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MODERATE THREAT TO NEW JERSEY

Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

AQAP will remain a threat to New Jersey, the region, and the United States in 2016 because the group has demonstrated an ability to act outside its primary area of operations in Yemen, and it has attempted to strike the United States on three occasions since 2009. AQAP continues to hone media outreach efforts and propaganda through its online English-language magazine *Inspire*, publishing the 14th edition, which encouraged homegrown attacks, in September.

- In January 2015, French brothers Sa'id and Cherif Kouachi attacked *Charlie Hebdo*, a satirical newspaper in Paris, killing 12 and injuring 11. AQAP later claimed responsibility.
- In April, New York City residents Noelle Velentzas and Asia Siddiqui were arrested for planning to conduct attacks using improvised explosive devices. Velentzas had contact with AQAP members, who encouraged the women to build bombs similar to the ones used in the Boston Marathon attack in April 2013.
- The deaths last year of AQAP leader Nasir al-Wahishi and other top leaders had little impact on AQAP's operational tempo. Its new chief, Qasim al-Rimi, has stepped up attacks against the Iran-backed Shia Huthis, and AQAP has acquired new weaponry and support from sympathetic Sunni tribes across Yemen.
- In 2009, 2010, and 2012, AQAP plotted unsuccessfully to blow up airliners over the United States. The chief architect of these plans, bombmaker Ibrahim al-Asiri, remains at large in Yemen. We assess Asiri has trained other terrorist operatives to build new, non-metallic explosives that can evade security detection, suggesting his death or arrest would not substantially diminish the AQAP threat to the United States.



*AQAP leader
Qasim al-Rimi*



Charlie Hebdo attacks



*AQAP bombmaker
Ibrahim al-Asiri*

Contact Information

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