UNITED STATES BOMB DATA CENTER (USBDC) EXPLOSIVES INCIDENT REPORT (EIR)

2015

The Annual Explosives Incident Report (EIR) reviews bombing and explosives related incidents and threats from information reported to the United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC) through the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

The 2015 *Explosives Incident Report (EIR)* is an analytical product generated by the United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC), using data captured in the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS) through case entry contributions from its 11,478 active users. This report examines the total number of *explosion related incidents*, *bombings*, *recoveries*, *suspicious packages*, *bomb threats*, *hoaxes*, and *thefts/losses* that were reported into BATS for calendar year 2015. It is important to note that BATS is a real-time dynamic incident management system and is strictly user dependent; therefore, it is possible that the data represented in this report may differ slightly from previously reported data due to updates or changes made by the owner of the records.

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

This is a brief synopsis of the significant trends and/or findings covered within the 2015 *EIR*. From January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2015, BATS captured a total of **630** *explosion related incidents* and **400** *bombings* (6 church, 6 school bombings). There were a total 6,727 recoveries in 2015. California and Pennsylvania were shown to have the highest number of reported bombings for 2015. California also had the highest number of recoveries documented with the majority being explosives (non-improvised explosive devices: commercial, military, fireworks, HME) recoveries. There were a total of 4,763 suspicious/unattended package incidents. Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, California and Maryland ranked the highest in reported suspicious/unattended incidents for the 2015 calendar year. As in previous years, there has been a slight decrease in the overall numbers of bomb threats reported from 2013 through 2015. There were 1,724 bomb threats reported in 2013, 1,693 in 2014, and 1,670 in 2015. Education and office/business properties remain the most commonly reported targets of bomb threats. There has been a 30-percent decrease of bomb threats targeting residences since last year.

LOOKING AHEAD

At the USBDC we are continually striving to improve the capabilities, performance and ease of BATS to increase regional and national situational awareness allowing users to better detect, deter and prevent future criminal and terrorist acts. During 2016 we began undertaking a major BATS Modernization project that will dramatically improve the User Interface and many functionalities of the system. As we move into the future we will continue to focus on improving our capabilities to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Brandt A. Schenken
Director, USBDC

EXPLOSIONS 2015

Explosions 2015

1.1 Explosion Incidents, Summary and Trends

Explosion Incidents are identified as the following: *bombings*, *accidental explosions* and *undetermined explosion incidents*. The *undetermined explosion* category is used in ongoing investigations where the cause was either unidentified, pending further investigation or awaiting laboratory results. Explosion incidents include all incidents where explosive materials, chemicals, or ignitable mixtures were determined to be the primary cause of an explosion.

A total of 630 Explosion Incidents were recorded in BATS during 2015, the lowest number since 2010. Explosion-related BATS entries decreased by 30 percent since 2014, while the total number of reported bombings dropped by approximately 37 percent from the previous year.

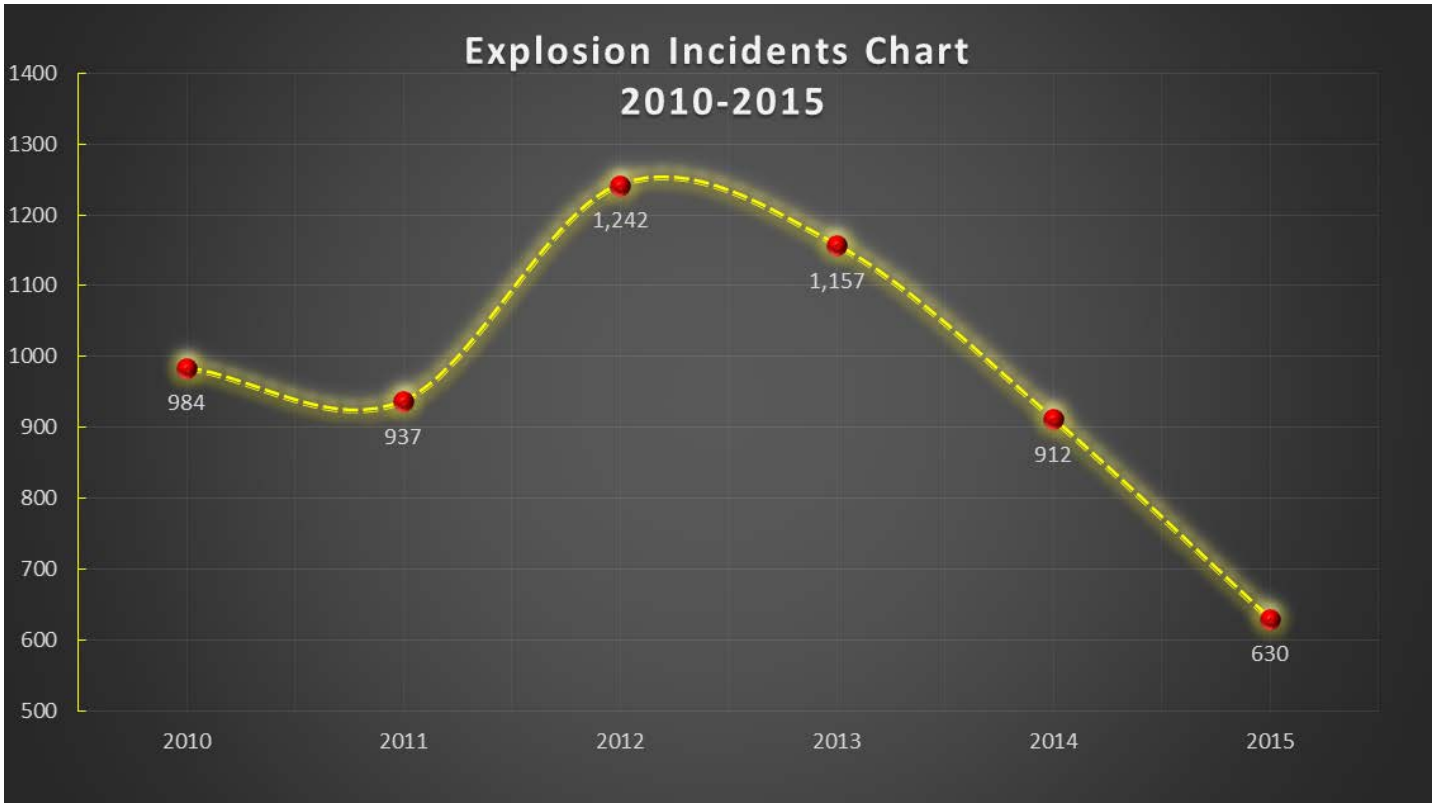
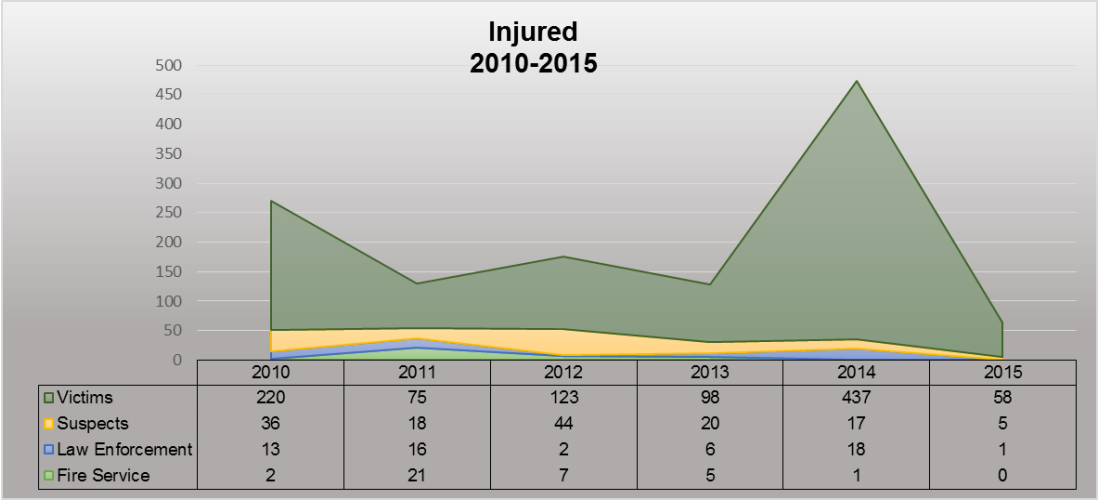


Figure 1. Explosions, 2010–15

EXPLOSIONS 2015

1.2 Explosion incidents in which individuals were reported injured.



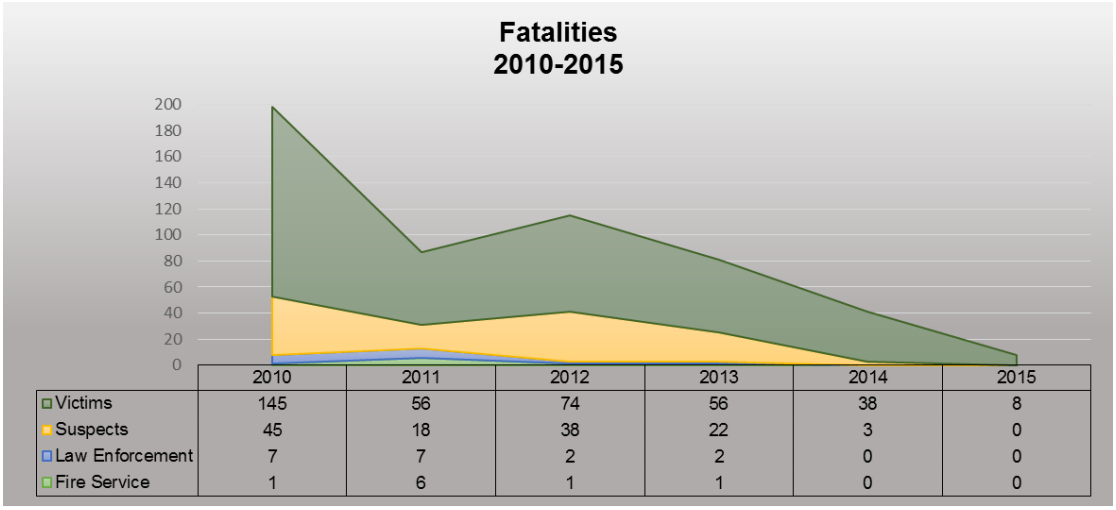
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Victims	220	75	123	98	437	58
Suspects	36	18	44	20	17	5
Law Enforcement	13	16	2	6	18	1
Fire Service	2	21	7	5	1	0

Figure 2. Explosion Incidents - Injured

Note: There were two major explosions that accounted for the high number of injuries in 2014. One was caused by an accidental explosion at a detention facility (174 injuries), and the other was caused by an accidental explosion at a 5-story building consisting of multifamily residences. This explosion caused 60 injuries.

Accidental Explosions account for 55 percent of the total number of reported injuries, whereas bombings were the cause of 27 percent of all reported injuries in 2015.

1.3 Explosion incidents in which fatalities were reported.



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Victims	145	56	74	56	38	8
Suspects	45	18	38	22	3	0
Law Enforcement	7	7	2	2	0	0
Fire Service	1	6	1	1	0	0

Figure 3. Explosion Incidents - Fatalities

EXPLOSIONS 2015

1.4 Explosion Incidents, Type and Subtype

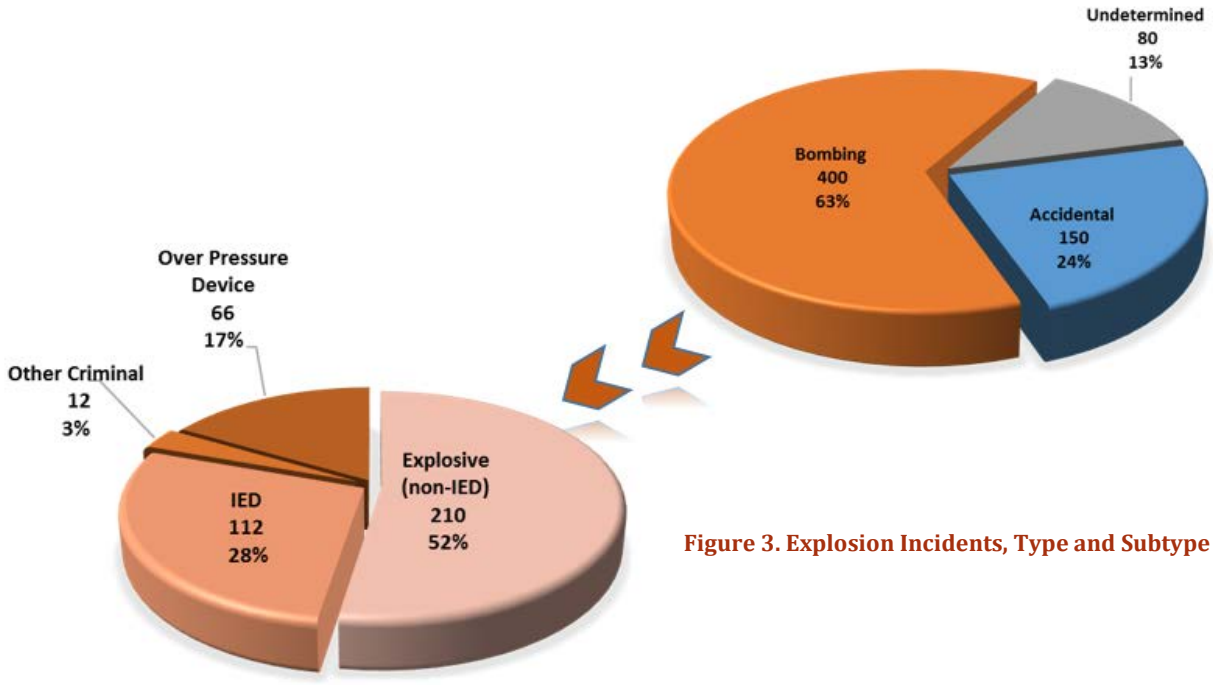


Figure 3. Explosion Incidents, Type and Subtype

1.5 Bombing Trends

A total of 400 bombing incidents were reported in 2015, a decrease of nearly 38 percent from last year; 178 of the 400 bombings targeted Residential structures. Additionally, there were 6 reported church bombings, 6 school bombings and 12 reported bombing incidents where businesses and office locations were targeted. During 2015, bombings were responsible for causing 16 injuries and 0 deaths.

- **Church Bombing Targets:** Four (4) of the six (6) church bombings were reported in New Mexico and categorized as *improvised explosive devices (IEDs)*. The other two were categorized as *explosive non-IEDs.* They were located in Idaho (*Commercial Fireworks*) and Maryland (*Smoke Grenade*).

- **School Bombing Targets:** Three (3) of the (6) school bombings were reported as *explosive non-IEDs* while the rest were either categorized as *IEDs* or *over pressure devices*.

- **Business and/or Office Targets:** There were six (6) reported *IED* bombings, while the rest were either categorized as *over pressure devices, explosive non-IEDs,* or *other.*

EXPLOSIONS 2015

California remains the State with the highest number of reported bombings. Five States with the most reported bombing incidents by type are shown below.

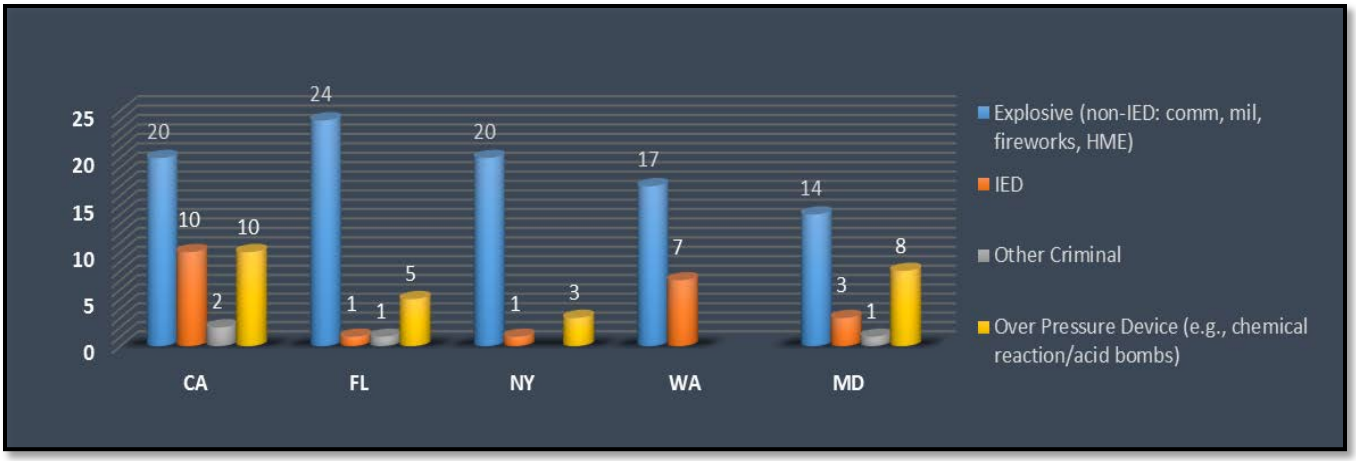


Figure 4. Bombing Types (Top Five States)

1.6 Explosion Device Main Charges

Pyrotechnics/Fireworks, Flash Powder/ Pyrotechnic Mixture, and Black Powder remain the most common device main charges reported in explosion incidents for 2015.

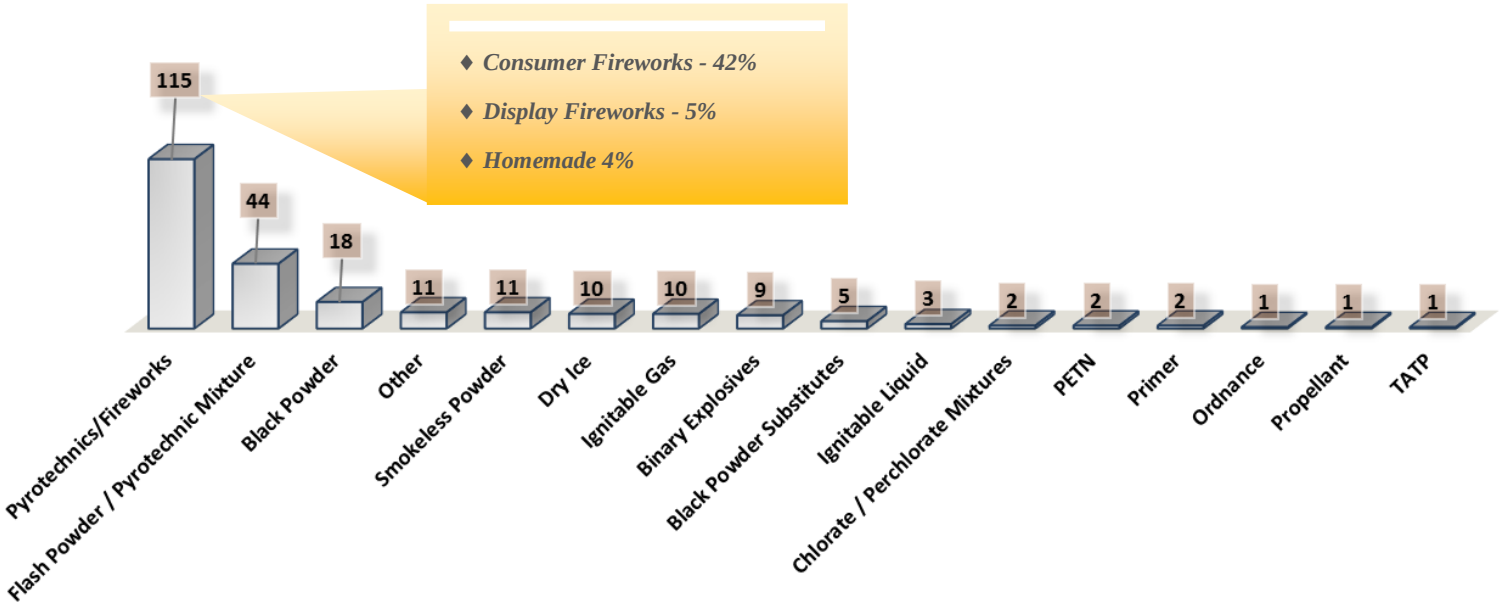


Figure 5. Explosion Device Main Charges - 2015

EXPLOSIONS 2015

* Items in yellow highlight the top 5 Explosion Main Charges for 2015.

Explosion Main Charges

Material Subtype Description	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Ammonium Nitrate/Prills	4	3	9	6	5	10	37
ANFO (Blasting Agent)	1	0	2	1		0	4
Binary Explosives	0	1	1	15	11	9	37
Black Powder	38	45	34	28	20	18	183
Black Powder Substitutes	1	17	5	11	7	5	46
Blasting Agent	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Booster	4	3	9	1	1	0	18
Chlorate / Perchlorate Mixtures	22	148	45	7	2	2	226
Composition C4	1	1	7	0	0	0	9
Delay Mix	0	0	1	5	0	0	6
Dry Ice	23	8	38	20	22	10	121
Dynamite	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Emulsion (Blasting Agent)	1	0	1	1	1	0	4
Flash Powder / Pyrotechnic Mixture	67	77	114	81	63	44	446
Flashbang/Distraction (LE)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
HMTD	0	0	1	1	2	0	4
Hydrogen Peroxide Mixtures	0	1	2	0	2	0	5
Ignitable Gas	1	8	4	8	9	10	40
Ignitable Liquid	13	7	12	11	6	3	52
Ignitable Solid	4	1	1	1	1	0	8
Ignition Mix	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Liquid Explosive	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
Magnesium	1	5	2	1	0	0	9
Match Heads	2	0	1	0	1	0	4
Ordnance	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other (Not identified)	130	97	61	36	11	11	346
Pellet Powder	4	0	0	1	1	0	6
PETN	1	1	0	0	1	2	5
Primer	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Propellant	0	0	4	1	2	1	8
Pyrotechnics/Fireworks	73	70	158	133	134	115	683
RDX	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Seal Bomb	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Sheet Explosive	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Signaling Device	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Slurry (Blasting Agent)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Smokeless Powder	19	19	26	21	10	11	106
TATP	0	1	2	0	2	1	6
TNT	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Urea Nitrate	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	**412**	**515**	**545**	**396**	**319**	**255**	**2,442**

** Items in yellow highlight the top 5 Explosion Main Charges for 2015.*

Figure 6 displays an overall view of main charges related to Explosion Incidents for the past 6 years. These numbers do not represent the actual quantity of main charges but rather represent the number of reported incidents where at least one or more main charges were identified.

Figure 6. Explosion Device Main Charges 2010-2015

EXPLOSIONS 2015

1.7 Explosion Device Containers: The container numbers represented below are associated with the number of explosive incidents. They do not represent the actual quantity of identified containers. For example, if a pipe bomb was identified, the numbers below do not show if there were 5 pipe bombs taped together with 10 end caps, but rather they show at least 1 pipe and 1 end cap associated with that incident.

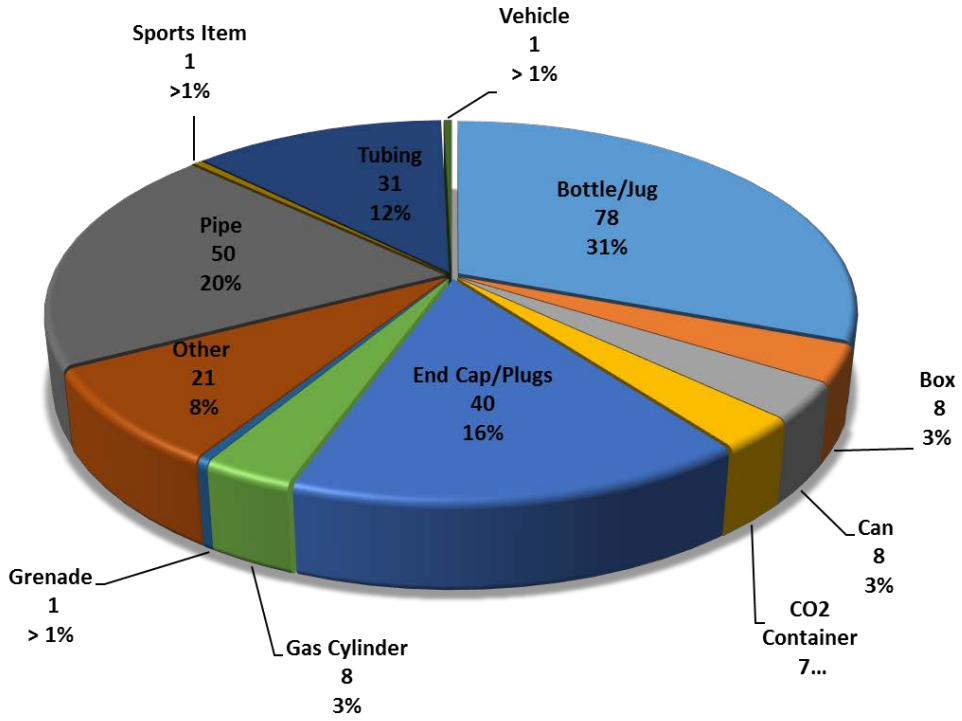


Figure 7. Explosion Device Containers

Container Type	Hand Placed	Other	Projected/ Launched	Thrown	Unknown	Not Specified	Grand Total
Bottle/Jug	48			19	10	1	78
Box	5			1	1	1	8
Can	6			1	1		8
CO2 Container	4			1		2	7
End Cap/Plugs	29	2		2	6	1	40
Gas Cylinder	4				3	1	8
Grenade	1						1
Other	13		3	1	4		21
Pipe	37			2	9	2	50
Sports Item (Tennis Ball, etc.)				1			1
Tubing	18	3		3	6	1	31
Vehicle	1						1
Grand Total	**166**	**5**	**3**	**31**	**40**	**9**	**254**

Figure 8. Explosion Placement Method

RECOVERIES 2015

Recoveries 2015

2.1 Recovery Incidents, Summary and Trends

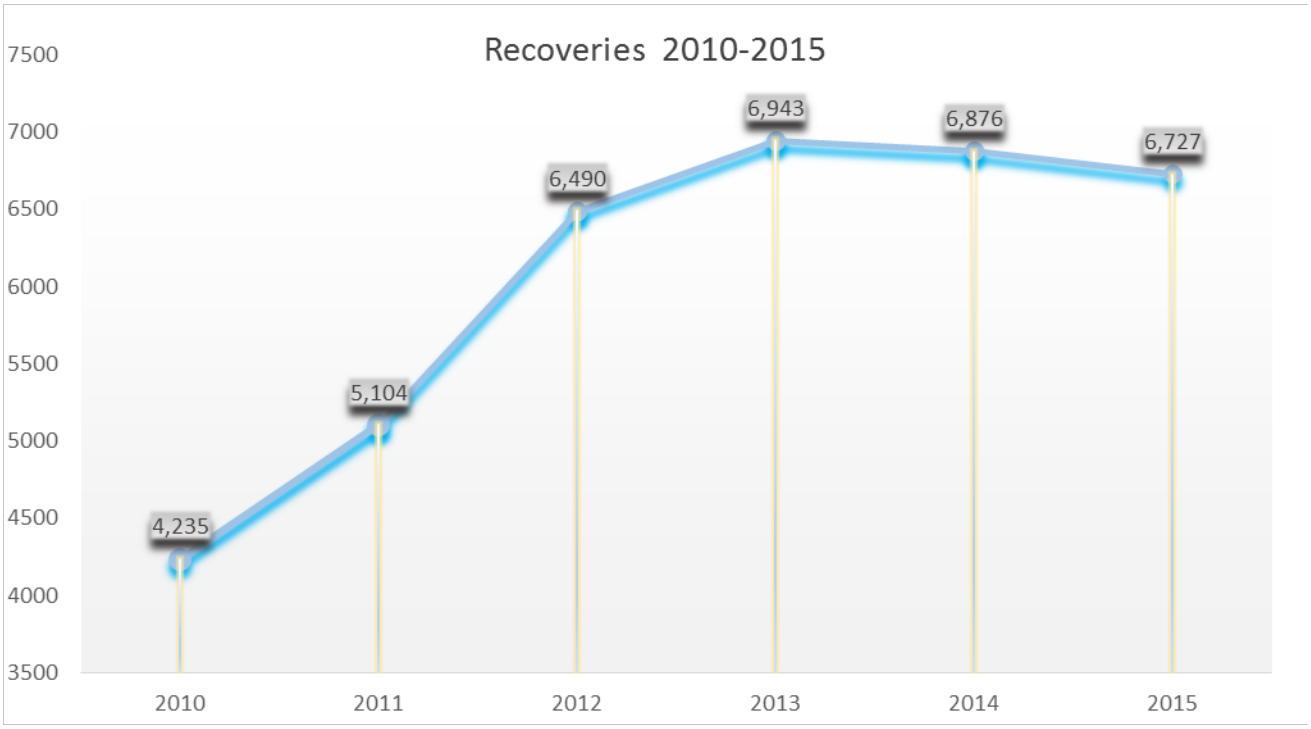


Figure 9. Recovery Incidents 2010–15

Over the past 6 years, we have seen reported recovery incidents go up by almost 60 percent. There was a slight decrease in 2015 from the previous year (see figure 9).

RECOVERIES 2015

2.2 Recovery Types

The largest recovery type and subtype categories, for the most part, remain unchanged. Explosives (non-IED) recoveries represent the majority, with commercial explosives recoveries and pyrotechnic recoveries in the lead. The "Other" category includes the following subtypes: Ammunition, Bomb Making Information, Inert Commercial, and Inert–Military. Out of those categories, Inert–Military (859) and Ammunition (819) were the most reported. (See figures 10 and 11.) Note that in 2014, there were more reported recoveries of Ammunition than Inert–Military.

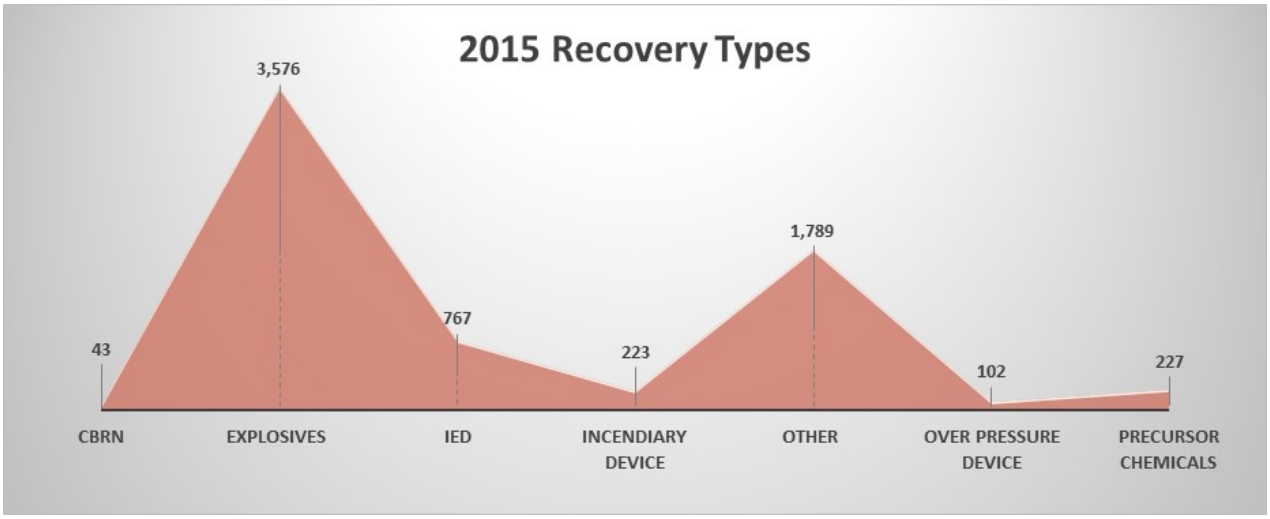


Figure 10. Recovery Types

2.3 Recovery Subtypes

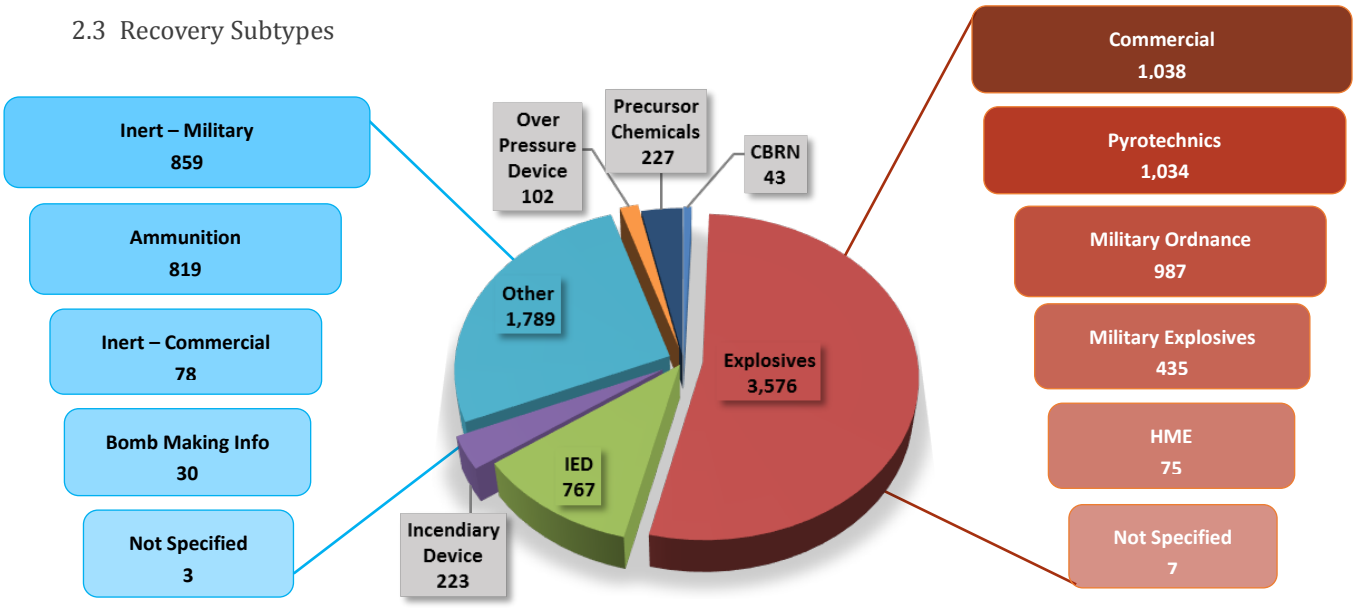


Figure 11. Recovery Subtypes

RECOVERIES 2015

2.4 Recovery Incidents by State (top 10):

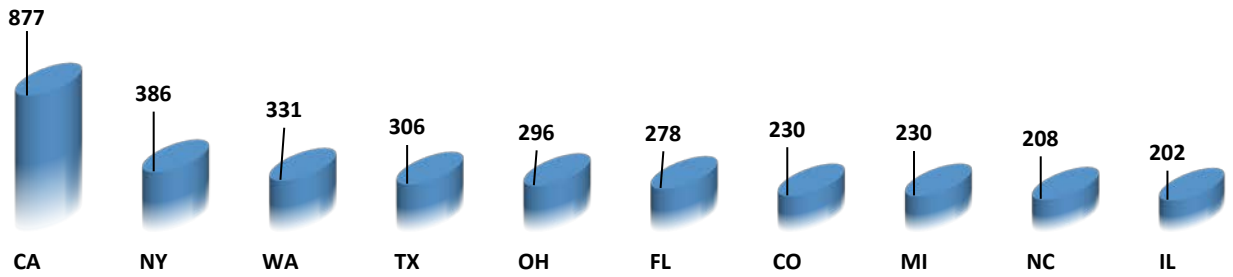


Figure 12. Recovery Incidents (Top 10 States)

California remains the State with the largest number of recoveries since 2010. Figure 12 below shows the top 5 cities in California with the highest number of reported recoveries in 2015.

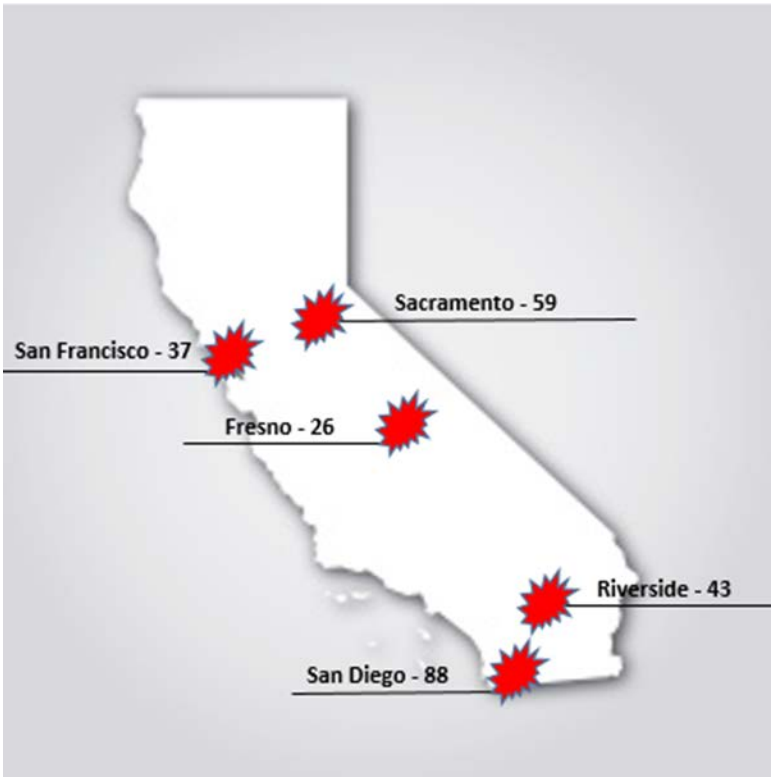


Figure 13. California cities with highest reported recoveries (Top 5 Cities)

RECOVERIES 2015

2.5 Recovery Device Main Charges

Recovery Main Charges							
Material Type	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**Grand Total**
Ammonium Nitrate/Prill	14	20	22	21	19	21	117
ANFO (Blasting Agent)	3	17	19	13	16	17	85
Binary Explosives	4	23	28	31	47	46	179
Black Powder	157	216	236	200	220	182	1211
Black Powder Substitutes	18	61	76	72	74	77	378
Blasting Agent	5	11	13	7	6	5	47
Booster	12	29	37	25	39	22	164
Chlorate / Perchlorate Mixtures	28	46	30	17	12	18	151
Composition B	0	1	7	3	7	7	25
Composition C3	0	2	1	2	0	2	7
Composition C4	5	12	31	23	34	31	136
CS/OC Grenade (LE)	0	0	0	3	21	17	41
Delay Mix	0	0	2	1	1	2	6
Dry Ice	2	8	5	4	6	5	30
Dynamite	48	127	157	157	154	128	771
Emulsion (Blasting Agent)	8	23	18	23	41	28	141
Flash Powder / Pyrotechnic Mixture	105	308	389	363	303	285	1753
Flashbang/Distraction (LE)	0	0	0	1	6	7	14
HMTD	3	2	2	4	2	4	17
Hydrogen Peroxide Mixtures	1	0	1	2	0	2	6
Ignitable Gas	9	10	8	9	1	7	44
Ignitable Liquid	52	70	107	89	91	72	481
Ignitable Solid	10	17	23	17	18	16	101
Industrial Explosives	4	4	0	0	0	0	8
Ignition Mix	0	0	0	3	2	1	6
Liquid Explosive	0	5	2	2	3	1	13
Magnesium	1	5	4	2	1	2	15
Match Heads	10	17	12	11	5	4	59
Nitro Carbo Nitrate	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
Nitroglycerene	0	7	4	6	6	8	31
Ordnance	4	8	8	2	6	13	41
Other	156	139	101	67	51	60	574
Pellet Powder	4	5	7	7	5	2	30
Perforator-	0	0	13	11	12	14	50
Perforator Oil Well Gun Assembly	0	0	0	8	5	0	13
PETN	2	8	13	13	7	3	46
Picric Acid	2	16	21	21	16	12	88
Primer	2	3	15	13	10	5	48
Propellant	0	4	7	15	5	12	43
Pyrotechnics/Fireworks	88	425	704	721	593	590	3121
RDX	2	4	6	2	6	8	28
Seal Bomb	0	7	11	11	13	15	57
Shape Charge	1	10	4	3	9	7	34
Sheet Explosive	0	3	9	10	11	6	39
Signaling Device	1	16	34	25	29	37	142
Simulator	1	4	16	23	18	20	82
Slurry (Blasting Agent)	5	18	26	21	17	12	99
Smoke Grenade (LE)	0	0	0	2	8	13	23
Smokeless Powder	128	140	183	205	184	163	1003
Spent Shell (canine only)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TATP	1	1	6	8	3	4	23
TNT	8	14	29	17	31	16	115
Urea Nitrate	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Water Gel (Blasting Agent)	0	0	5	5	2	0	12
Grand Total	**907**	**1,867**	**2,454**	**2,322**	**2,176**	**2,031**	**11,757**

**** Items in yellow highlight the top 5 Recovery Main Charges for 2015.***

Figure 14 displays an overall view of main charges related to Recovery Incidents for the past 6 years. These numbers do not represent the actual quantity of main charges but rather represent the number of reported incidents where at least one or more main charges were identified.

Figure 14. Recovery Device Main Charges 2010-2015

RECOVERIES 2015

2.6 Recovery Containers

Figure 15 provides the number of incidents where a container was reported as recovered in 2015. The statistics represented in this chart include a count of every time the specific container type was reported as recovered but does not represent the exact quantity of containers that were recovered. For instance, if one incident reported a recovery of two (2) pipes, four (4) end caps/plugs, two (2) bottles/jugs, and three (3) cans, the numbers below would represent as just one of each for that incident.

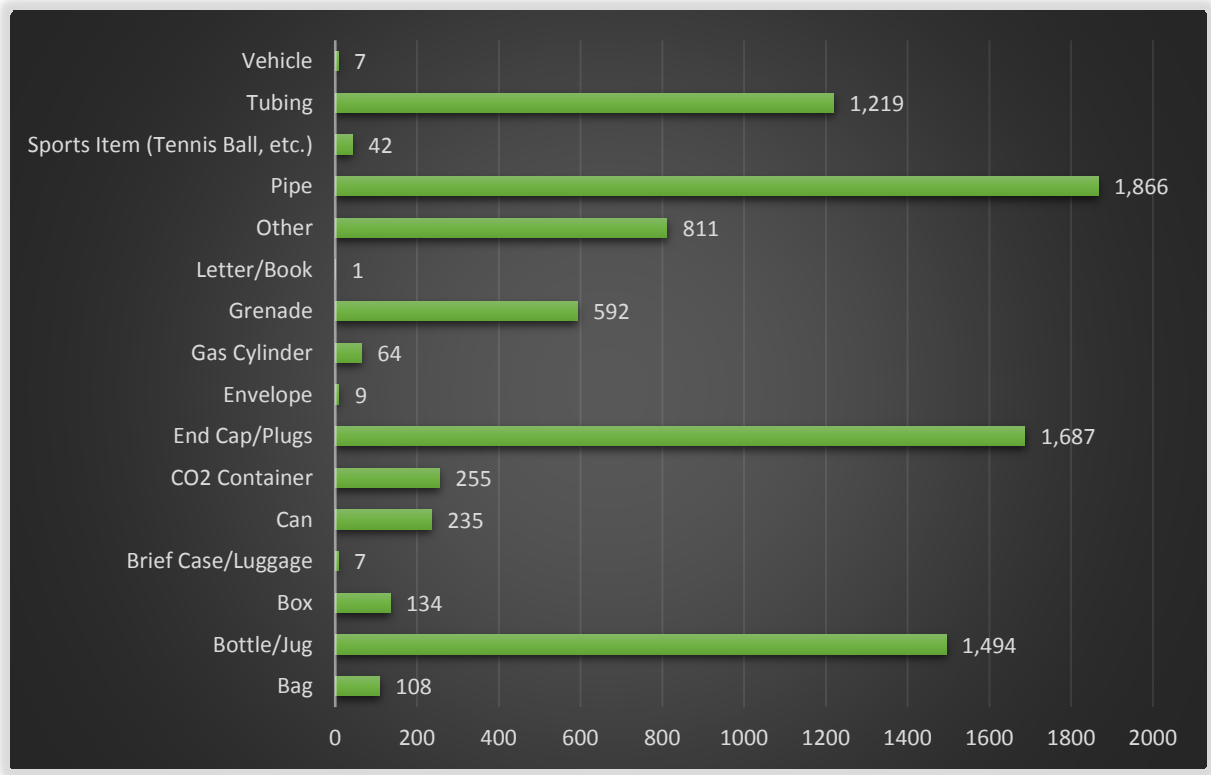
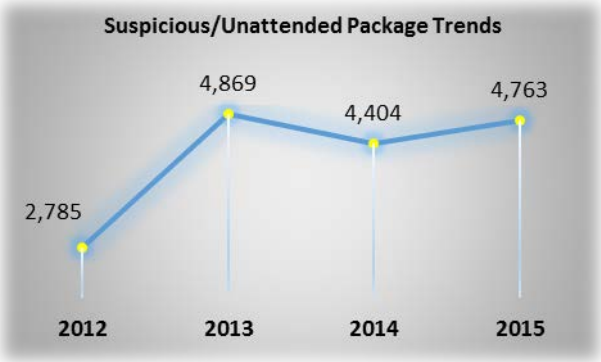


Figure 15. Recovery Containers

Note: The number of containers shown in the figure above may be significantly higher than those reported in the 2014 EIR due to a revised Quality Assurance process currently being used in order to provide our users with more accurate results when identifying the number of reported materials.

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES 2015

Suspicious Packages 2015



3.1 Suspicious Packages, Summary and Trends

There were 4,763 suspicious/unattended package incidents reported during the 2015 calendar year. This was an 8-percent increase from the previous year. The most common suspicious package types remained virtually unchanged. The top three most commonly reported package types were package/parcel, luggage/briefcase and book bag/purse. Moreover, the top targets of suspicious packages remain almost identical to those from previous years, with the top five being outside/special properties, open areas, assembly areas, residential structures and office/business locales. States with the most incidents of reported suspicious/unattended packages were Maryland, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Tennessee and California.

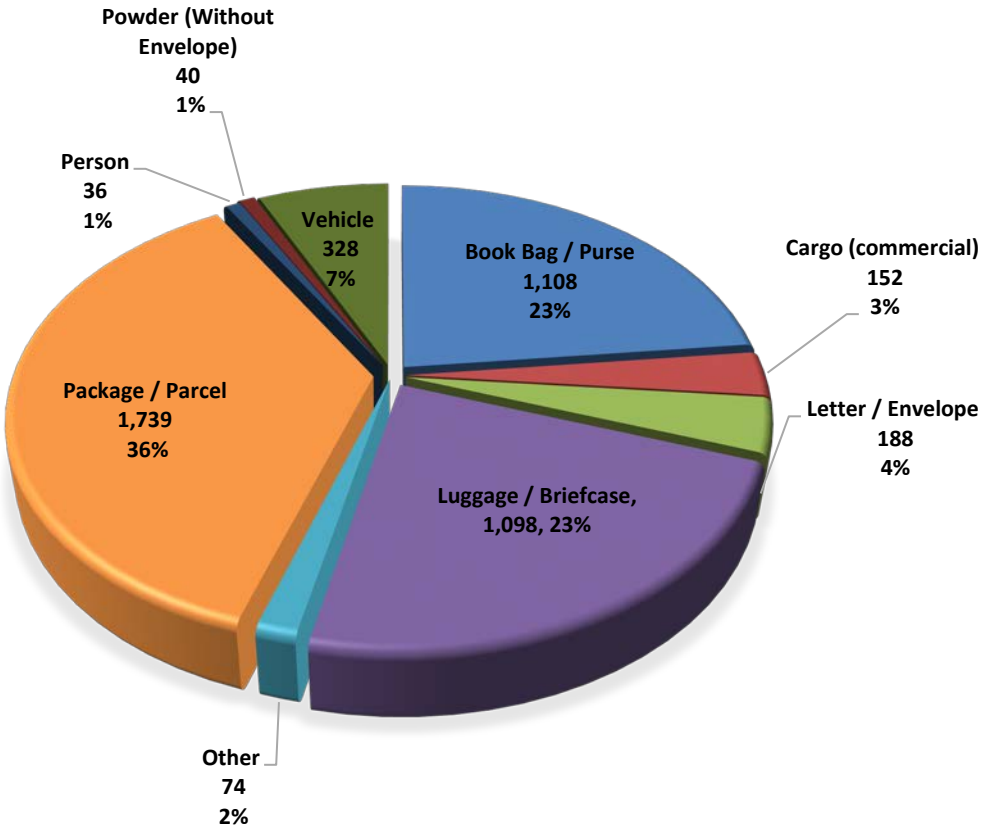


Figure 16. Suspicious/Unattended Package Incident Types

BOMB THREATS 2015

Bomb Threats 2015

4.1 Bomb Threat, Summary and Trends

A total of 1,670 bomb threat incidents were reported in 2015, an increase of 50 percent since 2010, with a slight decrease since last year. As a whole, from 2012 through 2015, bomb threat reporting has remained fairly consistent. Illinois, Texas, Ohio, and Pennsylvania had the highest reported bomb threats in 2015. Texas has decreased by 30 percent over the past 3 years, while Ohio has gone up by 80 percent. There were a few substantial changes since last year that are important to recognize: the number of reported bomb threats in Ohio doubled from 60 to 120, and in Illinois reported bomb threats increased nearly 400% from 28 to 135. Overall, bomb threats to educational facilities went up by 25 percent.

4.2 Bomb Threats by Target

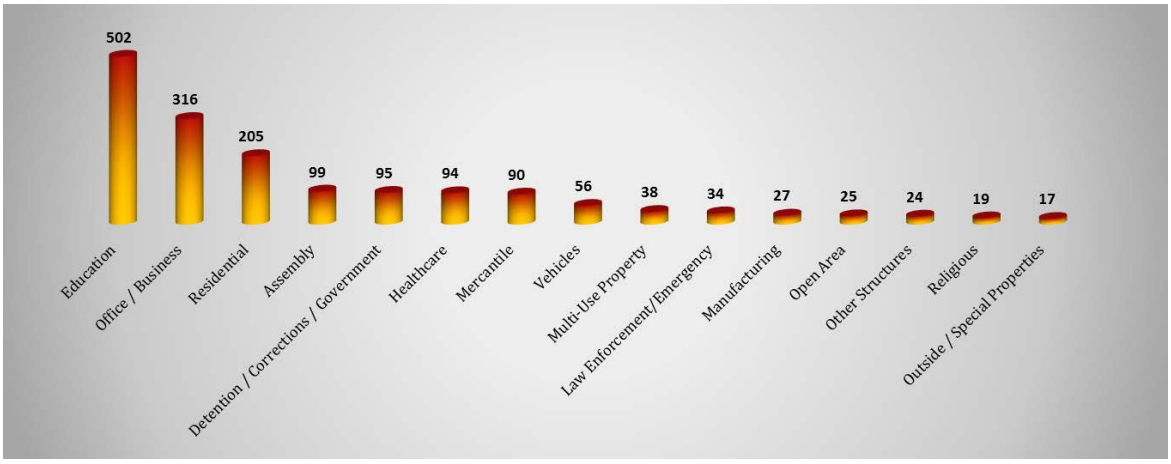


Figure 17. Bomb Threats by Target

4.3 Top Three Bomb Threat Target Types and Subtypes

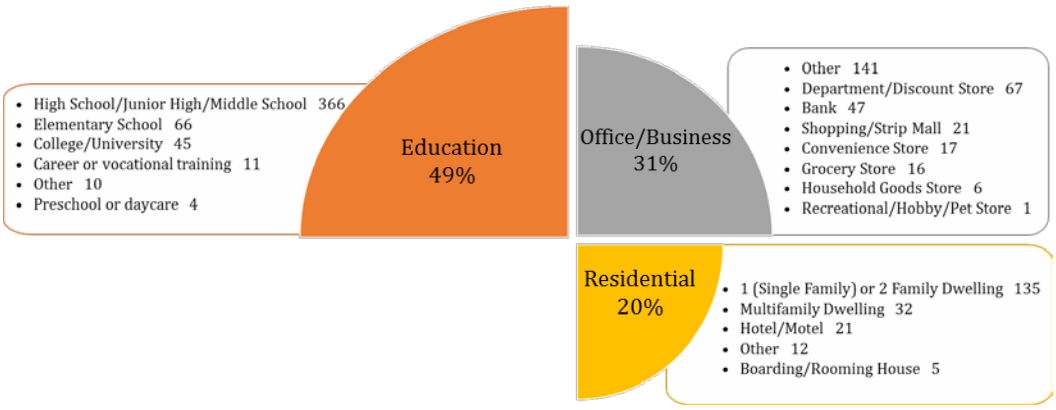


Figure 18. Bomb Threat Target Types (Top Three) and Subtypes

HOAX 2015

Hoax 2015

5.1 Hoax Device Incidents, Summary and Trends

There were 520 hoax device incidents reported in 2015, a decrease of 18 percent since 2014. Ninety-one (91) percent of the reported hoax devices were IEDs. California, Florida, Texas, and Ohio had the most reported hoax devices. Residential structures remain the highest target of most reported hoax devices; however, this number decreased by 20 percent from the previous year. This is opposite of what we saw in 2013–14 in which residential targets had a 6-percent increase. Looking at figure 19, we see that hoax device reporting is on a downward trend and is close to the lowest number seen throughout a 5-year period.

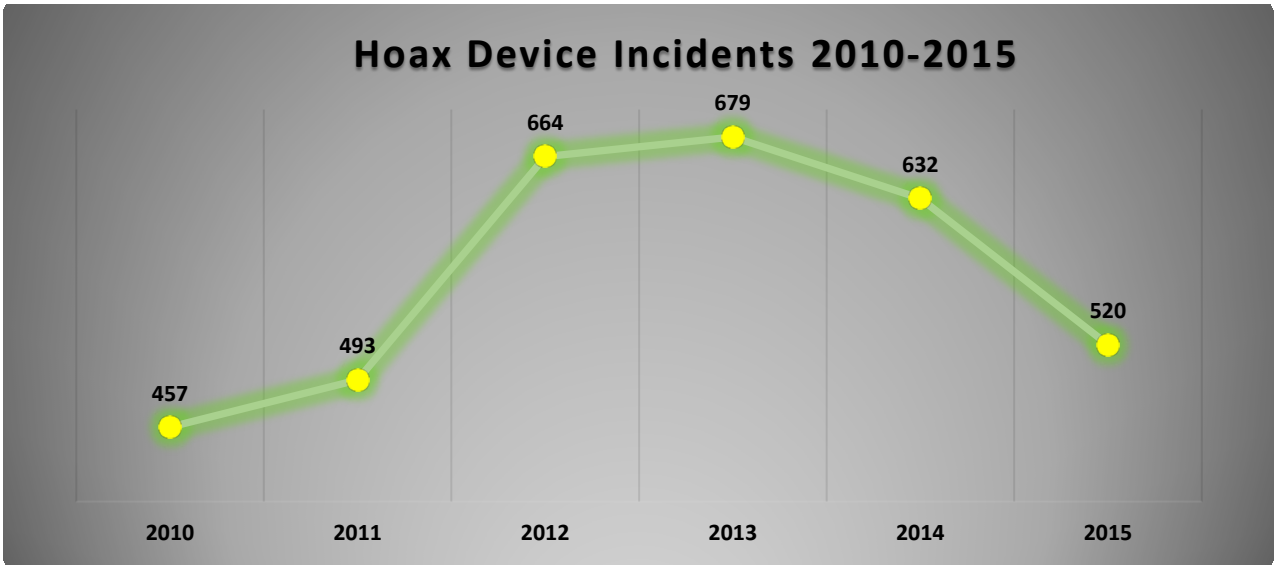


Figure 19. Hoax Device Incidents, 2010–2015

5.2 Hoax Incidents by Incident Type

The most commonly reported hoax devices in 2015 were IEDs, incendiary devices, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN).

Type of hoax devices reported (2010-2015)	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
IED	420	450	613	627	579	474
CBRN (Not chemical reaction/acid bombs)	12	20	13	19	18	10
Incendiary Device	25	23	38	33	35	36
Total	**457**	**493**	**664**	**679**	**632**	**520**

Figure 20. Hoax Incident Types

HOAX 2015

5.3 Hoax Incidents by State

California had the highest number of reported hoax incidents. See figure 21 for a State-by-State view.

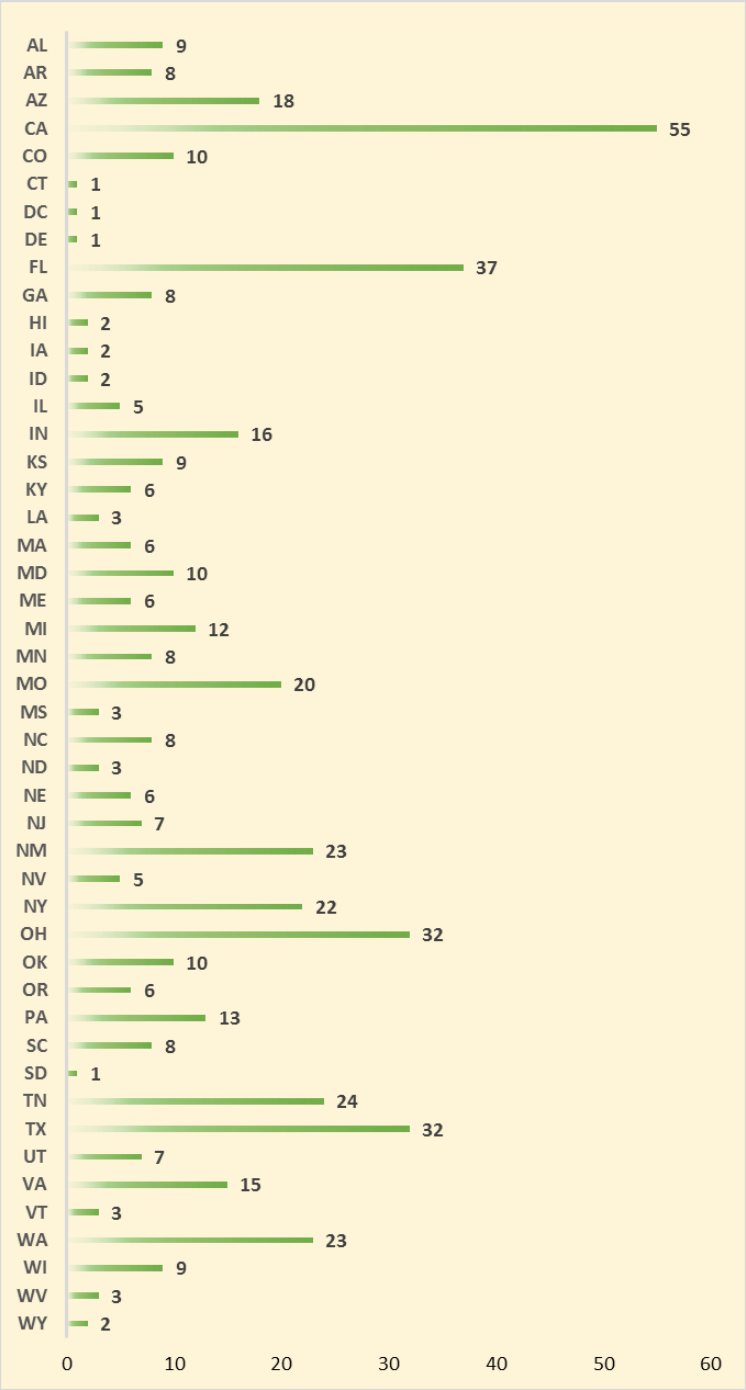


Figure 21. Hoax Incidents by State

5.4 Hoax Incidents by Target Type

The most commonly reported hoax incident target types in 2015 were residential, office/business and education. See figure 22 for a comparison to 2014. All have decreased by at least 20 percent.

Target Type	2015	2014	% Change
Residential	149	189	21% ↓
Office / Business	75	107	30% ↓
Education	41	67	39% ↓

Figure 22. Hoax Incident Target Types

There were 13 hoax incidents targeting detention/corrections/government structures. This is 30 percent higher than last year.

Healthcare hoax incidents dropped 30 percent for the second year in a row. The year before last it dropped by 43 percent. There were a total of six (6) reported incidents.

Finally, there were seven (7) hoax incidents reported on religious institutions; this is unchanged from last year.

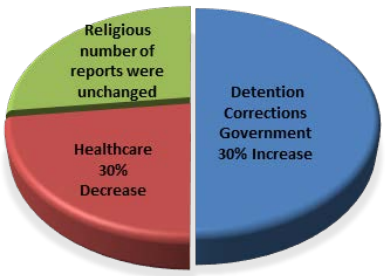


Figure 23. Top 3 Targets of Interest for 2015

EXPLOSIVES THEFT/LOSS 2015

Explosives Theft/Loss 2015

6.1 Explosives Theft, Summary and Trends

There were 15 reported thefts of explosives in 2015, the lowest number in the past 6 years. Commercial explosives remain the most commonly stolen at 53 percent and closely followed by Pyrotechnics at 40 percent.

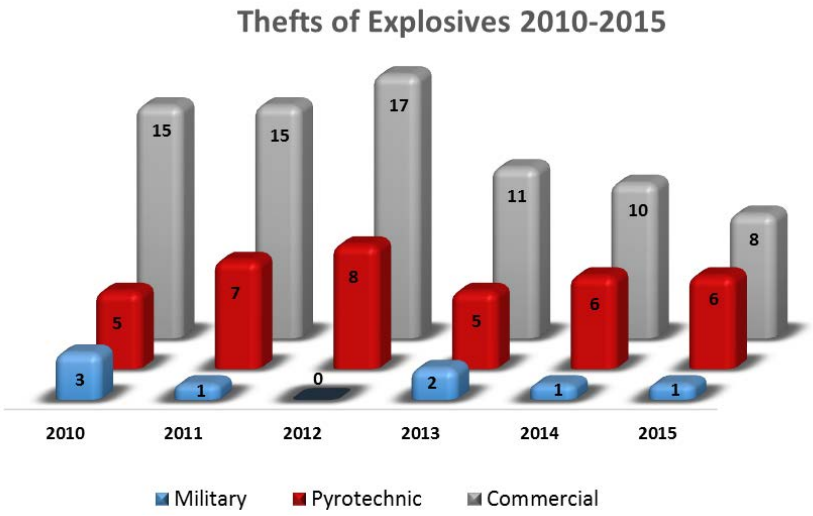


Figure 24. Explosives Theft Types, 2010–2015

6.2 Explosives Theft Types per State

Figure 25 identifies States where explosives thefts were reported in 2015.

State	Commercial	Military	Pyrotechnics	Total
AR	1			1
AZ			1	1
DC		1		1
IL	1			1
KS			1	1
KY	2			2
MN	1		2	3
MS			1	1
NC	1			1
SC			1	1
UT	1			1
WV	1			1
Grand Total	**8**	**1**	**6**	**15**

Figure 25. Explosives Theft Types per State

EXPLOSIVES THEFT/LOSS 2015

6.3 Explosives Loss Summary and Trends

There were 117 instances of explosives losses reported during 2015, the majority being commercial explosives (80 percent commercial explosives; 20 percent pyrotechnics; >1 percent military explosives).

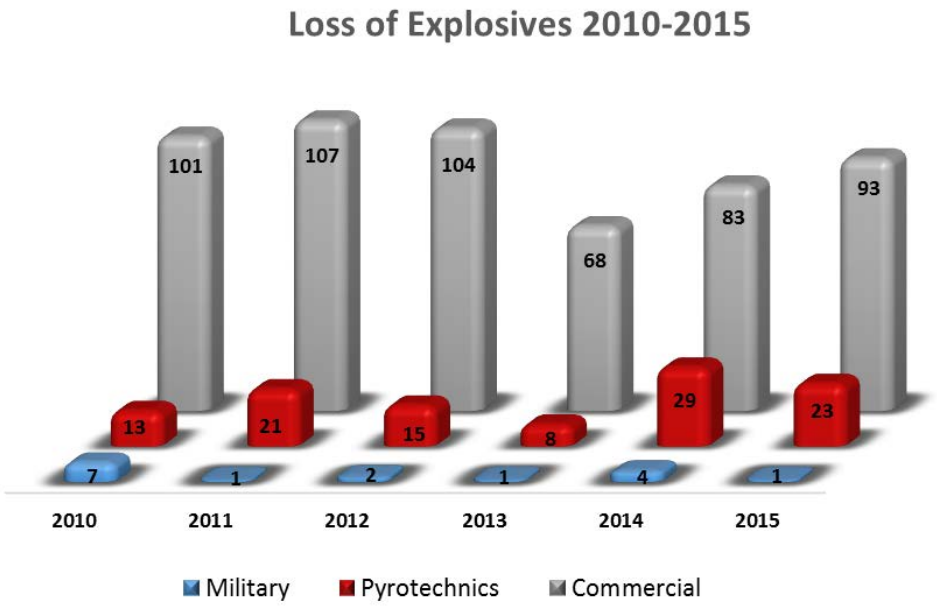


Figure 26. Explosives Loss Types, 2010–2015

It should be noted that a vast majority of reported explosives losses are the result of a discovery made during an ATF compliance inspection of Federal explosives licensees or permitees. The typical reason given for the loss of explosives by most reporting entities is improper documentation when issued, used, or they were deemed irretrievable after a failed shot.

EXPLOSIVES THEFT/LOSS 2015

6.4 Explosives Loss Reported by State

State	Commercial	Military	Pyrotechnics	Total
AK	1			1
AL	4			4
AR	1			1
AZ	5		1	6
CA	3			3
CO	3		1	4
FL	1			1
GA	1		1	2
HI	2			2
IA	1			1
ID	1			1
IL	5			5
IN	2		3	5
KS	6		1	7
KY	1			1
LA	1			1
MA	1			1
MD		1		1
ME	1			1
MI	1			1
MN			3	3
MO	2		1	3
MS			1	1
MT	1			1
NC	2			2
NH			1	1
NJ	1			1
NM	4		2	6
NV	3			3
NY	3		1	4
OH	5			5
OK	2			2
OR	1			1
PA	4		2	6
SC			1	1
TN	2			2
TX	13		2	15
UT	2			2
VA	2		1	3
VT	1			1
WA	3			3
WY	1		1	2
Grand Total	**93**	**1**	**23**	**117**

Figure 27. Explosives Loss Types per State

CONTACT INFORMATION

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