

11 Dec 2017 Manhattan Bomb Attack

On 11 December 2017, it was reported that a 27 year-old Akayed Ullah detonated a home-made pipe bomb in a crowded underground walkway in Midtown Manhattan. Though it happened during the morning rush hour, it was fortunate that the impact was not as severe as the bomb reportedly failed to detonate fully. The pedestrians managed to run away quickly when the attack occurred, but those in the immediate vicinity were still affected. 5 people were reported to be injured, including the attacker.

This attack came just over 5 weeks after another terror attack in Lower Manhattan, where a vehicle was used to ram into pedestrians along a busy bicycle path.

Implementing systems to prevent your workplace from being used for terror-related activities

Based on reports in TODAY, there could have been a possibility that Akayed Ullah researched online for bomb-making materials and made the device at his workplace. The incident reminds us that we need to continue to stay vigilant.

People spend a significant amount of time at their workplaces. A vigilant workforce coupled with systems in place to track proper usage of the companies' equipment or materials could help prevent possible misuses. It is also important for companies to be sensitive to their workforce sentiments and nurture a cohesive workforce. Here are some pointers which companies can consider to adopt:

- Implement a system to ensure that materials are not taken out from the company's facilities
- Provide open feedback channels and grievance handling procedures
- Develop reporting channels where staff are able to highlight colleagues suspected to be radicalised, or sympathetic to extremist groups

Mitigating Potential Disruption Due to Terror Attacks

Businesses also need to be prepared for the disruption that may be caused by a terror attack. To develop such capabilities, you can consider:

- Adopting the recommendations under the SGSecure Guide for Workplaces www.mom.gov.sg/~media/mom/documents/employment-practices/sgsecure/sgsecure-guide-for-workplaces.pdf?la=en
- Sign up for the enhanced bizSAFE training at www.wshc.sg/bizSAFE. You will learn about the risk management measures necessary to prevent an attack
- Encourage your stakeholders to register their SGSecure rep with MOM at www.mom.gov.sg/sgsecure to receive the latest updates and advisories
- Check if your building's managing agent is a member of the Safety and Security Watch Group and request to be updated on the information provided
- Advisories providing general principles on contingency planning and protective security may be downloaded via www.police.gov.sg/cpps