



United States Coast Guard
Marine Inspection Office Europe



Lylantse Plein 1 Box 189
2908 LH Capelle a/d IJssel
The Netherlands
Phone: (3110) 442-4458
Fax: (3110) 450-4752

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 08-02

October 16, 2002

POTENTIAL AL-QAIDA THREATS TO U.S. INTERESTS

The below information was obtained from a FBI Counter Terrorism Division, National Threat Warning System - Terrorist Threat Advisory Update. USCG Atlantic Area requested that we disseminate this information to all potentially effected industry stakeholders.

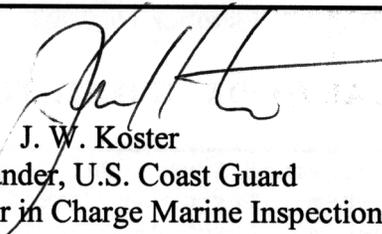
Recent statements, apparently by Al-Qaida Leaders threaten attacks against U.S. economic interests. An audio message from Osama Bin Ladin, (taped on an undetermined date), recently broadcast by Al-Jazeera, refers to the Al-Qaida targeting key sectors of the US economy. Another senior leader (Bin Ladin's senior deputy, Ayman Al-Zaeahiri) reiterated the threat in the closing line of an audio taped interview released 15 October 2002.

The coordinated release of these statements, coupled with our knowledge of ongoing plotting by Al-Qaida members and threat information described by detainees, strengthens previous assessments that Al-Qaida continues to plan major attacks against U.S. interests. The statements suggest that an attack may have been approved, while the specific timing is left to the operatives in the field. Our concerns are heightened by comments from Al Qaida detainees who are independently interpreting these taped remarks as a sign of attack. In 1998, Al Qaida issued a Fatwa (religious ruling) calling for attacks against Americans worldwide, apparently presaging the August 7 1998 east Africa embassy bombings. The content of the statements and the context surrounding these threats reinforces our view that they may signal an attack. One senior detainee maintains that Al-Qaida would only release such a statement after approving a specific plan for an attack. At this time, we have no information on a specific time, date or location of an attack.

Other aspects of the statements reflect what we know of Bin Ladin and Al-Qaida strategy. In addition, other recent appeals in extremist circles, some purporting to be from Bin Ladin, urge Muslim youth to strike U.S. forces in Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar and Bahrain. The Al-Qaida organization, which has lost its safe haven in Afghanistan and many of its leaders, is attempting to manipulate the broader Islamic extremist community to attack the United States at home and abroad.

The focus on economic targets is consistent with Al-Qaida's stated ideological goals and long standing strategy. The September 11 attacks and commentary on these attacks by Bin Ladin and others indicate how central economic targets are to this strategy. The group's leaders have said that they aim to undermine what they see as the backbone of US power, the economy. Our adversary is trying to portray American influence as based on economic might and therefore seeks to strike an economic target prominent enough for economic and symbolic reasons that it would have immediate resonance around the world. In view of the above information, the FBI urges recipients to review and implement additional prudent steps to detect, disrupt, deter and defend against potential attacks against our nations critical infrastructure and installations at home and abroad. Due to the lack of specificity of method, target and timing, the homeland security advisory system threat level will remain at yellow, at this time.

For additional information or clarification regarding this Marine Safety Bulletin, please contact Lieutenant Jason Smith at the above number or address.



J. W. Koster

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Acting, Officer in Charge Marine Inspection