

Take 5 To prepare



Resilience and specialist operations team briefing note:

Home Made Explosives

From time to time the ambulance service will receive 999 calls to people who have been overcome or injured by noxious fumes / chemicals or other reasons which, on the face of it, seem quite unspectacular, however, we must consider that someone may have been trying to construct a homemade explosive device.

There are many different kinds of homemade bombs and many different ways in which they can be constructed and deployed. Example of these types of bombs include...

- Those which have been made with fertilizer, a favourite of the IRA
- The use of petrol and other fuels such as gas cylinders (Glasgow Airport attacks)
- The use of Triacetone Triperoxide (TATP) as used in the London Bombings of 2005

TATP is a massively destructive compound (as well as being hugely unstable) which needs very little liquid to cause catastrophic consequences. This was the bomb of choice of the four London Bombers who attacked the underground system and a double decker bus on 7 July 2005. These four bombs not only killed 52 innocent people but also killed the four bombers and caused huge amounts of structural damage to the underground system. All four of these bombs were easily carried in back packs.



Why is it easy to make a bomb?

When we look at TATP many of the components needed for this are [easily purchased](#) from shops we would expect to see on the High Street. TATP includes hydrogen peroxide which is found in hair bleach and some disinfectants, along with another chemical which is also found in common household products.

Unlike explosives such as petrol and fertilizer, TATP is extremely unstable and doesn't always work as expected, as was seen during the Parsons Green underground attempted bomb attack in 2017.

EEAST staff are encouraged to visit [EAST24](#) to view two videos to help ensure they know what to look for and the dangers which come from these homemade explosives.

- [Improvised Explosives](#)
- [Home Mande Explosives, TATP Bombs](#)

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After watching the videos staff will have a better idea of the tell tail signs of homemade explosives and they must ensure they raise anything suspicious with their line manager / EOC, and where appropriate ask for a manager to attend to support them.

Reporting Concerns

Staff from all parts of the Trust must be aware of the risks associated with homemade explosives and staff must ensure they have a very low threshold for reporting anything suspicious they come across; for example information could come to the Trust via a Call Handler taking a 999 call where the caller states there has been an explosion in the garden shed which has injured their partner through to crews arriving on scene and seeing large quantities of suspicious chemicals or empty bottles lying around the property.

When we reflect on the learning which comes out of any terrorist incident one of the main questions is “could this have been prevented”; what as a Trust we need to ensure is that any information EEAST receives or anything suspicious our staff see is reported and we don’t inadvertently miss the “golden nugget of information” which would have allowed the security services to detain someone before they were able to kill and maim innocent people.

This picture below is from the [7/7 Inquest](#) where the offenders had been making and disposing of chemicals as they developed their Peroxide Bombs

