



National Consortium for the
Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BASED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Maryland Ranks 17th Most Frequently Attacked U.S. State

COLLEGE PARK, MD - Between 1970 and 2008, Maryland has been the location for 31 terrorist attacks, ranking 17th among U.S. states.

According to START Director, Gary LaFree, “The recent ignition of two packages in Maryland fit a general pattern in the United States of a strong reliance on incendiary devices as a terrorist weapon of choice.”

Although initial indications suggested that the weapons in question at the Maryland Department of Transportation in Hanover, MD and the Jeffrey Building in Annapolis, MD were explosives, authorities later reported that the packages contained incendiary devices.

Key Findings from START's Global Terrorism Database (GTD)

While incendiaries are the second most common weapons used in terrorist attacks in the United States, incendiary devices sent in letters or packages are very rare. The only weapons used more often than incendiaries in the U.S. are explosives, which are also the most common globally.

The prevalence of explosives in terrorist attacks in the United States has dropped dramatically in recent years, from over 60% in the 1970s to just under 25% in the 2000s. At the same time, the prevalence of incendiary weapons, including arson, in terrorist attacks in the United States has increased more than 60%.

More than 11% of all terrorist attacks in the United States between 1970 and 2008 have been directed against government entities (excluding embassies), like those targeted in the January 6th attacks. Of the 286 attacks against government targets in the United States, only 16 were lethal.

START Background Report

START has compiled [background information](#) from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) on terrorist activity involving:

- Terrorists' Use of Incendiary Devices
- Terrorists' Use of Letter/Package Devices in the United States

- Attacks against Government Targets in the United States
- Terrorist Activity in Maryland



in May 2010.

These data were collected and compiled from the **Global Terrorism Database (GTD)**, www.start.umd.edu/gtd. The GTD contains information on more than 87,000 terrorist incidents that have occurred around the world since 1970. An updated version of the database, with information on incidents through 2008, was released



GTD is a project of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Center of Excellence. START, based at the University of Maryland, College Park, aims to provide timely guidance on how to disrupt terrorist networks, reduce the incidence of terrorism, and enhance the resilience of U.S. society in the face of the terrorist threat. The material presented here is the product of START and does not express the official opinion of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Additional information on START is available at: www.start.umd.edu.

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