arrestees had made tributes to Mohammed Merah on Facebook, and automatic weapons and explosives were seized in the counter-terrorism operation. One of them tried to go to Tunisia to meet up with an AQIM-leader, but was arrested at the airport in France.<sup>32</sup> The explosive included 50 grams of TATP, 4,5 kilograms of nitrate-fuel mixture, 68 kilograms of nitrate and two liters of acetone which would enable the production of 600 grams more of TATP.<sup>33</sup>

### **Bonn plot**

In March 2013, German authorities arrested four extreme salafis suspected of plotting to assassinate right-wing politician and leader of the Pro-NRW Party, Markus Beisicht. Police raids were launched against three radical Islamist associations dubbed Dawa FFM, Islamische Audios and An-Nussrah, which all had an online presence and pursued fundraising, recruitment and propaganda on behalf of jihadi movements.<sup>34</sup> Two of the suspects were apprehended while they were driving a car near the politician's residence, and police confiscated one firearm and explosives among their belongings. It was later turned out that one of the men had also tried, but failed to bomb Bonn Central Station in December 2012, with a bomb device made out of ammonium nitrate (fertilizer) mixture, which failed to explode.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> <http://politiken.dk/magasinet/feature/ECE2282067/attentatmanden-ringede-to-gange/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.dr.dk/Nyheder/Indland/2014/10/11/225946.htm>

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/08/world/africa/2-french-citizens-accused-of-terrorist-plot.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/08/world/africa/2-french-citizens-accused-of-terrorist-plot.html?_r=0)

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.scotsman.com/news/world/plot-to-blow-up-eiffel-tower-and-louvre-foiled-1-3473342>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/487930/France-foils-terror-plot-to-blow-up-Eiffel-Tower-and-the-Louvre>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/islamist-murder-plot-and-raid-put-salafists-under-pressure-a-888949.html>

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.ksta.de/koeln/attentats-versuche-prozess-gegen-terror-verdaechtige\\_15187530,28186830.html](http://www.ksta.de/koeln/attentats-versuche-prozess-gegen-terror-verdaechtige_15187530,28186830.html) and <http://www.dw.de/german-terrorism-trial-gets-off-to-halting-start/a-17909087>

## **Lee Rigby murder**

On 22 May 2013, two Britons of Nigerian decent, Michael Adebolajo (Mujaahid Abu Hamza) (28) and Michael Adebowale (22), killed a soldier of the British Army, Drummer Lee Rigby near the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, South-East London. The assailants ran Rigby down with a car before hacking him to death with knives and a meat cleaver, attempting to decapitate the victim while shouting "Allahu Akbar".<sup>36</sup> The killers remained at the murder scene and talked to bystanders while allowing them to film. They said the attack was aimed at the British soldier as revenge for Muslims he had killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Investigation revealed that Adebolajo had been a longstanding member of the U.K. Islamist scene surrounding al-Muhajiroun spin-offs and Anjem Choudary, and that he had been arrested in Kenya in 2010 on his way to join al-Shabaab in Somalia. When police arrived on the scene the jihadis charged against them armed with an old revolver that misfired, and injured the shooter only.<sup>37</sup>

## **Paris stabbing**

On 27 May 2013, only five days after the killing of Drummer Lee Rigby, a convert named Alexandre Dhaussy attacked a French soldier patrolling a train and subway traffic hub in the La Défense financial area of Paris.<sup>38</sup> The attacker jumped the guard and stabbed him with a box-cutter in the neck. He was known by security services to have radicalized over the last few years, but I did not find information suggesting he was part of an organized jihadi network.<sup>39</sup> The attack was believed to have been inspired or triggered by the U.K. soldier attack days before.

## **France assassination plot**

In June 2013 French security services apprehended six individuals aged between 22 and 38 suspected of plotting attacks on public figures in France.<sup>40</sup> Four of the suspects held French citizenships whereas one hailed from Benin and another from Comoros. One public prosecutor told the press that the plotters represented most serious terrorist threat in France since the attacks by the GIA in the 1990s. Those arrested were known to previously have been involved in armed robberies.

## **Lyes Darani plot**

In October 2013 French police arrested a terrorist suspect named Lyes Darani in Lille.<sup>41</sup> He was in the possession of a bomb manual and a martyrdom testament, and had returned to France from Syria via Lebanon.

---

<sup>36</sup> <http://isc.independent.gov.uk/committee-reports/special-reports>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/10092487/Islamic-convert-charged-with-attempting-to-kill-French-soldier.html>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/International/2013/May-29/218753-french-police-arrest-suspect-in-soldier-stabbing.ashx> and

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324412604578512432273276190>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.france24.com/en/20130625-france-arrests-paris-terrorism-radical-islam-attacks-police> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23045277>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.lavoixdunord.fr/region/terrorisme-des-projets-d-attentats-dejoues-et-un-ia0b0n2471502>

According to media reports he had first been involved in a plot to attack Shia Muslims in Lebanon, before he returned to France and scouted targets for a suicide mission. A similar pattern was later seen in the case of French-Tunisian Mohamed Ouharani who plotted an attack in France on ISIS's behalf in the summer of 2014.<sup>42</sup>

### **\*London "Mumbai" plot (type 2)**

In October 2013, British MI5 intercepted four individuals believed to be plotting a Mumbai-style terrorist attack in central London. The alleged plotters were young Britons hailing from Turkey, Algeria, Azerbaijan and Pakistan. Apparently, they had actively been trying to obtain weapons suitable for a guerilla-style "Mumbai" attack. Two suspects were released, but one Turkish-Briton and Algerian-Briton were charged with terrorist offences. Reportedly, they had ties to (ISIS) and had spent time with the group in Syria.<sup>43</sup> There had also been contacts between them and an alleged handler named "Ahmed" on the Syrian-Turkish border, upon return to Britain.<sup>44</sup> Prosecutors believed that the purported cell-leader Erol I. was plotting indiscriminate mass casualty attacks on civilians with bombs and Kalashnikovs and also considered assassinating Tony Blair and security officials.<sup>45</sup> The evidence did not hold up in court and he was cleared of the charges. The case illustrates the difficulty of assessing plots. The security services assessed the plot to be very real and dangerous, and surely still do, whereas in the legal sense there had been no planned attack.

## **2014**

### **\*Riviera plot (type 3)**

In February 2014 French police arrested a 23-year-old terrorist suspect, Ibrahim Boudina, in the Cote d'Azur region in Nice, South France. He was believed to have trained with ISIS in Syria and possessed 900 grams of the explosive TATP and a handgun. He allegedly plotted a terrorist bomb attack against the Nice Carnival. According to media he had put together a rudimentary IED, which included bolts and nails meant as shrapnel. It is thought that the plot was supposed to resemble the Boston Marathon bombings. The suspect joined the insurgency in Syria alongside jihadi outfits in September 2012 and returned in early 2014. He was known to have ties to the Cannes-Torcy network, which was involved in recruitment for Jabhat al-Nusra (JAN), and whose members carried out an attack with a hand grenade on a Jewish bakery in the Paris region in September 2012. Members of this network later joined ISIS apparently. The attack led to a major crackdown against the network which was dismantled by French security services.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.metronews.fr/paris/terrorisme-un-projet-d-attentat-dejoue-cet-ete-en-ile-de-france/mnkc!vqyRCTMTPFwAY/>.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11479825/Erol-Incedal-cleared-of-terror-attack-plot-after-secret-trial.html>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31989581>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29609660>

<sup>46</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/28/world/europe/france-suspected-isis-link/>

### **\*Brussels Museum shooting (type 3)**

On 24 May 2014 a French-Algerian jihadi who had trained with ISIS in Syria entered the Jewish Museum in Brussels and opened fire at visitors and staff with a Kalashnikov. The attack left four people dead, three at the scene and one in hospital. The attacker disguised himself, and managed to escape. He wore a sports camera strapped to his chest to film the atrocity, but it is unsure if he managed to get it on tape. The terrorist was arrested six days later at a railway station in Marseilles. He was carrying the assault weapon with him wrapped in ISIS famous black flag. It later transpired that he had spent one year in Syria with ISIS after becoming radicalized while he served a jail sentence in France. In Syria he had been part of a crew of hostage takers said to be behind the abduction, heinous torture and beheadings of Syrian and foreign hostages, including journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff.<sup>47</sup>

### **June 2014 UK plot**

In June 2014 media reports said U.K. police had detained a British jihadi who had fought in Syria and was suspected of plotting a major terrorist attack, perhaps on the scale of the 7 July London bombings, after returning home. The attack likely meant to involve guns and bombs, and it was believed that the suspect took orders from a shadowy al-Qaida figure in Syria. The contact in Syria was reportedly known to design plots directed against Western countries and was making contacts with would-be-terrorists in the U.K. and other European countries for this purpose. The U.K. suspect was said to have brought with him substantial amounts of cash, and used them to buy weapons and bomb-making materials. Reportedly he kept in touch with the contact in Syria after returning to the U.K., and he also teamed up with another extremist accomplice before the security services intervened.<sup>48</sup>

### **\*Creteil plot (type 3)**

In July 2014 there were media reports that a 20-year-old French-Tunisian, Mohamed Ouharani, had been arrested shortly after the summer after returning from Syria via Lebanon. He was believed to have trained with ISIS and of plotting shooting attacks in Paris or Creteil, inspired by Mohammed Merah and Mehdi Nemmouche. According to media sources he and one French accomplice had offered themselves up to commit suicide attacks on Shias in Lebanon at first, but ended up returning to France. Also, Ouharani reportedly notified ISIS-contacts in Syria that he was ready to act.<sup>49</sup> The case had striking similarities to the Lyes Darani plot, intercepted in October 2013.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.france24.com/en/20140908-brussels-shooter-mehdi-nemmouche-planned-bastille-day-atrocity-paris>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2681957/Revealed-Briton-jihadi-Syria-came-home-bomb-UK-streets.html>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.metronews.fr/paris/terrorisme-un-projet-d-attentat-dejoue-cet-ete-en-ile-de-france/mnkc!vqyRCTMTPFwAY/>.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

### **Ziamani beheading plot**

In August 2014 UK police and MI5 apprehended 19-year-old Brusthom Ziamani for plotting to behead a British soldier with a knife. Of Congolese Christian background, Ziamani was inspired by the Woolwich attack and was in possession of a hammer, a knife and an Islamic flag when he was arrested. He had also made surveillance of Army cadet bases and spoken to his girlfriend of his intent to murder soldiers. The youngster had converted only four months before the arrest and he had been radicalized swiftly. He had mixed with followers of Anjem Choudary after converting. Al-Muhajiroun activists took care of him after he ran away from home. Alarmingly, he had been subject to counter-radicalization efforts (PREVENT), without positive effects apparently.<sup>51</sup>

### **\*Surgeon plot (type 3)**

In October 2014 U.K. police four suspected jihadi terrorists with links to IS suspected of plotting terrorist attacks. The main suspect was a medical student named Tarik Hassan (also known as “the surgeon”). He had been studying in Sudan and it was believed that he also spent time in Syria making plans with IS. According to some media reports the plan may have involved a beheading inspired by IS’ atrocities in Syria. Another suspect was of Moroccan and Saudi origin and excelled in school before he began mixing with North African extremists and became radicalized. He was highly active on voicing extreme views and eulogizing friends who had died fighting in Syria. Ironically, the pair was watching the American TV series “Homeland” when they were arrested. Statements from the authorities indicated that the arrests were part of an interventionist strategy to prevent attacks plans from developing.<sup>52</sup>

### **\*Vienna teenager plot (type 4)**

In October 2014 a 14-year-old Turkish boy referred to as Mertkan G. was arrested in Austria on suspicion of plotting to bomb a train at Vienna’s Westbahnhof and other crowded areas in the city, before fleeing Syria and joining IS. He had been living in Austria for eight years and he had conducted online research on how to build improvised cluster-bombs like the ones used in the Boston Marathon attack. He had also voiced support for IS in social media. According to some media reports, the Turkish boy had been offered the equivalent of USD 25,000 and a special position within the IS if he executed the attacks. The offer was made online and the reports said two other boys at large had received similar offers. The 14-year-old had not yet built bomb devices, but had carried out reconnaissance at the time of the arrest. Other media reports referred to the boy as a lone wolf, without any jihadi contacts. The plot could perhaps be perceived as an initiation test to prove commitment.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2960250/Teenager-guilty-plotting-behead-British-soldier.html>.

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2783689/Four-men-arrested-suspicion-terror-offences-series-raids-London.html>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-32882941>

### **\*Remembrance Day plot (type 5)**

In November 2014 U.K. police arrested four jihadis suspected of plotting a terrorist attack during Remembrance Day.<sup>54</sup> One of those apprehended, 19-year-old named Yousaf Syed, had gone through a swift radicalization phase and had spent time in Pakistan.<sup>55</sup> Syed had been experiencing personal problems, such as the divorce of his parents, and he had reportedly been threatened and intimidated people after becoming an Islamist. The plot had no direct link to Syria, but two affiliates of those arrested, Omar Hussain and Shabazz Suleman, had gone to Syria in early 2014 and joined ISIS.<sup>56</sup> The most likely target appears to have been military personnel, their families and officials or a public figure attending the commemoration of fallen British soldiers. Sources indicated that the plans involved guns rather than bombs, although details were sketchy.<sup>57</sup> Some sources indicated that the plotters also had thought about kidnapping a random member of the public and decapitate him or her.<sup>58</sup>

### **\*Tours knife attack (type 6)**

In December 2014, in Tours, France, a man charged into a police station armed with a knife and attacked three police officers before he was shot dead at the scene. Police tried to overpower the man when he first entered. He stabbed a policewoman in the face and tried to stab two other officers while shouting “Allahu Akbar”.<sup>59</sup> The attacker was a former rapper and convert to Islam from Burundi origin. He was known to have become a radical Islamist. However, he was not on the watch lists of the security services, according to media sources.<sup>60</sup> The assailant made the IS’s black flag his profile picture on Facebook a couple of days before the incident. There were indications in the case that he had suffered from psychological problems as well.

## **2015**

### **Kouachi brothers attack**

On 7 January 2015 two French-Algerian terrorists stormed the localities of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris and killed the editor and several staff. The magazine was known for publishing Mohammed cartoons and the terrorists shouted that they had avenged the Prophet before escaping the scene. They also claimed to be working for AQAP and took a hostage at an industrial site before being killed by anti-terrorism forces two days after the attack on the magazine. AQAP took responsibility

---

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11216261/Armed-police-arrest-four-men-amid-fears-of-Islamist-Remembrance-Day-terror-plot.html>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11216261/Armed-police-arrest-four-men-amid-fears-of-Islamist-Remembrance-Day-terror-plot.html>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11216261/Armed-police-arrest-four-men-amid-fears-of-Islamist-Remembrance-Day-terror-plot.html>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid and <http://www.news.com.au/world/four-men-arrested-for-allegedly-plotting-a-terror-attack-to-kill-queen-elizabeth/story-fndir2ev-1227116658248>

<sup>58</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/20/world/europe/uk-terror-suspects-isis/>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/21/france-dijon-driver-attacks-pedestrians>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0.7340.L-4605787.00.html>

for the attack later the same month.<sup>61</sup> One of the brothers was said to have spent time with AQAP in Yemen in 2009-2010 and to have met the “Undewear-bomber” (Abdulmutallab).<sup>62</sup> Some sources have reported that both brothers trained with AQAP in Yemen during 2011.<sup>63</sup>

#### **\*Coulibaly attack (type 6)**

In a parallel development a French-Malian, Amedy Coulibaly<sup>64</sup>, who claimed to act in coordination with the Charlie Hebdo attackers first shot and wounded a jogger and then killed a police woman before taking hostages at a Jewish supermarket on the day the other terrorists had been rounded up. The hostage taker had pledged allegiance to IS<sup>65</sup>, but we found no sources confirming that he ever entered Syria. His wife, who may have been an accomplice to the preparation of the attack, escaped France and entered Syria the day after the attack on Charlie Hebdo.<sup>66</sup> She later gave an interview to IS in Dabiq 7.<sup>67</sup> All of the terrorists belonged to longstanding jihadi support networks in France that had focusing on the Iraqi jihad from 2003 and onwards. All of them had spent time in jail and had been influenced by Algerian Djamel Beghal who operated as a recruiter for al-Qaida in Europe before he ended up in jail in France, from 2001 and onwards.

#### **\*Verviers plot (type 2)**

On 15 (16) January 2015 Belgian counter-terrorism police raided the hideouts of suspected terrorists linked to IS in the town of Verviers to intercept a major attack in the making. Special Forces stormed the militants’ apartment when a suspected ringleader visited and the terrorists fought back with Kalashnikovs and grenades. Two of the plotters (Sofiane Amghar and Khalid Ben Larbi) were killed and the alleged leader (Marouane El Bali) captured. Inside the apartment police confiscated chemicals suitable for production of TATP, police uniforms and GoPro cameras such as those used or sought used by Mohammed Merah, Mehdi Nemmouche and the Charlie Hebdo attackers. The plotters had talked about killing police, but investigators believed they also pursued an ambitious plan to bomb a target of high symbolic value.<sup>68</sup> Several of the plotters had trained with IS in Syria and communicated with a Belgian IS-member, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, believed to function as a middleman between them and the IS-leadership.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/01/14/europe/charlie-hebdo-france-attacks/>

<sup>62</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/12/said-kouachi-underwear-bomber\\_n\\_6455466.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/12/said-kouachi-underwear-bomber_n_6455466.html)

<sup>63</sup> <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/1/11/kouachi-france.html>

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/paris-terror-ahmedy-coulibaly-cherif-kouachi-spoke-hour-before-attacks/>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/11/paris-gunman-amedy-coulibaly-allegiance-isis>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2903601/Wife-Kosher-supermarket-killer-armed-dangerous-run-police-warn.html>

<sup>67</sup> <http://media.clarionproject.org/files/islamic-state/islamic-state-dabiq-magazine-issue-7-from-hypocrisy-to-apostasy.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/02/13/europe/europe-belgium-isis-plot/>

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

### **\*Copenhagen attack (type 6)**

In February 2015 Danish-Moroccan Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein launched a shooting attack against a cultural center named Krudttønden in Østerbro, Copenhagen, where the Swedish artist Lars Vilks was attending a debate on freedom of speech. Some 40 shots were fired with an automatic rifle, injuring four participants at the event and killing one filmmaker who was attending. The terrorist escaped and managed to execute a second attack at a synagogue in Krystalgade near the Nørreport metro station, where he killed a security guard watching over a bar mitzva celebration and injured two police officers. Shortly thereafter, the gunman was shot dead by armed police. El-Hussein was a conflicted individual who managed well in school, but drifted into gang crime. Like so many other terrorists he had radicalized inside jail, where he shared cell with a known Islamist extremist and IS-sympathizer.<sup>70</sup> El-Hussein swore allegiance to IS via Facebook a short time before he staged the shootings.<sup>71</sup>

### **\*Ceuta plot 1 (type 5)**

On 10 March 2015 Spanish authorities announced the arrest of two militant Islamists who were plotting attacks inside Spain or in neighboring countries.<sup>72</sup> The plotters were Spaniards of Moroccan origin and were arrested in the North African Spanish enclave of Ceuta. They had been in contact with IS online, and had been arrested on another occasion possessing guns, munitions, knives, military uniforms and Spanish license plates. Officials also mentioned to the media that those arrested had profiles resembling the terrorists behind the attacks on Charlie Hebdo and the Jewish supermarket in Paris, January 2015.

### **\*Catalonia plot 2 (type 5)**

In April 2015 Spanish police jailed seven Islamists suspected of having IS-links and plotting “kidnappings, an execution and attacks on Jewish shops and buildings in Spain”.<sup>73</sup> The suspects belonged to a local network dubbed “The Islamic Brotherhood for Preaching Jihad”, involved in recruiting Spaniards for IS in Syria. Members of the group had reportedly considered kidnapping individuals, dressing them in orange jump suits and beheading them in an IS-style video broadcast, investigators believed. They had also contemplated the kidnapping of a female bank director for ransom.<sup>74</sup> The cell involved Moroccans and Spaniards mainly and the leader had reportedly proposed attacks guns and hand grenades on a

---

<sup>70</sup> <http://nyhederne.tv2.dk/krimi/2015-04-14-afsloering-omar-el-hussein-havde-cellefaellesskab-med-islamisk-stat-stoette>.

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2956592/He-went-prison-gang-member-came-wanting-wage-holy-war-Friend-says-Copenhagen-gunman-radicalised-serving-sentence-stabbing-teen.html>

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/11/world/europe/spain-says-arrested-pair-were-part-of-terrorist-plot.html>.

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/67275-150410-spain-nabs-jihadist-cell-plotting-to-bomb-jewish-bookstore>.

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/67275-150410-spain-nabs-jihadist-cell-plotting-to-bomb-jewish-bookstore>

range of targets including a Jewish bookshop, synagogues, police and other targets.<sup>75</sup>

### **French church plot**

In April 2015 French police apprehended a 24-year-old of Algerian origin believed to be plotting terrorist attacks against churches in Paris. The suspect was known to the security services for wanting to join the insurgency in Syria and was arrested after he accidentally shot himself in the leg, perhaps while preparing an attack. From the French-Algerian's car and his apartment, investigators retrieved weapons, munitions, bullet proof vests, notes on alternative targets and "documents linked to al-Qaida and Islamic State".<sup>76</sup> The purported plotter was a computer science student and he was also suspected of having shot and killed a woman during an attempted car jack just before his arrest. The suspect, identified as Sid Ahmed Ghlam, was under surveillance and had been in contact with an unidentified individual in Syria who had specifically asked him to target a church. He surrounded himself with people known to have embraced radical Islam, but his extremist contacts and activities had not been assessed serious enough to intervene until April.<sup>77</sup> Shortly, police apprehended three additional suspects linked to the plotter.<sup>78</sup> In an interesting twist Ghlam argued via his lawyer that he had actually averted a church attack rather than been trying to stage one.<sup>79</sup>

### **Germany bike race plot**

In May 2015 German police arrested a German-Turk and his wife suspected of preparing a terrorist attack. The incident caused the cancellation of a bike race from Eschborn to Frankfurt out of concern it might have been a target. From the suspects' home near Frankfurt, investigators retrieved a functional pipe bomb, three liters hydrogen peroxide, munitions and parts of a G3 assault rifle. The German-Turk had known links to the so-called Sauerland network, which has been implicated in several jihadi plots Germany.<sup>80</sup> The Sauerland network established ties to the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), and Uzbek terrorist outfit operating out of the AfPak border region, which plotted a high-profile attack in Germany in 2007.<sup>81</sup> Individuals and cliques associated with the Sauerland network also seem to have maintained relations with al-Qaida on occasions.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/5602/spain-beheadings>

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-32409253>.

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/921820/ce-que-lon-sait-de-lhomme-soupconne-davoir-planifie-un-attentat-en-france.html>.

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/france-detains-three-new-suspects-linked-to-alleged-terror-plot-to-attack-paris-churches-10205531.html>.

<sup>79</sup> <http://m.france24.com/en/20150620-france-church-terror-suspect-claims-thwarted-attack-sid-ghlam>

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.dw.de/frankfurt-on-high-alert-over-suspected-bike-race-terror-plot/a-18423188>.

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/lessons-learned-from-the-september-2007-german-terrorist-plot>

<sup>82</sup> See Guido W. Steinberg, *German Jihad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013) and <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/operation-alberich-how-the-cia-helped-germany-foil-terror-plot-a-504837.html>

### **\*Lyon gas factory attack (type 6)**

In June 2015 a radical Islamist with IS-sympathies mounted a terrorist attack against a U.S. owned gas plant outside Lyon. The attacker, Yassine Salhi, was working as a truck driver with the company. He attempted to cause gas explosions inside the plant by ramming his car into gas cylinders and he also killed his boss, severed his head and put it on a fence pole, even taking a selfie with it to distribute online. The pictures were sent to a friend of his in Syria.<sup>83</sup> Salhi had lured his boss into his car at a nearby location before driving to the plant. Inside, he had knocked him unconscious and strangled him before conducting the decapitation and entering the premises of the gas facility. His lawyer claimed Salhi was pursuing personal grievances after being reprimanded by the boss, but his background, contacts and the modus operandi suggested otherwise. Salhi was known to frequent extremist circles since 2003; the friend in Syria he sent pictures to, Sebastian Younes, had indicated that he had been in contact with the IS-leadership about the pictures; Salhi brought black flags with the Islamic confession of faith during the attack and shouted the jihadi slogan “allahu akbar” when he was arrested.<sup>84</sup>

## **North America<sup>85</sup>**

**2011**

### **Aldawsari plot**

In February 2011, a Saudi national, Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, who had gone to college in the U.S., was arrested accused of plotting to kill former President George W. Bush with a bomb. He had gathered bomb-making materials and conducted reconnaissance of Bush’s home in Dallas. Al-Dawsari studied chemical engineering in the U.S. since 2008. He also scouted nuclear power plants and soldier formerly stationed at Abu Ghraib as possible targets. Aldawsari was inspired by bin Laden’s speeches and aimed to attack with the explosive TNP.<sup>86</sup> The case seems to be one out of very few in the U.S. since 2011 that did not involve a sting operation.<sup>87</sup>

### **Synagogue plot**

In May 2011, two Arab-Americans, Ahmed Ferhani and Mohamed Mamdouh, were arrested for plotting attacks on targets in Manhattan, including a synagogue. They also showed an interest in bombing a church and Empire State Building. For the attack on the synagogue the plotters had attempted to procure handguns and grenades, and planned to dress as Jews. They were apprehended through a sting operation, and seemed to be

---

<sup>83</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/prosecutor-beheading-french-factory-attack-trademark-093019537.html>

<sup>84</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/prosecutor-beheading-french-factory-attack-trademark-093019537.html>

<sup>85</sup> Main sources: <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/07/60-terrorist-plots-since-911-continued-lessons-in-domestic-counterterrorism> and judicial documents.

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/07/60-terrorist-plots-since-911-continued-lessons-in-domestic-counterterrorism>

<sup>87</sup> <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/nov/13/nation/la-na-nn-saudi-student-texas-terrorism-20121113>

motivated by a combination of anti-Semitism and perceived injustices against Muslims around the world. The media coverage did not reveal information about links to organized jihadi networks, or online radicalization.<sup>88</sup>

### **Seattle Military Processing plot**

In June 2011, two American Muslim converts, Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif and Walli Mujahidh, were arrested for plotting to attack a military processing center in Seattle with grenades and automatic firearms. The main plotter, Abdul-Latif, had served in the military, been involved in crime, and suffered from mental issues. He was inspired by al-Qaida and Anwar al-Awlaki's online lectures, and motivated by U.S. invasions of Muslim countries.<sup>89</sup> The arrests resulted from a sting operation.<sup>90</sup>

### **Pimentel NYC plot**

In November 2011, an American convert, Jose Pimentel, originating from Dominican Republic was arrested for plotting to launch bombings in New York, likely against military targets. He was captured through a sting operation and investigations indicated he was inspired by Osama bin Laden and Anwar al-Awlaki's online sermons. He was described as mentally unstable. He was preparing three bombs for the attacks.<sup>91</sup>

## **2012**

### **Osmakac Tampa plot**

In January 2012, U.S. authorities apprehended a Kosovar American for plotting attacks in Tampa, Florida. He sought to buy weapons and explosives with the intention of staging a car bombing, take hostages and detonating a suicide vest in a crowded area. He wanted to avenge injustices against Muslims, had recorded a suicide video, and was intercepted through a sting operation. There was no evidence of links to al-Qaida or affiliated groups, but he was inspired by al-Qaida and had tried to obtain al-Qaida flags.<sup>92</sup> The arrest was result of a sting operation.<sup>93</sup>

### **El Khalifi Capitol plot**

In February 2012, U.S. authorities apprehended a Moroccan national, Amine El-Khalifi) for planning to bomb the Capitol, through a sting operation. While under surveillance, he had obtained a suicide vest and an automatic weapon, which had been rendered inoperable by police. El Khalifi contemplated attacks against a restaurant, a military target, or a synagogue, but had not reached a decision when arrested. There were no sources indicating contacts with jihadi organizations. The FBI received

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/12/to-catch-the-devil-fbi-informant-program/>

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2084551/Sami-Osmakac-Terror-suspect-caught-camera-brawling-Christian-protesters.html>

criticisms for, via an informant, offering to pay martyrdom tribute to El Khalifi's family in Morocco.<sup>94</sup>

### **AQAP plane bomb plot**

In May 2012, U.S. authorities announced the successful interception of a plot by AQAP to bomb a U.S.-bound airliner. A double agent had infiltrated AQAP's networks and volunteered to execute the bombing, using an upgraded version of the "underwear-bomb" employed by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab in the failed AQAP-plot to down trans-Atlantic jet from Holland to the U.S. in 2009.<sup>95</sup>

### **Chicago bar plot**

In September 2012, a 19-year-old Muslim American Adel Daoud was caught when attempting to set off a car bomb in Chicago, outside a bar. Daoud drew inspiration and advice from AQAP's Inspire magazine and was provided with fake explosives by FBI in a sting operation.<sup>96</sup>

### **Federal Reserve bomb plot**

In October 2012, another plot linked to, or inspired by AQAP occurred, when Bengali Quazi Mohammad Rezwanul Ahsan Nafis and an accomplice attempted to bomb a bank in Manhattan's financial district.<sup>97</sup> Nafis brought AQAP propaganda and manuals into the U.S., and sought to recruit manpower for a cell. In yet another sting operation, FBI provided Nafis and the accomplice with fake explosives. The attack was meant to hurt the American economy. Nafis invoked statements by bin Laden as justification.<sup>98</sup>

### **Qazi brothers plot**

In November 2012 FBI captured two terrorist suspects, Raees Alam Qazi, and Sheheryar Alam Qazi, believed to be plotting an attack on two federal officials.<sup>99</sup> They also admitted to have made reconnaissance of potential targets for mass casualty attacks in central New York. Bomb-making materials and an AQAP manual were retrieved from their home. They were consuming and posting jihadi content online, and one of the brothers had attempted to travel to Afghanistan via Pakistan, but failed to enter the war zone. He also wanted to join AQAP in Yemen, but was told by the group to do something inside the U.S. instead.<sup>100</sup> According to the authorities, the suspects were not captured through a sting operation in this case.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.fbi.gov/newyork/press-releases/2013/new-york-man-pleads-guilty-to-attempting-to-bomb-new-york-federal-reserve-bank-in-lower-manhattan>

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/crime/fl-qazi-brothers-plead-20150312-story.html>

<sup>101</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/30/qazi-brothers-arrested-terror-charges-florida\\_n\\_2221127.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/30/qazi-brothers-arrested-terror-charges-florida_n_2221127.html)

2013

### **Boston bombing**

In April 2013, the Tsarnaev brothers attacked Boston Marathon with pressure cooker bombs killing three and injuring 264.<sup>102</sup> The older brother is believed to have been the author of the attack and it was motivated by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The plotters drew inspiration and advice from AQAP's Inspire magazine. They hailed from the Caucasus region and possible links to Islamist militants in Dagestan were investigated, though no contacts with or directives from foreign militant groups have been confirmed.

### **Via Rail Canada plot**

In April 2013, Canadian authorities intercepted an alleged plot to derail passenger trains of the national railway service Via Rail in Canada.<sup>103</sup> The purported plotters, Raed Jaser and Chiheb Esseghaier, hailed from Tunisian and Palestinian background and were believed to maintain links to al-Qaida affiliated fighters operating on the border between Pakistan and Iran, possibly the group known as Jundullah. The lead figure Esseghaier admitted before an undercover agent having spent time with "mujahedeen" in Iran.<sup>104</sup> He was a doctoral student and an ardent, ideologically extreme jihadi. The motive appears to have been Canada's support for the War on Terror. Both were found guilty of terrorist offences.<sup>105</sup>

### **Wichita bomb plot**

In December 2013, a 58-year-old aviation technician, and convert to Islam, was arrested for plotting a suicide bombing and Wichita Airport in Kansas, U.S.<sup>106</sup> The convert, Terry Lee Loewen, had radicalized online, inspired by the U.S.-based extremist website RevolutionMuslim.com and the online lectures of AQAP-ideologue Anwar al-Awlaki. As in so many U.S. cases, a sting operation led to the arrest.<sup>107</sup>

2014

### **Canada Day plot**

In July 2014 a radicalized couple, who were recent converts to Islam, was captured in a sting operation by Canadian security services on suspicion of plotting an al-Qaida-inspired terrorist bomb attack on the legislature in Victoria.<sup>108</sup> The attack was supposed to happen on Canada Day and the

---

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/03/us-canada-security-idUSKBNOL62CX20150203>

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/via-rail-plot-trial-raed-jaser-chiheb-esseghaier-found-guilty-on-several-terror-charges-1.3001383>

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/12/terry-lee-loewen-terrorist-plot-in-wichita-kansas-airport>

<sup>107</sup> [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/12/kansas\\_bomb\\_plot\\_sus.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/12/kansas_bomb_plot_sus.php)

<sup>108</sup> <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/canada-day-crowd-at-b-c-legislature-was-target-in-thwarted-bomb-plot-police-say-1.340077>

plotters had put two pressure cooker bombs on the lawn outside the legislature. The motive appears to have been Canada's contribution to ISAF and the country policies towards Palestine. The suspects were hardly hardcore, ideological jihadis, however. Seemingly unfocused ex-druggies, they invoked as different sources of inspiration as radical Islam and Rambo, although the lack of focus did prevent them from building bomb devices and implementing the plan.<sup>109</sup>

#### **\*Quebec Car attack (type 6)**

In October 2014 a Canadian Muslim convert, Martin Couture-Rouleau, rammed his car into two uniformed soldiers in Quebec, murdering one of them<sup>110</sup> the convert was shot dead in the subsequent police hunt. He was known to the security services as an extremist and had been active in jihadi social media. He had tried fly to Pakistan in 2013 but was denied boarding the plane. He had also voiced sympathies for IS online. In July he booked a flight to Turkey aiming join the fighting in Syria, but was stopped at the airport and had his passport confiscated.<sup>111</sup>

#### **Ottawa Parliament attack**

In October 2014 the Canadian convert to Islam and former drug addict, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, gunned down a soldier guarding the National War Memorial in Ottawa before going on a shooting rampage nearby Parliament building, where he was shot dead by a security guard.<sup>112</sup> He was known to voice support for the Taliban, and had joked to co-workers about becoming a suicide bomber.<sup>113</sup> While some news reports indicated that the convert sympathized with IS and wanted to join the group<sup>114</sup>, no concrete evidence of links to, or interaction with the group has been confirmed.<sup>115</sup> Some media reports claimed he read IS Twitter-posts<sup>116</sup> and others that he followed the same IS-related Twitter accounts as fellow Canadian convert Martin Couture-Rouleau, a known IS-sympathizer, who rammed a car into soldiers two days earlier. However, there seems to be little concrete evidence of any links between the two.<sup>117</sup> In a video statement claiming the attacks the convert mentioned several Arab-sounding names as accomplices, but the status of the investigation in this regard does not appear to have reached a conclusion.<sup>118</sup> A photo of the attacker with a rifle emerged on Twitter accounts of IS-sympathizers

---

<sup>109</sup> <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/alleged-2013-canada-day-terror-plot-inspired-by-rambo-iii-court-hears-as-jurors-try-to-suppress-laughter>

<sup>110</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014\\_Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu\\_ramming\\_attack](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu_ramming_attack)

<sup>111</sup> [http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/10/26/how\\_martin\\_couturerouleau\\_became\\_an\\_aspiring\\_islamic\\_state\\_fighter.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/10/26/how_martin_couturerouleau_became_an_aspiring_islamic_state_fighter.html)

<sup>112</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014\\_shootings\\_at\\_Parliament\\_Hill,\\_Ottawa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_shootings_at_Parliament_Hill,_Ottawa)

<sup>113</sup> <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/hill-shooter-was-polite-at-work-supported-taliban-reports-say>

<sup>114</sup> <http://www.ibtimes.co.in/isis-jihadi-dead-ottawa-shooting-suspect-michael-zehaf-bibeau-was-terror-watch-list-612083>

<sup>115</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-29752077>

<sup>116</sup> <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/ottawa-shooter-read-posts-by-isis-convert-calling-for-attacks-on-canada>

<sup>117</sup> For an interesting critical review of the media coverage, see <http://citationsneeded.com/2014/10/24/i-got-the-daily-beast/>

shortly after the attack, but this photo was apparently taken on another occasion before the attack and was already available in social media. Seemingly a blogger located the photo and published it before IS-supporters picked upon it.<sup>119</sup>

#### **\*NYC Axe attack (type 6)**

In October 2014 an American Muslim convert, Zale Thompson, attacked four policemen with an axe in Queens, New York, wounding two of them before being shot dead at the scene.<sup>120</sup> Thompson was active in jihadi social media and had visited hundreds of websites linked to al-Qaida, IS and jihadism in general. He had shown an interest in the beheading videos released by IS. There was no evidence that he.<sup>121</sup> Thompson had also actively praised the rise of IS online.<sup>122</sup> Very remote IS-link, but the group communicated in Dabiq 5 that the attack was in response to “Abu Mohammed al-Adnani’s call to action” (referring to the statement of the top IS spokesman to attack targets in the West with simple means.<sup>123</sup>

## 2015

#### **\*Cornell Capitol plot (type 6)**

In January 2015, in another sting operation, a convert from Ohio, Christopher Cornell, was arrested for an alleged plan to assault Capitol Hill using pipe bomb and automatic rifles.<sup>124</sup> He was known to be an anarchist and strongly antagonist towards the authorities before converting. Cornell was apprehended when he procured automatic two semi-automatic rifles and ammunition, but had not required bomb-making materials at this point. Reportedly, Cornell had tried to recruit an FBI informant posing as an extremist for an attack in support of IS. He had been active in extremist social media and praised violent jihad there.<sup>125</sup> He also made references to al-Qaida and Anwar al-Awlaki, writing to the FBI informant “I believe we should just wage jihad under our own orders and plan attacks and everything... [W]e already got a thumbs up from the Brothers over there and Anwar al Awlaki before his martyrdom and many others.”<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/michael-zehaf-bibeau-urges-similar-attacks-in-unreleased-video-cp-1.3091782>

<sup>119</sup> <http://www.journaldemontreal.com/2014/10/23/photo-du-tireur-dottawa--histoire-dun-scoop>

<sup>120</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2014/10/terror-plot-62-lone-wolf-terrorist-attacks-in-the-us-and-canada-call-for-renewed-vigilance>

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2806731/Was-terror-attack-Police-probe-extremist-links-online-rants-New-York-hatchet-attacker-emerge-shot-dead-attack-group-cops-Queens.html>

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2806731/Was-terror-attack-Police-probe-extremist-links-online-rants-New-York-hatchet-attacker-emerge-shot-dead-attack-group-cops-Queens.html>

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2806731/Was-terror-attack-Police-probe-extremist-links-online-rants-New-York-hatchet-attacker-emerge-shot-dead-attack-group-cops-Queens.html#ixzz3b9Sgx1Sq> and <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/the-islamic-state-e2809cdc481biq-magazine-522.pdf>

<sup>124</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/04/67-islamist-terrorist-plots-since-911-spike-in-plots-inspired-by-terrorist-groups-unrest-in-middle-east> and <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/01/terrorist-plot-63-attempt-to-bomb-the-us-capitol-shows-the-us-cannot-ignore-the-threat-of-terrorism>

<sup>125</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/01/15/us/capitol-attack-plot/>

## **Mohamud plot**

In February 2015 another American convert from Ohio, going by the kunya Abdirahman Sheik Mohamud was arrested on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack on a military base in Texas and “kill three or four soldiers”, - execution style.<sup>127</sup> Before Mohamud traveled to Syria he had supported ISIS online. However, when arriving in the conflict theater he joined al-Qaida’s branch, Jabhat al-Nusra and trained with them in the use of explosives break-in-and-entering, and “hand-to-hand combat”.<sup>128</sup> Before he was able to join the insurgency, he had been contacted by a cleric linked to an unspecified group, who asked him to return to the U.S. and stage an attack there instead.<sup>129</sup> Heritage Foundation’s overview of U.S. incidents claims the cleric represented IS<sup>130</sup>, but affiliation with Jabhat al-Nusra seems to have been confirmed by law enforcement, and Mohamud’s brother was reportedly also killed fighting for that group.<sup>131</sup>

## **\*Velentzas/Siddiqui plot (type 6)**

In April 2015 two female American Islamists known as Najma Samaa” Velentzas and Asia “Murdiyyah” Siddiqui, were arrested in a sting operation for an alleged plan to bomb a funeral of a police officer, which thousands of police were expected to attend.<sup>132</sup> They talked about using self-made grenades, pressure cooker bombs and pipe-bombs. The two were inspired by al-Qaida and bin Laden and one of them had befriended AQAP’s Samir Khan back in 2006. They hailed the Boston bombers and IS online and said they wished to be spoken of as “citizens of the Islamic State” after the attack. The women had consumed diverse jihadi propaganda by al-Qaida and IS, as well as bomb manuals from AQAP’s inspire and “The Anarchist Cookbook” a popular read for extremists of different ideological shades. According to the undercover agent,

## **\*Fort Riley plot (type 6)**

In April 2015 U.S. authorities arrested a man from Topeka, John T. Booker Jr., for plotting an IS-inspired attack on the Fort Riley military base in Kansas.<sup>133</sup> Investigators believed that he was going to launch a suicide truck bombing at the base. He appears to have been in the final stage of preparations, assembling the bomb device, when the authorities

---

<sup>126</sup> [http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/01/14/cornell\\_complaint.pdf](http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/01/14/cornell_complaint.pdf)

<sup>127</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/ohio-man-trained-islamic-state-charged-supporting-terrorism-163702359.html>

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/ohio-man-trained-islamic-state-charged-supporting-terrorism-163702359.html>

<sup>130</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/04/67-islamist-terrorist-plots-since-911-spike-in-plots-inspired-by-terrorist-groups-unrest-in-middle-east>

<sup>131</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/ohio-man-trained-islamic-state-charged-supporting-terrorism-163702359.html#>

<sup>132</sup> <http://heavy.com/news/2015/04/noelle-velentzas-asia-siddiqui-isis-bomb-plot-arrest-new-york-bin-laden-hero/> and <http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/isis/frauen-in-new-york-planten-terroranschlag-40413164.bild.html>

<sup>133</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/04/three-terrorist-plots-disrupted-in-three-weeks-66th-islamist-plot-reconfirms-scope-of-threat>

intervened. Booker had expressed wishes to go abroad to wage jihad online, and he had recorded a video saying he was acting on behalf of IS.<sup>134</sup> The arrest was result of a sting operation.<sup>135</sup>

#### **\*Garland attack (type 5)**

In May 2015 two gunmen, Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi, attempted to launch a terrorist shooting attack on a “Mohammed cartoons contest” staged by American anti-Islam activists calling themselves American Freedom Defense Initiative in Garland, Texas.<sup>136</sup> The attackers shot and wounded a guard at the event before being shot dead at the scene by Police. The alleged author of the attack, Elton Simpson was a known extremist who was on a no-fly list for wanting to join al-Shabaab in Somalia. He was also a supporter of IS and had pledged allegiance to IS’s “Caliph” al-Baghdadi online. They also tweeted that they wanted to be accepted by Allah as “mujahedeen” just before the attack.<sup>137</sup> IS claimed responsibility for the attack through its official radio channel and referred to the plotters as its soldiers.<sup>138</sup> At the same time, in the run-up to the attack, Simpson had been in touch with an al-Shabaab militant in Somalia who previously lived in Minneapolis, and private messaging between them appears to have referred to the Mohammed cartoons contest.<sup>139</sup>

#### **\*Usamaah Rahim plot (type 6)**

In June 2015 a terrorist suspect Usamaah Rahim was shot dead by law enforcement in Boston after reportedly charging against them armed with a military knife. Police also arrested a purported accomplice of Rahim named David Wright. The two were alleged to be inspired by IS and to have plotted to behead a local policeman and to assassinate the high-profile anti-Islam activist Pamela Geller. Rahim had called his father to say farewell the day before he was shot and had told Wright in a phone conversation that he was about to go after the “boys in blue”.<sup>140</sup> Investigators claimed Rahim had drawn inspiration from IS propaganda online.<sup>141</sup> Rahim’s family denied that he had any IS-affiliation.<sup>142</sup>

#### **\*NYC aeronautics student plot (type 6)**

In June 2015 FBI arrested an aeronautics student in New York who was suspected of cooperating with others to mount an IS-inspired terrorist

---

<sup>134</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/11/us/kansas-man-charged-with-plotting-suicide-attack-at-fort-riley.html? r=0>

<sup>135</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/10/us-man-arrested-bomb-fort-riley\\_n\\_7041960.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/10/us-man-arrested-bomb-fort-riley_n_7041960.html)

<sup>136</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/05/68th-terrorist-plot-calls-for-major-counterterrorism-reforms>

<sup>137</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/05/05/us/texas-shooting-gunmen/index.html>

<sup>138</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/05/05/us/garland-texas-prophet-mohammed-contest-shooting/index.html>

<sup>139</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/05/07/politics/fbi-warning-elton-simpson-cartoon-event-attack/>

<sup>140</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3110889/Pictured-Boston-terror-suspects-inspired-ISIS-revealed-one-called-father-say-goodbye-shot-dead.html>

<sup>141</sup> <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/bostons-usaamah-rahim-isis-style-terror-plot-suspect-described-promising-student/>

<sup>142</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/06/05/us/boston-police-shooting/>

bomb attack. The suspect, Munther Omar Saleh, had reportedly planned to target the New York subway.<sup>143</sup> Saleh and another suspect were apprehended when they charged against an FBI vehicle following them. Saleh had expressed support for IS in “numerous online postings” and announced on Twitter that he feared al-Qaida was becoming too moderate.<sup>144</sup> It is not entirely clear if the arrest of Saleh was a sting operation at the time of writing.

## Australia/New Zealand

### 2011-2013

[In the period 2011-2013, 17 low-level incidents appeared to be Syria-related in Australia.<sup>145</sup> Examples include the petrol bombing of a Turkish Alawite center in Melbourne in March 2012 and the arson of an Alawite prayer room in Melbourne in the same period. One Australian foreign fighter with IS, Jack Bilardi, left bomb-making equipment behind, when he headed to Syria in August 2014, suggesting he may have considered a plot in Australia.<sup>146</sup>]

### 2014

#### **\*Brisbane plot (Kruezi) (type 6)**

On 10 September 2014, police raided an Islamic bookstore in Brisbane, arresting Agim Kruezi (22) and Omar Succarieh (31).<sup>147</sup> A third suspect, Louis Maestracci (32) was later arrested in the same investigation.<sup>148</sup> They were initially charged with recruitment and fundraising for groups in Syria, and in Kruezi and Succarieh’s case, of planning to fight in Syria. Succarieh was charged with fundraising for Jabhat al-Nusra.<sup>149</sup> But later Kruezi was charged with transporting a firearm and of possessing machetes, knives, balaclavas and military fatigues in preparation for an attack on Australian soil.<sup>150</sup> There was no mention or evidence of prior trips to Syria. Police said that between 18 July and 5 September 2014, Kruezi had recruited another person become a member of IS.<sup>151</sup> Succarieh’

---

<sup>143</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/06/16/politics/isis-american-helping-new-york/index.html?Sr=twtsr061615newyorkisis6pstoryphoto>

<sup>144</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/17/new-york-student-arrested-isis-inspired-bomb-plot>

<sup>145</sup> <http://www.andrewzammit.org/2013/06/30/list-of-syria-related-violent-incidents-in-australia/>

<sup>146</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-12/bilardi-left-bomb-making-material-home-before-leaving-to-join-isis/6307370>

<sup>147</sup> <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/islamic-book-store-raid-men-face-court-20140911-10fa51.html>

<sup>148</sup> <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2014/10/16/man-charged-with-planning-australian-terror-attack>

<sup>149</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2796649/accused-terrorist-agim-kruezi-stocked-weapons-plotting-home-soil-terror-attack.html>

<sup>150</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2796649/accused-terrorist-agim-kruezi-stocked-weapons-plotting-home-soil-terror-attack.html>

<sup>151</sup> <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/father-of-terror-accused-agim-kruezi-rejects-police-allegations-his-son-was-recruiting-is-soldiers/story-fnihsrf2-1227055846486>

brother Ahmed allegedly blew himself up in a truck bomb in Syria in September 2014.<sup>152</sup>

#### **\*Baryalei-Azari plot (type 4)**

On 17 September 2014, over 800 Australian police officers raided homes in Sydney and Brisbane, arresting 15 people. One person, Omarjan Azari (22), was charged with preparing a terrorist attack on Australian soil.<sup>153</sup> A few days prior to the raid, Azari had allegedly been in telephone contact with Syria-based Australian ISIS member Mohammad Ali Baryalei. In February 2015, a court heard transcripts of a conversation in which Baryalei told Azari to “pick any random unbeliever” and “finish him, finish her [and] put the flag of the state in the background”. Azari allegedly replied “Yeah.” Baryalei told Azari to pick “a tourist or backpacker, American, French or British, like that’s even better”, to send the message: “If you kill our people we will also kill your people one by one.” Baryalei wanted Azari and two or three other “heavy duty boys with perfect faith” to kill “continuously”, saying he carried orders from the “commander of the faithful”. Azari allegedly replied: “If this is what the commander says, I’m happy with it, praise be to Allah”.<sup>154</sup> In a second call, on or around 16 September 2014, Azari told Baryalei he wanted to postpone the operation two months “get out from being under surveillance.” Baryalei (33) was an Australian of Afghan origin who was said to be a prominent recruiter of Australian foreign fighters to Syria and the most senior Australian national in IS before his death in late October 2014.<sup>155</sup>

#### **\*Melbourne Police Stabbing (type 6)**

On 24 September, an 18-year old man attacked two police officers with a knife outside a Melbourne police station, wounding both before being shot and killed by the officers.<sup>156</sup> The attacker had turned up by his own free will at Endeavour Hills police station for a meeting with police. He was later identified as Numan Haider.<sup>157</sup> He had not been to Syria, but some time earlier he had waved what appeared to be an Islamic State group flag at a shopping mall.<sup>158</sup> Haider had been attending Al-Furqan, a controversial Islamic centre in Melbourne.<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>152</sup> <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/father-of-terror-accused-agim-kruenzi-rejects-police-allegations-his-son-was-recruiting-is-soldiers/story-fnihsrf2-1227055846486>

<sup>153</sup> [http://mashable.com/2014/09/17/massive-raids-as-anti-terrorism-operation-underway-in-australia/;](http://mashable.com/2014/09/17/massive-raids-as-anti-terrorism-operation-underway-in-australia/)

<sup>154</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/feb/24/terrorism-suspect-omarjan-azari-told-to-pick-any-random-unbeliever-and-film-killing>

<sup>155</sup> [http://mashable.com/2014/09/09/senior-australian-islamic-state-recruiter-identified-as-former-nightclub-bouncer/;](http://mashable.com/2014/09/09/senior-australian-islamic-state-recruiter-identified-as-former-nightclub-bouncer/) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/29/mohammad-ali-baryalei-australia-alleged-senior-isis-recruiter-killed>.

<sup>156</sup> <http://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/news/teen-shot-and-killed-counter-terrorism-police/2397502/>

<sup>157</sup> <https://www.pulse.me/ap/5e5f837d22eb4299bac3c7d81dd4c4cc>

<sup>158</sup> <https://www.pulse.me/ap/5e5f837d22eb4299bac3c7d81dd4c4cc>

<sup>159</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-20/melbourne-counterterrorism-raids-plot-to-kill-police-officer/6407586>

### **\*Sydney hostage taking (type 6)**

On 15 December, a man armed with a shotgun took 18 people hostage at the Lindt Chocolate Store in downtown Sydney. After a 16-hour siege, police raided the site and killed the attacker. One person was killed by the gunman, and another was killed by a police bullet during the raid. Four additional people were wounded. The gunman had demanded to speak to the Australian prime minister. He claimed there were four explosive devices around Sydney, which turned out to be untrue. Early in the raid, the gunman also demanded that an ISIL flag be brought to him. He also made hostages record videos saying, among other things, that "this is an attack on Australia by the Islamic State."<sup>160</sup> The perpetrator was identified as Man Haron Monis, an Iranian convert to salafi Islam who had a history of criminal convictions, personal problems, and radical religious activism.<sup>161</sup> He had not been to Syria and appears not to have had any direct connection with groups there.

2015

### **\*Fairfield plot (type 6)**

On 10 February 2015, police arrested Omar Al-Kutobi (24) and Mohammad Kiad (25) in Fairfield, Sydney and charged them with planning a terrorist attack.<sup>162</sup> In their home, the police allegedly found an IS flag, a machete and a knife, and a video recording of one of the men talking about carrying out an attack. Prime Minister Tony Abbott later said in Parliament that the video recording showed "one suspect kneeling in front of the ISIL flag with the two knives whilst making a statement in Arabic." The video was allegedly filmed by Mohammad Kiad and showed Kutobi holding both knives and vowing to strike the kidneys and necks of white people "today".<sup>163</sup> Police allege the men had plotted to attack several targets, including police and a prayer hall in Sydney. Al-Kutobi had been an IT student who had come to Australia as a refugee from Iraq around 2003.<sup>164</sup> His father lived in Germany and his mother in Iraq. He appears to have radicalized quickly; as late as 2013, he had wanted to join the Australian military and had enthusiastically completed the Australian citizenship ceremony. But his neighbors and his father said that in mid-2014 he had started becoming "agitated and more devout". Six months before his arrest, he had told his father he wanted to go back to Iraq to see his mother. The Sydney Morning Herald reported that "They were glued to their television during the Lindt Cafe siege and changed their appearance in the weeks after, trading Nike sneakers and Dolce & Gabbana jeans for religious robes and beards. Kiad, who worked as a nurse in Kuwait, began

---

<sup>160</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-siege-over-lindt-cafe-gunman-forces-hostages-to-appear-in-videos-20141216-127wgy.html>

<sup>161</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-siege-man-haron-monis-humanitarian-and-terrorist-20141219-12ajn5.html>

<sup>162</sup> <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/02/11/world/asia/australia-holds-2-in-terrorism-case.html? r=0>

<sup>163</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/national/inside-the-mind-of-student-terror-suspect-omar-alkutobi-20150214-13d18k.html>

<sup>164</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/national/inside-the-mind-of-student-terror-suspect-omar-alkutobi-20150214-13d18k.html>

obsessively posting messages from a fan page for Egyptian sheikh Abdul-Hamid Kishk." Kutobi had told his father that he felt alone in Australia and was struggling with work and study. He allegedly lost his job a week before the arrest.<sup>165</sup>

#### **\*Anzac day plot (type 6)**

On 18 April 2015, police arrested five teenagers in Melbourne and later charged two of them with planning a terrorist attack. Police said they were suspected of preparing an attack at the ANZAC Day ceremony in Melbourne on 25 April.<sup>166</sup> Police said the plot involved "edged weapons" and that "there was reference to an attack on police". Police also said "some evidence that we have collected at a couple of the scenes, and some other information we have, leads us to believe that this particular matter was ISIS-inspired." A security source later said the plot involved running a police officer over with a car and then killing him with a knife. They would then take the officer's gun and go on a shooting rampage to their deaths.<sup>167</sup> The two main suspects were later identified as Sevdet Besim (18) and Harun Causevic (18). A third suspect, Merhan Azami, was later charged with possessing prohibited weapons and accused of having imported dozens of weapons from overseas.<sup>168</sup> The suspects were linked to Numan Haider, perpetrator of the September 2014 police stabbing. They also had links to Al-Furqa, a controversial Islamic center in Melbourne. In a curious development, a 14-year old boy was arrested in Blackburn, UK, on 20 April as part of the same investigation.<sup>169</sup> He was charged with inciting a terrorist beheading and inciting a terrorist attack in Australia.<sup>170</sup> Besim allegedly had a telephone conversation with the 14-year old British boy. According to ABC News: "Australian counter-terrorism officials are investigating links between the most senior Australian with the Islamic State terror group, Neil Prakash, and the group of Melbourne teenagers who were targeted in Saturday's raids. Twenty-three-year-old Prakash, of Fijian-Indian and Cambodian background, is an Islamic convert and travelled to Syria in early 2013, where he took the nom de guerre Abu Khalid al Cambodi. He is now the chief recruiter of Australians for IS, filling the void left by the death of Mohammed Ali Baryalei in fighting last year. Police said that during the period they were monitoring the suspects, police officers in a patrol car saw Mr Causevic wave the black shahada flag at them while in Brighton Road, in Melbourne's inner south-east, in mid-April."<sup>171</sup>

---

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/national/inside-the-mind-of-student-terror-suspect-omar-alkutobi-20150214-13d18k.html>

<sup>166</sup> <https://www.pulse.me/ap/5e5f837d22eb4299bac3c7d81dd4c4cc>

<sup>167</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-20/melbourne-counterterrorism-raids-plot-to-kill-police-officer/6407586>

<sup>168</sup> <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/more-charges-for-anzac-day-terror-plot-teen-20150430-1mx4b5.html>

<sup>169</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11549258/Boy-14-arrested-in-Britain-over-terror-plot-in-Australia.html> ; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3046761/Police-arrest-14-year-old-boy-Blackburn-connection-Australian-terror-plot.html>

<sup>170</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/apr/23/british-boy-charged-over-alleged-anzac-day-terror-plot-in-australia>

### **\*Greenvale plot (type 6)**

On 8 May 2015, police arrested a 17-year in the Greenvale suburb of Melbourne and detonated three rudimentary improvised explosive devices found in his home.<sup>172</sup> There was speculation that an attack was planned for Mother's Day (11 May), but the police would neither confirm nor deny. The case was thought to be unrelated to the Anzac plot. The suspect, who remains unnamed, is the son of a Syrian-born doctor.<sup>173</sup> Officers made the raid after a tip-off to a security hotline.<sup>174</sup>

---

<sup>171</sup> <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/more-charges-for-anzac-day-terror-plot-teen-20150430-1mx4b5.html>

<sup>172</sup> <https://news.yahoo.com/one-arrested-australia-over-alleged-bomb-plot-pm-004945740.html> ;;

<sup>173</sup> <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2015/May/Boys-Arrest-Thwarts-Major-Terror-Attack-in-Australia/>

<sup>174</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-32669938>