



JOINT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



23 August 2022

(U//FOUO) Dissemination of Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures Used by Buffalo Attacker Likely To Enhance Capabilities of Future Lone Offenders

(U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This *Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB)* provides an overview of significant tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) discussed or used by the alleged perpetrator of the 14 May 2022 mass casualty shooting in Buffalo, New York and details how related documents spread after the attack may contribute to the current threat landscape. The alleged attacker drew inspiration from previous foreign and domestic racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists (RMVEs) and their online materials, underscoring the transnational nature of this threat. ^a DHS, FBI, and NCTC advise federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government counterterrorism and law enforcement officials and private sector security partners to remain vigilant of this enduring threat.

(U) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures Observed

(U//FOUO) DHS, FBI, and NCTC assess that the dissemination of written guidance outlining the TTPs used by the alleged Buffalo attacker will likely enhance the capabilities of potential mass casualty shooters who may be inspired by this attack. The alleged attacker prioritized creating a comprehensive “how-to” guide for future attackers, including guidance on bolstering opportunities for maximum casualties and optimizing personal defense. The written guidance will contribute to the volume of violent extremist content readily available online, leading to potential opportunities for future attackers to learn from the TTPs and enhance their own capabilities. While these TTPs can enhance the capabilities of any violent extremist, we assess that lone offender RMVEs espousing a belief in the superiority of the white race are most likely to utilize these tactics due to their shared ideology and the demonstrated history of RMVEs citing inspiration from previous attackers.^b

^a (U//FOUO) DHS, FBI, and NCTC define racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists as groups or individuals who facilitate or engage in the potentially unlawful use or threat of force or violence with intent to intimidate or coerce, in furtherance of political and/or social agendas, which are deemed to derive from bias, often related to race or ethnicity, held by the actor against others, including a given population or group.

^b (U//FOUO) DHS, FBI, and NCTC define lone offenders as individuals motivated by one or more violent extremist ideologies who, operating alone, supports or engages in acts of unlawful violence in furtherance of that ideology or ideologies that may involve influence from a larger terrorist organization or a foreign actor.

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- (U//FOUO) The alleged attacker extensively documented his pre-attack planning process and TTPs in a 180-page manifesto and 672-page online diary intended to serve as a manual for future attackers, according to DHS and press reporting. The diary demonstrates his interest in extensive pre-operational planning and details his ideological motivations, target selection, gear and weapons choices, reconnaissance, and calls to action designed to inspire additional attacks. The accompanying manifesto includes a structured breakdown of all weapons, ammunitions, and gear considered in the planning of the attack and a cost-benefit analysis of using select materials. The alleged attacker also upgraded his cell phone data service prior to the attack, believing this would improve the quality and ease of livestreaming the attack. The alleged attacker invited several individuals to his private online diary minutes prior to the attack to assist in the dissemination of his materials.



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(U) Image 1 and 2: attacker's AR-15 rifle before and after modifications for larger magazines

- (U//FOUO) Approximately 100 pages of the alleged attacker's manifesto provide recommendations on specific TTPs intended to maximize casualties. The document details his pre-attack training with gear, modification of weapons, and extensive target selection research. For example, several pages describe how to make a homemade magazine coupler and modify an AR-15-style rifle to accept magazines that can hold 30 rounds of ammunition to circumvent some state laws that limit possession of high-capacity magazines, pointing the reader to flea markets and online sellers to obtain materials for additional modifications, which violate some state laws.

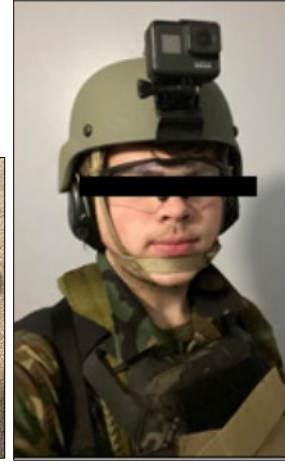


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(U) Image 3: hand-made magazine coupler included in alleged attacker's documents

- (U//FOUO) The alleged attacker's target selection process is discussed at several points, detailing the use of publicly available information to determine which areas of New York state were more populated by African Americans and which physical locations were soft targets with limited security measures. The documents also detail the alleged attacker's use of physical reconnaissance to determine optimal attack paths and possible locations for secondary attacks to maximize casualties.

- (U//FOUO) The alleged attacker modified and employed various materials and tactics intended to optimize his personal safety and defense. The manifesto and diary detail his choices of body armor and gear modifications, including details like basic clothing choices. For example, he opted for lighter body armor to increase his mobility because he believed armed shooters would most likely encounter police officers armed with pistols before Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) personnel, who are more heavily armed. The documents also highlight the focus on targeting security personnel at the onset of an attack and discuss conducting attacks in areas with strict local gun laws to decrease resistance from armed civilians. The documents also suggest conducting on-location scouting prior to an attack to identify security measures to select appropriate ammunition and weapons for defeating the observed obstacles.



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(U) Image 4 and 5: Modified military-grade combat helmet and image of alleged attacker in gear

(U//FOUO) Historical Use of Online Guides and Manifestos by Transnational Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists

(U//FOUO) Online writings and manifestos have been created and used by attackers of varying ideologies for multiple reasons. Historically, these writings have been used by RMVE actors to connect across borders and have served a critical role in creating a diverse transnational RMVE community that advocates for and inspires further violence, as shown by several RMVE attackers who were motivated by prior attackers. For example, Australian RMVE attacker Brenton Tarrant livestreamed his 2019 shootings—the first example of an RMVE livestreaming an attack—in Christchurch, New Zealand, in addition to producing an online manifesto, both of which influenced the alleged Buffalo attacker's mobilization to violence. Tarrant's attack and writings also reportedly inspired at least two Homeland attacks in 2019: Patrick Crusius^{USPER}, who is awaiting trial for allegedly killing 23 in El Paso, Texas, and John Earnest^{USPER}, who was sentenced to life in prison for killing one in Poway, California. Tarrant, in turn, was inspired by Norwegian Anders Breivik, who killed 77 in 2011 in Norway.

(U//FOUO) Within his own manifesto, the alleged Buffalo attacker explicitly claimed to have drawn support and inspiration from Tarrant, Breivik, Crusius, and Earnest, as well as Dylann Roof^{USPER}, who is serving consecutive life sentences for killing nine Charleston churchgoers in 2015; he was also inspired by Robert Bowers^{USPER}, who is awaiting trial for killing 11 people at the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue^{USPER} in 2018, and other foreign-based RMVEs.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) The alleged Buffalo attacker's documentation and use of the above TTPs underscores the lethality of RMVE lone offenders, a persistent threat as outlined in previous intelligence community reporting and highlighted in the most recent National Threat Advisory System Bulletin. We remain alert to the potential use of these TTPs in copycat attacks due to the history of some violent extremists finding ideological inspiration and leveraging tactical guidance from perpetrators of high-profile attacks.

(U) Indicators

(U//FOUO) Due to the highly personal nature of radicalization and mobilization to violence, it is difficult to assess specific indicators that are indicative of US-based violent extremists' intent to commit violence at home or abroad.^c While not all-encompassing, DHS, FBI, and NCTC have identified several possible signposts listed below that would likely be observable to law enforcement, technology companies, and community members if the alleged Buffalo attacker's materials and documented TTPs were increasing the capabilities of violent extremists. We urge state and local authorities, as well as private sector security partners, to promptly report suspicious activities potentially related to violent extremist activity, including indications of possible online radicalization to violence and mobilization for attacks.

- (U//FOUO) Increased circulation of the attacker's guidance materials in online spaces commonly associated with or used by some violent extremists to espouse their beliefs.^d
- (U//FOUO) Explicit discussion and/or praise of the Buffalo attacker's specific TTPs in online spaces commonly associated with or used by violent extremists to espouse their beliefs.^e
- (U//FOUO) Unusual purchase of military-style tactical equipment (for example, body armor or personal protective equipment) in a manner that raises suspicion of planning violence.

(U) DHS, FBI, and NCTC also direct public safety partners to the unclassified booklet ["US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators 2021 Edition,"](#) which includes additional possible indicators of mobilization to violence. These indicators apply to all ideologically motivated, US-based violent extremists.

^c (U//FOUO) DHS, FBI, and NCTC define radicalization as the process through which an individual changes from a nonviolent belief system to a belief system that includes the willingness to actively advocate, facilitate, or use unlawful violence as a method to affect societal or political change.

^d (U//FOUO) Use of online platforms is protected under the First Amendment of the US Constitution, unless users are engaging in violent extremist or illegal activities. Use of the platforms mentioned in this product should not be viewed as connected to domestic violent extremism without additional facts. US Persons linking, citing, quoting, or voicing the same themes, narratives, icons, or opinions raised by threat actors are presumed to be acting under their own volition and engaging in First Amendment-protected activity, unless there are reasonable, articulable facts suggesting their participation in violent extremist activities.

^e (U//FOUO) The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics does not constitute violent extremism, and is constitutionally protected. Reporting on protected activity must include articulable facts and circumstances that support the suspicion that the observed behavior is not innocent, but rather reasonably indicative of criminal activity associated with terrorism.

(U) Related Products

(U//FOUO) For additional information regarding the Buffalo supermarket shooting, please refer to the below intelligence products:

- (U//FOUO) *Joint Analytic Cell*, “Buffalo Attacker’s Messaging Spread Widely Online Despite Companies Takedown Efforts,” dated 17 June 2022
- (U//FOUO) *Intelligence In Brief*, “Buffalo, New York Attack Likely to Drive Heightened Threat from Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists in Near Term,” dated 13 June 2022
- (U//FOUO) *Current*, “Buffalo Example Likely To Heighten Transnational RMVE Threat,” dated 2 June 2022
- (U) *Liaison Information Report*, “Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremist Buffalo Supermarket Shooting,” dated 17 May 2022

(U) Report Suspicious Activity

(U//FOUO) We encourage the use of the unclassified information sharing system eGuardian for reporting suspicious activity reports (SARs) to the FBI. eGuardian is accessible via the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP). If the information is urgent in nature, then please contact your local FBI field office directly (if appropriate) and follow up with an eGuardian report. If you need a LEEP account, please navigate to the LEEP homepage at www.cjis.gov and select apply for an account. From within LEEP, navigate to LEEP Services and then select eGuardian and an eGuardian application page will be displayed. Further information about the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI) and eGuardian access can also be obtained at <https://www.dhs.gov/hsi><https://www.dhs.gov/hsi>

(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response

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