



Fact Sheet

Public Affairs Division - Washington DC



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BOMB ARSON TRACKING SYSTEM (BATS)

For law enforcement agencies, BATS is the reporting link to the U.S. Bomb Data Center (USBDC), the national database for explosives and arson incident information. The purpose of BATS is to collect data and to provide bomb technicians and arson investigators with analytical products to assist in the investigation of crimes related to the criminal misuse of explosives and acts of arson.

In 2004, the Attorney General mandated that all of the Department of Justice's arson and explosives incident databases be consolidated into a single database, which is now known as the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS). This was reinforced in 2010 by the Deputy Attorney General's Office. (ref: Attorney General's August 11, 2004, Memorandum Regarding the Coordination of Explosives Investigations and Related Matters; and Deputy Attorney General's August 3, 2010, Protocol for Assigning Lead Agency Jurisdiction in Explosives Investigations).

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the USBDC developed BATS to better enable the reporting of arson and explosives-related incidents to the national database by federal, state, and local agencies. BATS also provides state and local agencies a case management tool at no cost and technology that helps simplify and standardize investigative reporting methodology and track related administrative tasks.

BATS includes the capability of profiling improvised explosive devices (IEDs) according to the most common components (container, ignition, main charge, switch, power source, and enhancements). Additionally, BATS provides the ability for fire investigators to search information about reported fire incidents nationwide, which can assist with the identification of suspects. The USBDC facilitates case analysis and comparison in connection with the above stated criminal acts in order to provide investigative leads and intelligence, a strategic intent supporting ATF's Mission. (ref: 28 CFR 0.131(e), implementing 18 USC 846b)

Bomb technicians and investigators can use BATS to perform trend analysis and compare incidents for similarities in motives, device construction, suspects and crime methodologies for possible investigative leads nationwide. Images of post-blast scenes,

IEDs, and crime scenes can be shared across agencies and nationwide through the BATS secure Web connection. BATS also includes a function that allows the program to be used as a case management system, which enables users to “build” their investigation in BATS while collaborating with other agencies in a secure environment.

BATS contains information on more than 300,000 explosives and arson-related incidents investigated by ATF and other federal, state, local law enforcement and public safety agencies.

ATF and the USBDC released the latest version of BATS to the community in January 2014. BATS (Version 7.1.2) features numerous improvements developed as a result of feedback from system users, and has a new and improved look and feel with even more investigative resources for the explosives and arson investigative community.

BATS has been formally endorsed by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI), the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), and the International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators (IABTI). BATS is taught to all bomb technicians at the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI’s) Hazardous Devices School at Redstone Arsenal, and the use of BATS is endorsed by the FBI.

ATF has been collecting, storing, and analyzing records on explosives and arson incidents since 1976. ATF, through the U.S. Department of the Treasury, was mandated by Congress pursuant to Public Law 104–208, the 1997 Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, to establish a national repository for incidents involving arson and the criminal misuse of explosives. This authority was later transferred with ATF, to the authority of the Attorney General of the United States with the passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002. (ref: 28 CFR 0.131(e), implementing 18 USC 846b).

For more information on BATS, please visit the website at <http://atf.gov/applications/bats/>.

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