The Triton Report is compiled monthly by highly specialised data collators and former British Military Ammunition Technical Officers using state of the art data-mining technology. We work with global partners to gather, analyse and evaluate, comprehensively, all recorded IED events worldwide.

The information in this document is proprietary. It is intended only for the use of registered subscribers with limited extract capability. It is strictly prohibited to forward or otherwise distribute this information to anyone who is not an authorised user.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL OVERVIEW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIA PACIFIC</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPE</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE EAST</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRAQ</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH AMERICA</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH ASIA</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFGHANISTAN</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL OVERVIEW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIA PACIFIC</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPE</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE EAST</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRAQ</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH AMERICA</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH ASIA</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFGHANISTAN</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information in this document is proprietary. It is intended only for the use of registered subscribers with limited extract capability. It is strictly prohibited to forward or otherwise distribute this information to anyone who is not an authorised user.
GLOBAL OVERVIEW

AFRICA

Security forces continued to locate and render safe IEDs during operations across Algeria. Boko Haram increased its activities across Nigeria, focusing on Maiduguri and continued to deploy suicide bombers in Cameroon.

The Islamic State group conducted two high-profile attacks in Libya, and the Group of Support for Muslims and Islam upped attacks against security forces. In Somalia, the single highest casualty attack to have occurred throughout the insurgency so far, was recorded on 14 October with upwards of 350 people killed by an SVBIED.

ASIA PACIFIC

IED activity was reduced throughout Asia Pacific, especially in the Philippines where fighting has moved away from Marawi, Lanao del Sur, and over to Maguindanao province.

MIDDLE EAST

Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) recaptured the Hawijah area in Kirkuk province. A deterioration in relations between the Government of Iraq (Gol) and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) led to the military reoccupation of Kirkuk province, as well as other territory considered to have been illegitimately captured by the Kurds. Turkish military forces deployed to several forward operating bases within northern Idlib province in Syria, ostensibly to monitor de-escalation of the conflict.

SOUTH AMERICA

IED activity significantly increased in Colombia from 22 to 84 incidents reported throughout the month, while in Mexico an ABIED was recovered in Guanajuato state.

SOUTH ASIA
Taliban militants continue to target police compounds and foreign security forces in Afghanistan. IS carried out a suicide attack on a mosque in Kabul province killing 41 people and injuring 61, just hours after a separate attack on a mosque in Daleema district, Ghor province. It indicates IS are continuing their campaign of attacks on members of religious groups they deem inferior.
AFRICA

SUMMARY

IED incidents have risen across the continent this month, which reflects a renewed offensive by militant groups. The most significant attack occurred on 14 October when an SVBIED killed upwards of 350 people in Mogadishu, Somalia. *QLR-002 and Update* refers. Senegal was also put on alert by the United States Embassy claiming that a credible threat of an attack had been received on 18 October.

ALGERIA

Throughout October, security forces continued to locate IEDs during operations. Whilst the majority were emplaced devices, on 02 October, two suicide belts were located in Wilaya de Bejaia, and on 29 October, 200kg of fertilizer intended for use in explosives manufacturing were recovered in Wilaya de Biskra.

CAMEROON

At least one IED incident related to the Anglophone crisis was reported in October. The attack occurred during the early morning of 03 October, when an IED functioned near the Mobile Intervention Group (GMI) located in front of the regional hospital of Bamenda, Northwest region. A second device contained in a gas bottle was located and rendered safe.

TRITON COMMENT: Officers were previously targeted outside the hospital on 21 September. Targeting the GMI in the early hours likely concealed the presence of the devices and reduced the probability of inflicting civilian casualties. As the perpetrators targeted the same location twice, it could indicate that sufficient security protocols were not put in place to prevent further attacks. COMMENT ENDS

However, the majority of incidents in October were perpetrated by Boko Haram (BH) suicide bombers who primarily targeted civilian locations in the Far North region. For example, at approximately 04:30hrs on 02
October, at least one civilian was killed when two PBIEDs functioned inside two mosques in Mozogo, Mayo-Tsanaga division. Only one of the militants was able to gain entrance to one of the mosques whilst the other initiated outside. The highest casualty incident, was reported to have taken place on the night of 31 October, when a child suicide bomber joined a group of children playing in Zamga village, before functioning her device and killing five. **TRITON COMMENT:** Both incidents occurred in areas near the Nigerian border, where BH militants have largely concentrated their attacks. As this is the closest point to Borno state, this is unsurprising and could indicate that PBIEDs are being directed by groups on the other side of the border. In addition, it should be noted that children have repeatedly been used as suicide bombers because they attract less suspicion than adults and create greater media attention, which increases the notoriety of the group. **COMMENT ENDS**

**KENYA**

At least four IED incidents were reported this month. The sole event to be unattributed to a militant group occurred on 08 October, when a suspect was detained in possession of 130 pieces of expogel TM V6, 30 electric detonators and 250 metres of solar cable at a bus station in Kisii county, Nyanza province. It was believed that the materials were obtained in Tanzania and were used in quarrying.

![IED Incidents October 2016 - October 2017](image)

**TRITON COMMENT:** Kisii county is situated on one of the main roads that leads to the Isbanaia crossing on the Kenyan/Tanzanian border, and it is possible that the suspect may have taken this route. It is of note that the suspect was identified following a tip from passengers at the bus station, who believed him to be carrying suspicious items, but it remains unclear whether he was a smuggler or a member of Al Shabaab (AS). **COMMENT ENDS**

The three remaining incidents – one attack and two caches - were related to AS militants in the southern counties of Lamu and Garissa. The attack occurred on 10 October, and included a roadside IED which had been emplaced to target military vehicles at the Mambore-Mkokoni junction near the Kiunga KenGen power station in Lamu. When the device failed to function, militants opened fire on the vehicle but retreated after being engaged by security forces. **TRITON COMMENT:** It is unlikely that the militants would have been able to overpower the soldiers without the aid of the IED and, on understanding this, sought to target the vehicle before retreating. Operations against militant enclaves in the Boni forest may soon benefit from additional support from Kenyan Police Reservists, who have been promised new small arms to be better equipped to fight AS, however, the size of the forest will likely hamper the effectiveness of this directive. **COMMENT ENDS**
LIBYA

The most significant IED attack of the month occurred on 04 October against the court complex in Misratah. At least four people were killed, and 35 others injured when three Islamic State (IS) militants launched a PBIED and small arms attack inside the compound. Following the assault, a VBIED was located and rendered safe with a 154kg main charge consisting of 12 adapted PRB M3 landmines and fragmentation enhancements.

On 09 October, a retaliatory operation in the region resulted in the detention of an unspecified number of IS militants and the recovery of weapons and explosives in Ruwaisat. For further analysis, TFR-026 refers. IS militants also targeted the Tisan checkpoint in Ajdabiya, al Wahat region on 25 October, killing two Libyan National Army (LNA) soldiers and injuring three others. The militants overran the checkpoint and emplaced an IED in the gate house and beneath the body of one of the deceased soldiers before leaving.

TRITON COMMENT: The placement of the two devices suggests that the militants were hoping to inflict casualties amongst first responders who would secure the area and check the bodies. There is a high probability that the perpetrators were not interested in holding the position, but were more likely attempting to steal supplies and weapons, thereby reducing the capabilities of regional forces and promoting their continued existence within Libya. COMMENT ENDS

In Benghazi, clearance operations continued throughout the month, locating VOIEDs incorporating adapted munitions. For example, within a residential property on Hamad Palace street, multiple pressure-type devices were rendered safe on 16 October, and a pressure-plate device using an artillery shell as the main charge with two push-button connectors was recovered in the city (see image opposite from Facebook) on 23 October.

TRITON COMMENT: The manufacturers of the device may have incorporated the push-buttons to reduce the
metallic content of the IED, reducing the chances of its detection. Civilians have repeatedly been directed not to return to their properties before the LNA have cleared areas from landmines and IEDs. However, these orders have repeatedly been ignored by people seeking to check on their homes thus resulting in loss of life and serious injuries. COMMENT ENDS

MALI

An increase in IED activity was observed this month, with nine incidents reported, six more than the previous month. Between 01-03 October, there were three roadside IED attacks, one targeting Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), another on a gendarme vehicle and most significantly, in the attempted assassination of Komani Tanapo – an Islamic religious leader and teacher – that injured two gendarme between Matomo and Sana-Kouin, Segou region.

Between 23-31 October, five attacks were reported with three in Mopti and two in Kidal region, again the weapon of choice in each incident was a roadside IED. On 23 October, this was combined with a small arms ambush by Group of Support for Muslims and Islam (JNIM) militants which lasted 15 minutes. This tactic was employed again on 31 October, when militants targeted the convoy of the High Court President – Abderrahmane Niang – as he travelled between Diafarabe and Dia, Mopti region. Although the driver was injured, Niang was unharmed.

JNIM also claimed that French forces had killed 11 Malian soldiers being held hostage by the group following an operation on 23 October in Abeiba, Kidal region. Initially their deaths were denied by the French but Malian media and later the Defence Ministry supported the claim. TRITON COMMENT: Initial denials over the 23 October incident may increase resentment against both governments and Operation Barkhane after statements produced by JNIM proved to be at least partially accurate. The 17-day gap between IED attacks is of note. It could indicate that information pertaining to other attacks went unreported, that the militants used alternate weaponry or that something impacted upon the militants abilities to launch IED attacks. The use of roadside IEDs in the attempted assassination of high-profile figures indicates that militants may have had forewarning of the routes and times that these individuals would travel. It is possible that militant and criminal activity may increase during the run up to the Malian elections, scheduled for next month, as JNIM militants seek to undermine the government’s control in the central and northern regions by restricting the movement of campaigners and pro-government figures to effect the viability and legitimacy of the results. COMMENT ENDS
MOROCCO

On 14 October, Central Bureau of Judicial Investigations (BCIJ) officers detained IS affiliated militants and recovered IED materials including chemicals, two potential suicide belts, electrical wires, gas canisters, a fire lighter, a blender, lightbulbs, nails, pesticides, firecrackers, radio equipment, small arms and bladed weapons from a property in Fes, Fes-Boulemane.

TRITON COMMENT: The quantity of weapons and IED materials denotes the intent to carry out a potential suicide, melee and/or small arms attack. Those involved may have either acquired the knowledge to manufacture IEDs through personal training or via social media. Aspirant IS militants remain a consistent problem for Morocco and although the BCIJ has been successful at locating and dismantling cells, the continued ability of such individuals to acquire substantial weaponry and explosive precursors to begin construction of suicide devices demonstrates the persistent threat posed by the group. COMMENT ENDS

NIGERIA

October has seen the first rise in IED activity in Nigeria since July, as well as an SVBIED and possible PBIED on the evening of 10 October, when at least one soldier and 17 BH militants were killed during an attack against an outpost at Yamteke axis of Gwoza, Borno state.

TRITON COMMENT: The return of SVBIEDs to the field is an interesting development in the conflict, with the last recorded VBIED being recovered from BH militants in Gulumba Gana on 03 July, and evidenced in an operational capacity during an attack by the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) on 28 April in Manguzum village, Borno state. The coordinated aspect of the 10 October attack may demonstrate the possible motivation of overrunning the outpost and gaining access to Gwoza. COMMENT ENDS

The remaining incidents of the month highlighted the threat of PBIEDs and the renewed targeting of the outskirts of Maiduguri, Borno state. This began on 12 October, with a failed attack against Molai General Hospital, and
continued on 22 October with a triple suicide attack against Muna Dali and Muna Garage areas, which killed 13 civilians and injured 13 others. A failed attempt to infiltrate the same area was stopped on 29 October and on the same day two female bombers were identified and killed at Mafa-Dikwa axis.

On 30 October, militants launched a combined roadside IED, small arms and PBIED attack against a convoy transporting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) along the Banki-Bula road in Bama. At least four civilians were killed and six soldiers, two Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and six IDPs were injured. TRITON COMMENT: The roadside IED functioned first, likely to disable the vehicles and prevent the movement of the convoy. The addition of small arms and the PBIED may have been included to engage the military escort, who typically protect civilian vehicles travelling the road. The single suicide bomber was likely identified quickly, as he was shot before he could function his device, this may denote the failure of the militants to effectively conceal his presence.

COMMENT ENDS

SENEGAL

On 18 October, the United States Embassy in Dakar released a statement regarding a credible terror threat against sites popular with Westerners. It was later claimed that three Malian militants behind the attacks were detained and were being held in a secret location. An additional arrest was made on 21 October when another Malian militant - Mouhammed Al Fati Mouhammed - was detained at Rosso. It was reported that he was returning from Syria where he had undertaken training and that explosives were recovered from his possession. TRITON COMMENT: Senegal remains under the threat of militant attack due to its provision of forces to MINUSMA. Given the nationalities of all those detained, it is possible that the militants were dispatched by JNIM - the Al Qaeda umbrella group - that has sought to unify Malian militant groups against both national and foreign forces as well as their supporters. The fourth detainee, was possibly travelling a commonly used route for militants re-entering Mali, his detention may signify an increase in security in response to the US’ statement.

COMMENT ENDS

SOMALIA

At least 16 IED incidents occurred in Mogadishu this month. Most were continuation of typical AS activity - roadside IEDs against military convoys, emplaced devices and a UVIED – but two incidents were especially significant. The first, and the largest terror attack recorded in Somalia occurred at 15:25hrs on 14 October when at least 350 people were killed, and 600 others injured by an SVBIED that functioned in proximity to a fuel tanker at Soobe junction.
CCTV footage has now been released of the vehicle and five suspects have so far been detained in relation to the attack. For further information and analysis, QLR-002 and Update refers. (Image from SNTV/Twitter)

The second notable attack occurred between 17:05hrs on 28 October and 04:00hrs on 29 October. At least 33 people were killed, and 29 others injured during a combined VBIED, PBIED, small arms and grenade attack against the Nasa Hablod2 Hotel owned by Interior Security Minister Du’ale. TFR-027 refers. TRITON COMMENT: Both incidents show that AS remains able to launch complex attacks against high profile landmarks in the city. Although the 14 October attack was undoubtedly so large because of the proximity of the SVBIED to a fuel tanker, it still highlighted a failure in security protocols due to the ease with which it was able to travel through Mogadishu. In the later attack, the militants demonstrated their strategic planning to infiltrate the hotel in National Intelligence and Security Agency uniforms before systematically executing those found inside. COMMENT ENDS

Outside of the capital, activity has largely been concentrated in the neighbouring regions and it is of note that Elasha Biyaha was identified as a point of transit for VBIEDs heading towards Mogadishu - with two devices being reported in the area between 19-20 October.
African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) convoys and patrols also remained the target of roadside IEDs deployed by AS. One of the more notable incidents occurred at approximately 11:00hrs on 25 October, with at least three Burundian soldiers killed and seven others injured between Lafoole and Arbiska, Lower Shabele region. Militants then proceeded to open fire upon the damaged convoy, which led the soldiers to believe that the enemy combatants were positioned within a school. After returning fire with an RPG, it was revealed that up to 12 civilians had been killed by the rounds instead of militants. **TRITON COMMENT:** The 25 October incident may have been arranged so that AMISOM forces would be goaded into firing upon the school, thereby resulting in an almost certain reduction of local support for the international force. AS has previously used such incidents to recruit additional fighters, as evidenced in the 14 October attack where the driver was identified as a Barire resident, a location where ten civilians were killed in counter-terrorism operations on 24 August. This month’s incidents have largely been clustered around routes connecting Mogadishu to the rest of Somalia, demonstrating AS’s intent to reduce the ability of the Federal government to access and effectively control territory beyond the capital. **COMMENT ENDS**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

On 17 October, two suspects were detained with 10 x 3.6m shock tubes, 15 x 4.2m shock tubes and 14 x explosive blasting bars from the Freedom Park homeless camp in Phokeng, Rustenburg, North West province. **TRITON COMMENT:** The materials had been stolen from a local mine and may be related to other discoveries of explosive materials in the local area. **COMMENT ENDS**

**TUNISIA**

Two soldiers were injured in two separate incidents in which suspected IEDs functioned during operations on Mt. Semmama (01 October) and Mt. Seif (30 October) in Kasserine governorate.
ASIA PACIFIC

SUMMARY

Activity in the Asia Pacific has decreased in line with the end of fighting in Marawi, Lanao del Sur province. In Thailand, despite fears of a resurgence in activity, there was actually a decrease in IED usage.

MALAYSIA

On 17 October, three suspected Islamic State (IS) militants were detained and three pipe bomb-type IEDs located in Pasir Puteh, Kelantan state. The devices were reported as 55mm in diameter, 130mm long, containing ball bearings and carbide. The trio had conducted a successful test of an IED on 28 September, with the intention of targeting the Better Beer Festival in Kuala Lumpur, places of worship and stores selling alcohol.

TRITON COMMENT: There are references to a ‘carbide bomb’ in at least two explosive handbooks located online. Both recipes mix Calcium Carbide and water in an air-tight container, preferably made of glass. The resultant chemical reaction forms a build-up of internal pressure ultimately causing the container to shatter. Should a flame also be present at the moment of initiation, a fireball may form due to the creation of acetylene. Ball bearings are a common enhancement, which may have been included as their case-hardened shell would prevent evaporation when the IED functioned. COMMENT ENDS

PHILIPPINES

Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF) militants were attributed to the majority of IED incidents this month, with activities centred on Maguindanao province, although on 03 October, the group were suspected of damaging power relay pylon 106 in Carmen town, North Cotabato province.

The remaining incidents involved the recovery of IED materials and completed devices in response to security force operations, such as the location of explosives in a marsh at Sitio Nangalan, B. Katibuan in Talayan on 16
October, following a mortar barrage against BIFF militants a day prior.

Only two successful attacks were recorded. The first, on 09 October involved an IED thrown by New People’s Army (NPA) militants at the Barangay Hall of Patungcaleo in Quirino, Ilocos Sur province. The second, on 15 October, featured an IED functioned by IS militants, near the offices of the Lapanday Corporation in B. Kalaong, Maitum, Sarangani province. TRITON COMMENT: A wider spread of IEDs was observed this month, which reflects the defeat of IS militants in Marawi, Lanao del Sur province. However, the 15 October attack signifies that the group has not been completely removed from the Philippines and supporting groups such as the BIFF have returned to operations in Maguindanao province. Campaigns to target the BIFF may result in further retaliatory attacks as the group clashes with security forces in the province. COMMENT ENDS

THAILAND

This month, IED activity has been largely limited to Narathiwat province, with only one incident reported outside in Pattani province. The attack, which occurred on 14 October, featured a 20-25kg IED, contained in a round steel box with a HME mix containing urea, that functioned against electricity poles in Don Yang, Nong Chik district.

Whilst most devices were emplaced on the roadside, on 19 October militants threw a 700g IED contained in a PVC pipe into the kitchen of a self-defence volunteer outpost in Chanae, Narathiwat province. Although the device functioned, it failed to inflict casualties. TRITON COMMENT: Surrounding the 25 October anniversary of the Barisan Revolusi Nasional’s founding, security forces increased their presence and operations in the Deep South. However, reported incidents did not increase exponentially during this period, which may be due to inactivity or the focus of the media being on the cremation of former King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The Rangers in Chanae were likely lucky as the militants missed the manned section of the checkpoint. Militants often commit drive-by attacks on motorcycles as they can quickly exit the scene using routes inaccessible to larger vehicles. COMMENT ENDS
TURKEY

On 28 October 2017, in Istanbul’s Bayrampaşa district, Turkish police identified and seized an explosives-laden vehicle and a motorcycle, found in a shopping mall parking lot. The findings followed an operation launched after two explosions occurred in two separate buildings in Istanbul’s Esenyurt and Arnavutköy districts the day before.

A number of IED materials were seized in the buildings, including chemical materials, metal marbles, nails, screws, a remote control, electronic circuits, cables and batteries. 120 suspects have been detained in connection to the incidents. Several remotely controlled IEDs, PBIED vests and two firearms were recovered from inside the VBIED.

It is suspected that the militants, belonging to two IS cells, were planning a large-scale attack targeting the 29 October 2017 Republic Day celebrations. The detainees have been reported to be Austrian citizens of Turkish origins. 156 individuals with suspected links to the IS and the planners of the above incident have been arrested in the two days following the foiled plot. Around 5000 suspects from 95 countries have been detained in Turkey on grounds of association with IS since 2015. Turkey is being targeted by both the Syrian opposition and the IS for its involvement in northern Syria, where it denies access to Syrian territory to both IS and the rebels, under the label of ‘Operation Euphrates Shield’.

In the South-East, Turkey remains opposed by the PKK; recent operational gains against the PKK have put Turkish security forces past the borders of northern Iraq as well. Several Iraqi provinces are now included in Turkey’s operational reports. For instance, during Turkish security forces operations between 19-25 October in Hakkari districts of Yüksekova and İkilyakalar, Sırnak, Siirt Baykan, Pervari Yazlica Mountain, Diyarbakır Lice, Erzurum Şenkaya and Zap and Avaşın-Basyan regions in northern Iraq, 72 PKK militants were killed and a
number of munitions, including several dozen rifles and 202kg of ammonium nitrate were seized from the PKK, while seven Turkish soldiers were killed and 11 injured during the operations.

PKK IED attacks have also claimed the lives of seven Turkish soldiers last month. During the morning of 04 October, in Yuksekoval, Hakkari province, between Susuzkelli Police Station and Aslankarşı Base Area in Esendere District (by the Iranian border), a roadside IED functioned against a passing Turkish military vehicle. Four soldiers were killed and four more were injured. Also, on 16 October, in the Çukurca district of Hakkari Province, a roadside IED functioned underneath a passing military vehicle, killing two Turkish soldiers, while on 23 October, near the Iraqi border in Çukurca, Hakkari Province, an emplaced IED functioned killing one Turkish soldier. Overall, despite continuous large-scale Turkish SF operations, IED incident levels remain relatively constant, fluctuating within the amplitude of 22-27 incidents per month for the whole of the past 12 months, with occasional outliers which spike above the average.

RUSSIA

Increasing activity has been observed in Russia’s Southern Caucasus regions. On 04 October, in Babayurt District of Dagestan near the village of Kachalay, local police attempted to stop a passing vehicle at a checkpoint when passengers opened fire from inside the vehicle. Two of the attackers were killed. Later that day an IED was recovered from the residence of one of the attackers. Police reports state that the suspects were involved in the murder of a Kizlyar District police inspector. On 05 October, at the site of a former barrel factory in Makhachkala, Dagestan, the FSB identified a 50g IED with a magnetic component, presumably for attaching the device underneath a vehicle. Two other IEDs were located on the site the day before. Finally, on 11th October, “Rosgvardia” (National Guard of the Russian Federation) reported the results of their counter-terrorist operations during the Spring-Summer period of 2017 in Russia’s Northern Caucasus region. According to the report, 133kg of explosives were confiscated, 35 IEDs were neutralised and six militant leaders were killed during the operations.

These incidents are parallel to dozens of hoax bomb threats that have occurred across Russia’s most populous cities every week over the past month. In August 2016, an IS fighter threatened Putin personally in a propaganda clip; another clip released this month threatens an attack on the World Cup in St Petersburg in 2018. The clips typically feature motivational speakers that encourage lone-wolf action in the country, as retribution for Russia’s foray into Syria. This IS impetus, coupled with the unstable economic and social climate of Russia’s Muslim-majority republics, results in the self-radicalisation of individuals. It has been reported, for instance, that Chechnya’s secret police use exile and forced displacement as a punitive measure on individuals with suspected IS links, sometimes leaving entire families without a home. At the same time, due to the collapse of IS in the Levant, former fighters are potentially heading home, where militant activities may be resumed.
IRELAND

18 October - an Army Bomb Disposal Team rendered safe an unidentified IED in Rathkeale, Limerick.
24 October - at around 15:30hrs in Finglas Garda Station in Dublin, a civilian entered the Garda station carrying an IED, described as a ‘pipe bomb’, which he had discovered by his house. The station was evacuated and the device retrieved by the EOD for further inspection.

MALTA

16 October - in Bidnija (near Mosta), Malta, an UVIDE functioned beneath Caruana Galizia’s Peugeot 108. Galizia was an outspoken critic of the Maltese government, and the attack is believed to be an assassination based on personal motivations. It is suspected that Semtex was used for the main charge; the device may have been RC initiated and witnesses recall hearing a smaller detonation followed by the explosion.

SWEDEN

16 October - in Loresborgsgatan / Vendelfridsgatan in Malmö, Sweden, an unidentified IED functioned against a vehicle. There were no injuries. The incident has been reported as a VBIED attack by some international media outlets, but media in Sweden does not confirm this view.

18 October - in Helsingborg, Sweden, an unidentified IED functioned against police station, damaging the building. The incident is reportedly linked to the recent police crackdown on criminal gang activity and drug trafficking.

21 October - in Ängleholm, Sweden, an unidentified male assailant threw several incendiary devices (reported as ‘fire bombs’), through an open window of a bar, and stepped inside carrying a large kitchen knife and threatening to function a suicide belt. The assailant was overpowered by security staff and guests, and the attack caused no injuries. EOD seized the device described by witnesses as a ‘suicide belt’ but declined to comment on its viability.

Due to the proximity and volume of IED-related incidents in Sweden last month, both international media and some experts speculated the possibility of the incidents being an outbreak of organised terrorism. There is, however, no evidence of the links between any of the incidents and international terrorism. There is also no reported increase in criminality levels. Most criminal offenders in Sweden are Swedish-born.
SUMMARY

The increase in IED incidents compared with October 2016 is due to increased militant activity in both Yemen and Lebanon. This is related to ongoing Lebanese security force operations in Baalbek province and a general increase in attacks attributed to Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) as the group seeks to disrupt Hizam security forces within southern Yemen.

EGYPT

Militant activity attributed to Wilayas Sinai (WS) continues to be concentrated in Shamal Sinai province with multiple emplaced and roadside IED attacks reported against armoured vehicles containing police and military forces.

On 05 October, a rare instance detailing the size of a device was reported, noting that a 200kg RCIED was located on the border with the Gaza Strip in Rafah before being removed. The militants also tried and failed to target a cement factory with a SVBIED near Al Hasna but a conscript opened fire, which led to the device functioning prematurely. TRITON COMMENT: The bank is situated near a security zone but WS was able to carry out a 40-minute attack and leave unhindered by security forces, which denotes a failure in response times and commitment to engage the militants and could result in civilians losing confidence in the armed forces abilities to protect them. In addition, the need to acquire an extra source of income could indicate that support from IS and revenue from illegal activities may not be sufficient to sustain the militants campaign. COMMENT ENDS

The most significant incident this month occurred on 20 October, when at least 16 police officers were killed, and eight others injured in a complex roadside IED, small arms and RPG attack against a convoy of four SUVs in the
El-Wahat El Baheria desert in al Jizah province. The attack was claimed by Ansar Al-Islam. **TRITON COMMENT:** It was reported that the officers had been following a tip-off regarding a militant camp before they were ambushed, which could indicate a deception designed to draw in the forces. Due to the high-profile nature of the group's return, after relative silence since 2015, Ansar Al-Islam could be positioning itself as an alternative group to IS, which has dominated in Egypt. Furthermore, it is claimed that one of the group's leaders - Ashmawi – was former Egyptian Special Forces, which may signify that the group has insider knowledge of the Egyptian military, which it may use to exploit any weaknesses amongst security forces. Following the incident, the Egyptian government accused media groups of inflating the casualty figures and stated that a blanket ban reporting on battles, operations and terror-related incidents, which if implemented, would be a detriment to understanding the ongoing conflict. **COMMENT ENDS**
IRAQ

SUMMARY

Iraqi Security Force (ISF) operations against Islamic State (IS) continued in Kirkuk and Al Anbar provinces, however on 16 October the Government of Iraq (GoI) initiated the recapture of territory held by Kurdish forces throughout northern Iraq. This was done in response to the refusal of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to annul the results of the Kurdish independence referendum, held on 25 September.

Several small-scale clashes were reported, including in Kirkuk City, however ISF successfully took control over the city and a large portion of Kirkuk province.

The overall number of devices decreased significantly compared to September, however this may be largely due to the completion of battlefield clearance by ISF and Popular Mobilisation Units (PMU) following the recapture of Tal Afar in Ninawa province.

A continued increase in the number of VBIEDs reflects an escalation of ISF activity, and coalition airstrikes against IS positions during the lead up to operations to liberate Al Qaim near to the Syria – Iraq border in western Al Anbar province. The sole airborne IED incident was recorded during clashes in Hawijah when a UAV air-dropped improvised munition (ADIM) prematurely functioned killing an IS militant.
Significant Dates:

03 Oct - Iraqi Independence Day

09 Nov - Arbaeen

30 Nov - Milad un Nabi (Birthday - Prophet Muhammad - Sunni) - Islamic Holiday
NORTHERN IRAQ

While there was a slight increase in the number of IED attacks recorded compared to September, there were no VBIED attacks. Suicide attacks were recorded in both Tal Afar and Mosul, reflecting an ongoing threat of IS militant activity in both areas. The most significant took place on 23 October in the Tawalib area of the Old City district when three suicide bombers targeted a police unit. One of the militants functioned a PBIED, killing a police officer and injuring another while the other two were shot and killed. There was also a large complex attack against Waad Allah Popular PMU members deployed in the Hatra area roughly 55km south-west of Qayyarah.

TRITON COMMENT: Given that the Hatra area was recaptured by ISF in April 2017, it is possible that IS identified PMU positions here as comparatively weaker than areas of recent combat such as Hawijah or near to Qayyarah. COMMENT ENDS

Emplaced/roadside IED attacks against security forces and civilians recorded in Mosul and Badush, located approximately 10km north-west of the city, killed seven people. Two of these attacks were IEDs emplaced in civilian residences which functioned when families attempted to return to their homes in Al Mashahda and Islah Al Zarai in the west of Mosul. An IED attack also injured three street cleaners on 03 October near to the Fifth Bridge in Mosul on the same day it was scheduled to be re-opened following repairs.

IED attacks continued to target civilians in Sinjar, with at least one of the three attacks taking place inside a
residential building, killing five members of the same family returning to their home. **TRITON COMMENT:** While it is unclear whether all of the IED incidents were the result of legacy devices, it is highly likely that civilian residences were specifically targeted by IS for IED emplacement prior to their withdrawal. This is due to the number of incidents in which returning family members have been killed or injured in IED attacks. It is probable that, while IED/UXO clearance has been undertaken within the Sinjar area, these efforts have not been sufficient. As such it is highly likely that internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to their homes will continue to be at risk of further IED incidents. **COMMENT ENDS.**

---

**NORTH-CENTRAL IRAQ**

**Kurdish – ISF Clashes**

On 16 October, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) began to advance through Kurdish held territory in Kirkuk province after a deadline for the withdrawal of Kurdish forces passed on 14 October. Sporadic clashes were reported between individual groups of Peshmerga and ISF units near to Kirkuk and further north in Makhmur. Although casualty figures remain unverified at least 29 ISF and Peshmerga were killed in clashes during this period.
As clashes began to escalate the Iraqi Ministry of Defence released images (as shown), of what it described as an IED manufacturing facility located in an evacuated Peshmerga building within the Kirkuk area. (Twitter)

**TRITON COMMENT:** Whilst Peshmerga have previously deployed IEDs, particularly against Turkish military forces in northern Duhok province, it is unlikely that Kurdish forces would use such weapons within Kirkuk. This is due to the indiscriminate nature of IEDs as well as Kurdish access to military equipment, including anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), AFVs and main battle tanks, at least one unit of which were deployed to Kirkuk during this period. It is more likely that the IED components, including suspected explosive material, were recovered during Kurdish security force operations against IS within the Hawijah area, and that the ISF either mistook these for a Peshmerga IED manufacturing facility or deliberately attempted to discredit the Peshmerga by associating them with the use of IEDs. **COMMENT ENDS**

Following the systematic advance of ISF and PMU forces in Kirkuk, Erbil and Ninawa provinces, an internal division between two primary Kurdish political parties became apparent. The ruling Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) led by Massoud Barzani, promoted the Kurdish Independence Referendum, and initially backed military resistance against advancing ISF units. The PUK opposition party however, favoured a negotiated solution with the Gol and has since faced accusations of collusion with the Abadi Government. **TRITON COMMENT:** This was likely a planned and limited military action aimed at recapturing Kurdish held territory considered by the Gol to be outside the pre-2014 boundaries of Kurdistan. Although the threat of military action was highlighted during the run up to and following the Kurdish Referendum on Independence, which took place on 25 September, the ISF
operation in Hawijah likely delayed its implementation. The Gol also stated it would re-establish control over international borders, a process which will likely involve cooperation with Turkey and Iran while further isolation Kurdistan. The recapture of key oil fields in Kirkuk province will also drastically impact its economic standing and likely necessitate a more conciliatory stance within the Kurdish ruling political structure.

Violent clashes outside of Kurdistan are also likely to continue in several key flashpoints, such as Tuz Khurmato, due to the shift in regional political structures and ongoing ethnic disputes between a number of groups including Kurdish sub-groups, Turkmen and Arab tribes. **COMMENT ENDS**

**HAWIJAH OPERATIONS**

On 08 October the Iraqi Defence Ministry indicated that the ISF operation to recapture the Hawijah area was completed. This followed a relatively swift military operation which began on 20 September and which resulted in ISF units recapturing some border positions previously held by Kurdish forces. As noted below, further IS attacks were recorded after 08 October, however there were no large-scale complex attacks which threatened ISF positions. **TRITON COMMENT:** Similar to Tal Afar, the Hawijah operation appears to have been conducted against relatively poor quality militants, with only sporadic instances of significant resistance, including multiple VBIED attacks, temporarily blocking the southern approaches to Hawijah. Unlike in Tal Afar, where a group of militants carried out a sustained assault against ISF units north-west of the town, there were no sustained large-scale clashes. Given numerous recorded instances of disaffection among militants within Hawijah prior to the ISF operation, it is possible that poor morale and a lack of defensible positions led to the large-scale surrender or withdrawal of militants. Reports that large numbers surrendered to Kurdish forces, which did not take part in the operation, in order to avoid summary execution or death sentences following trial have not been verified. **COMMENT ENDS**

Militant activity remained broadly consistent with that recorded in September with multiple suicide attacks recorded in the Hawijah area, Tikrit and Samarra. Despite the number of suicide attacks, only three incidents resulted in civilian or security force casualties. Of these the most significant took place on 28 October when a suicide bomber functioned his device after being challenged by security forces near to a funeral for an Iraqi soldier in Mushahdah, Salah ad-Din province. **TRITON COMMENT:** The high number of PBIED attacks likely reflects ongoing clashes in the Hawijah area following the Gol declaration of victory on 08 October, as well as a dedicated attempt to infiltrate population centres in North Central Iraq. The relatively low casualties resulting from these attacks could indicate a heightened awareness among security forces given the Arbaeen period. It is also possible that the majority of suicide bombers deployed by IS were from other areas of Iraq, lacking local knowledge of target areas, and more readily identifiable by local security forces.

IS will likely continue to target population centres along the primary Baghdad – Baiji route as the group seeks to achieve a high profile and/or high casualty incident. Such attacks enable IS to demonstrate a continuing capability despite significant losses suffered in both Iraq and Syria. Following the recapture of Mosul, and the heavy casualties inflicted there, IS has largely reverted to IED attacks, including complex and individual suicide
attacks, in order to maintain pressure on security forces in areas where the group continues to operate. 

COMMENT ENDS

During the Hawijah Operation an incident took place on 01 October when an IED functioned against US Army unit killing a soldier and injuring another along a main route north of Tikrit in Salah ad-Din province. Reporting indicates that an EFP was used.

TRITON COMMENT: The incident was significant, and widely reported, due to the historical context of the transfer of IED technology, and EFPs and EFP construction methods in particular, between Iran and certain Shia militant groups during the 2005 – 2011 period. While it is possible that an Iranian backed PMU was responsible, as IS has reportedly not deployed EFPs against security forces in Iraq, such an overt confrontation with US forces would risk a wider confrontation, potentially leading to the withdrawal of US military support for ongoing ISF operations. It is also important to note that steel and not copper was used for the convex plate which formed the penetrator. It is possible that IS militants constructed an EFP utilising available resources in order simply to replicate a proven IED design and/or to implicate Iranian backed PMUs in an attack against US military personnel during a period of expanding Iranian influence within Iraq. COMMENT ENDS
WESTERN IRAQ

There was a slight increase in militant activity within Western Iraq compared with September, although more than a third of reported incidents were coalition air strikes.

An ISF operation to recapture the border town of Al Qaim and secure key towns and villages within Al Anbar province commenced on 26 October with a combination of Iraqi Army and PMU units participating. A concurrent operation is also being carried out by pro-Assad forces in Syria and aimed at recapturing the town of Al Bukamal and surrounding countryside in Deir ez-Zour province. TRITON COMMENT: The completion of both operations would effectively reduce a pocket of IS militants within the Iraq-Syria border area, though it is possible, given the relative swift tempo of recent ISF actions in Tal Afar and Hawijah, that the majority of militants will disperse into the hinterlands of western Iraq and south-western Syria.

Although several ISF and PMU forces have been deployed to Al Anbar province since the recapture of Mosul, an initial military plan to simultaneously carry out both the Hawijah and Al Anbar operations was deemed unfeasible given the level of planning and logistical support required. It is also likely that the objective of surrounding and destroying remaining IS militants within the Al Qaim – Rawa area was only partially achieved, with reports that numbers of IS militants withdrew across the border to Syria. Given the size of the border region, and the limited advances by pro-Assad forces in Deir ez- Zour province, it is highly likely that large number of militants have been able to evade ISF units in western Al Anbar province. It remains unclear, however, whether these militants
will regroup and whether they will be committed to the defence of remaining IS territory in Deir-ez Zour province, or if they will infiltrate the porous border to target ISF units in western Al Anbar. **COMMENT ENDS**

Elsewhere in Al Anbar province militants equipped with PBIEDs targeted residences in Kasarra and Saridya with small arms fire, killing two people and injuring six others. Security forces shot and killed all of the would-be suicide bombers before they could function their devices. A similar attack took place in Tash and Abu Aljir, with all six would-be suicide bombers killed before they could access the target area. West of Ramadi a militant equipped with a PBIED was killed near to an Iraqi Army (IA) headquarters position.

On 11 October, a 12-year-old suicide bomber killed 12 people and injured 22 others at a café near to the main bridge in Hit, whilst a second suicide bomber was killed by responding security forces in the area. The attack took place following an attempted coordinated suicide attack on 01 October in which four militants prematurely functioned their devices after being discovered by an ISF unit in or near Hit. **TRITON COMMENT:** The relative diffusion of attempted suicide attacks across the population centres of Al Anbar province is likely aimed at exploiting relatively weaker ISF units providing security to areas outside of current Iraqi areas of military operation in the west of the province. The limited efficacy of these attacks may reflect both an increased awareness among ISF of the threat of IS activity in urban areas, as well as the poor quality of the militants themselves. The successful attack recorded in Hit on 11 October may have been facilitated by the young age of the suicide bomber, with older militants more likely to be challenged by local security forces. **COMMENT ENDS**
BAGHDAD

The number of IED attacks recorded in Baghdad remained consistent with September, with effective attacks primarily targeting civilians within Baghdad City. A successful VBIED attack was also recorded in Husseiniyah directly north of Baghdad which represents a continued decrease and the lowest number of attacks since March.

There were no suicide attacks within Baghdad, with the last recorded on 22 August when security forces killed two militants equipped with PBIEDs in Alsklat Street in west Abu Ghraib. TRITON COMMENT: While Baghdad remains a key target for IS, the group has likely diverted focus from the capital in order to confront security forces in areas where territory is under threat such as western Al Anbar province, Hawijah in Kirkuk province and in the Hamrin, Makhoul and Mutabijah areas of Diyala and Salah ad-Din provinces respectively. The group has therefore deployed suicide bombers against security forces as part of wider engagements, though local cells operating outside the capital likely continue to pose a significant threat. Increased security measures within Baghdad, such as the implementation of extensive vehicle checkpoints, prior to the Shia religious periods of Ashura and Arbaeen may also have reduced the viability of deploying VBIEDs within the capital. COMMENT ENDS
Security forces also conducted a series of clearing operations outside of Baghdad leading to the location of several caches in the Mahmudi area of Zadain (see right) and in unspecified areas north of the capital.
CENTRAL-SOUTH IRAQ

There was a slight decrease in the number of IED attacks within the area, with no vehicle borne devices recorded. Incidents were focused around Jurf as Saker and Yusufiyah, Babil province.

Two incidents were likely related to escalating tensions between local Arab and Kurdish communities following the Kurdish Independence Referendum on 25 September and ISF military operations within the KRG. On 13 October, an IED was deployed during an attack on a Korek Telecom building in the Bata area of north Hillah. While the device did not cause casualties, unidentified militants entered the building, kidnapping two engineers and five other civilians. A second attack took place on 16 October when an IED functioned damaging a telecommunications tower belonging to the Kurdish Al Hakim company. **TRITON COMMENT:** Although the Gol has reaffirmed its commitment to safeguarding Kurdish communities within Iraq, pre-existing local grievances as well as the historical importance of Jurf as Sakhr as a transit route for Shia Pilgrims during Ashura, has led to a consistent level of IED incidents over the previous six-month period.

Wider instances of sectarian tensions within Babil province have also likely been stoked by the October conflict between the ISF and Kurdish security forces. Although this has primarily affected Sunni Arab communities, it is possible that Kurdish companies were targeted in direct response to the deterioration of Gol and KRG relations. Further such attacks are possible, particularly as such ethnic and tribal-based violence has become normalised to a degree as some Sunni communities within Babil province have been pressured either to leave or to avoid...
returning to the area following internal displacement. COMMENT ENDS
ISRAEL - PALESTINE

On 27 October, an IED attached to a vehicle functioned injuring Tawfiq Abu Na’im, Secretary General of the Hamas Ministry of the Interior, as he left a mosque in the Nuseirat Refugee Camp in Gaza. **TRITON COMMENT:** Abu Na’im is a founding member of the military wing of Hamas within Gaza and was made responsible for internal security within the area in December 2015. It is possible that IS-inspired militants operating within Gaza were responsible for the attempted assassination in retaliation for recent Hamas internal security operations aimed at disrupting militant activity. Such attacks are likely to increase as Hamas seeks an improvement in relations with Egypt which is currently conducting counter-terrorism operations in northern Sinai against Wilayat Sinai (WS). **COMMENT ENDS**

SAUDI ARABIA

On 05 October, a suicide bomber functioned his device after being confronted by security forces in Al Rimal district, Riyadh. Other security force raids targeted two safe houses in Al Rimal and Nimar districts and a suspected suicide belt and explosives manufacturing facility in the Al Ghannamiya area of Al Ha’ir in south Riyadh.

Small arms ammunition, two AK-variant rifles, IED components, containers of distilled water, inflammable liquids and iron moulds were recovered. **TRITON COMMENT:** Saudi security forces have previously carried out raids on suspected explosives manufacturing facilities within Jeddah and disrupted suspected IS cells within Riyadh during the 2017 period. The most recent took place on 11 September when two Yemeni nationals were detained suspected of planning a suicide attack at two defence ministry buildings in Riyadh. PBIED components, including six main charges were recovered. IS has maintained wilayahs in Najd and Hejaz in central and western Saudi Arabia since 2014 and while attacks have largely focused upon Shia religious and civilian targets in Eastern Province, the group has also maintained a presence within Riyadh. **COMMENT ENDS**

SYRIA
On 08 October, Turkish military units deployed to Idlib province as part of a wider ‘de-escalation’ operation. Further units were deployed on 23 and 24 October in order to create a buffer zone along the Idlib border with the Kurdish Afrin Canton in northern Aleppo province. Reporting indicates that the Hayyat Tahrir Al Sham (HTS) militant group facilitated the movement of Turkish military personnel within northern Idlib. **TRITON COMMENT:** The intervention by the Turkish military in Idlib and Aleppo provinces is aimed at containing Kurdish forces within the Afrin Canton. It has also been undertaken during the same period as a renewed ceasefire and peace talk initiative by the Russian Federation. Renewed talks are scheduled to take place on 18 November in Sochi as part of the ongoing Astana Peace Process, with a wide spectrum of political and armed groups reportedly invited. It is possible that the wider de-escalation within northern Syria is planned to coincide with these talks, with the passive stance of HTS within Idlib a possible indicator of their participation in, or at least adherence to, the process. Any substantive talks including HTS would prove a significant shift and would likely preclude key western states, particularly the US, from becoming fully engaged. **COMMENT ENDS**

**ADIM Strike in Deir ez-Zour Province**

Islamic State (IS) released a video showing a UAV air-dropped improvised munition (ADIM) strike against an ammunition depot located within a stadium directly south-west of Deir ez-Zour. The ADIM appears to function initiating sympathetic explosions among storage boxes pictured along the circumference of the stadium.

**TRITON COMMENT:** While IS has consistently used UAV ADIMs within Iraq and Syria, the group has disseminated fewer videos or screenshots of successful attacks following the recapture of Mosul in Iraq, and the loss of Raqqah and Deir ez-Zour in Syria. It is highly likely that IS possesses onboard video capability on all of the UAVs as this is also a standard feature for most commercially available devices, such as the DJI Phantom product line. The relative decline in the number of IS UAV ADIM strikes recorded through IS media channels may indicate their relative ineffectiveness, particularly given the large-scale offensives by both the SDF and pro-Assad forces in Raqqah and Deir ez-Zour respectively. Both the size of the Sports Stadium, and its apparent use for stocking large amounts of arms and/or ammunition, make it a distinct target, and reflect a poor understanding of the continued UAV ADIM threat by local pro-Assad forces, rather than any increase in the efficacy in either the UAVs or ADIMs used by IS. **COMMENT ENDS**

**YEMEN**

There was an increase in the number of IED attacks compared with September, with Al Qaeda in the Arabian
Peninsula (AQAP) suspected to have carried out the majority. Incidents were largely focused in southern Yemen with security forces, including Hizam paramilitary members, the primary target. The most significant attack took place on 30 October when a suicide bomber on a motorcycle targeted a khat market within the Dar Saad.

**TRITON COMMENT:** The previous suicide attack recorded in Aden took place on 28 April when security forces shot and killed a would-be suicide bomber near to the entrance to a military camp in the Mansoura district. While no group claimed responsibility for the 30 October attack, both AQAP and IS have previously claimed similar attacks, with IS carrying out the majority due to their expansion within Aden from October 2015 onwards.

**COMMENT ENDS**
As demonstrated in the chart, IED incidents in Colombia have dramatically escalated during October. This may be due to a combination of enhanced reporting, encroaching militant groups and a reaction to coca eradication campaigns.

In Mexico, police forces also located an intended ABIED incorporating a "potato bomb"-type IED. Imagery and comment on the device is available in the relevant summary.
IED activity in Colombia has increased significantly, from 22 in September to 84 in October. The map right denotes locations per week where incidents have been reported. To see a more detailed breakdown of the specific incidents please refer to the TRITON Weekly reports. As illustrated, IEDs have been located primarily across the south west and central sections of Colombia, encompassing Caqueta, Guaviare, Huila, Meta, Narino, Putumayo, Tolima and Valle del Cauca departments. There have also been clusters in Antioquia, Arauca, Caldas and Norte de Santander departments.

In terms of cache finds, four records are primarily of note due to the high number of IEDs and IED materials recovered. The first on 04 October contained 44 IEDs and 84kg of ANFO in El Rosal, Putumayo, 200 IEDs and 800m of detonating cord were recovered on 09 October in Villagarzon, Putumayo, on 15 October 200 IEDs contained in PVC tubes with black powder, urea, fragmentation enhancements (nails, nuts and ‘washers’) along with 400kg of ANFO and nine grenades from Puerto Caicedo, Putumayo and on 29 October 114 IEDs were located in Granadina, Cauca.

The highest areas of IED activity were Narino and Meta departments, constituting almost half of all events. Across the country, 11 IEDs were identified as VO while seven were CW, three RC and only one reported as command initiated. Device descriptions are often limited in Colombia but this month the armed forces revealed that at least six devices were deployed to specifically target forces involved with coca clearance.

TRITON COMMENT: The dramatic escalation witnessed over the past month has several entwined causes including greater reporting of security force operations to render safe legacy devices and increasing hostility against security personnel. The latter may stem from flashpoints including the Tumaco incident on 05 October, where police opened fire on unarmed protesters killing at least seven and injuring 20 others. Not only has this led to localised protests and clashes but also inspired students to throw IEDs at security forces in Medellin on 11 October. Rural populations in areas previously controlled by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have objected to the killing of local community leaders and have fought back against forced eradication of coca.

Coca has been a popular crop for farmers in Colombia due to its price and potential to grow in poor soil at an accelerated rate. Whilst the eradication efforts themselves are necessary, the Colombian government has failed to adhere to a crop substitution programme designed to help farmers sustainably switch their farming methods to suit other crops such as coffee. Farmers have claimed that they have not been allowed the 60 days agreed to remove the coca plants, received the agricultural assistance promised nor monetary compensation for their losses, which is crucial as these areas tend to be high in poverty. These grievances will likely bring both sides into further conflict until the system becomes efficient, running the risk of increasing support for militant groups who provide protection for coca growers in areas where local government and the rule of law find it difficult to operate.

In addition, Armed groups continue to encroach into former FARC territories and these groups may be employing greater violence and intimidation to cement their control over the civilian population. FARC dissidents have also been evidenced returning to their former trades and may be under pressure to exploit their profile in the media to
command their territories. Where the drugs trade and armed groups have collided, it was always probable that
the emplacement of IEDs would increase as they can be cheap to manufacture, materials easily acquirable on
the black market and a wealth of knowledge on their manufacture retained due to the long history of the
Colombian insurgency. It is likely that such devices will continue to be used defensively - to protect farmland –
and offensively to target advancing security forces, whose movements are presumably being watched and
relayed. **COMMENT ENDS**

**MEXICO**

On 20 October, the Federal Police intercepted a stolen vehicle, detained four suspected cartel members and
recovered an RC initiated ABIED on the Salamanca-Morelia highway in Valtierrilla, Guanajuato state. The device
featured a 3DR Solo Quadcopter and probable main charge wrapped in silver tape and connected by a white
cord to the drone. A yellow wire can be seen protruding from the main charge, which was described as a potato
bomb.

![Recovered drone](image1.jpg)

Images of the recovered drone from Twitter.

**TRITON COMMENT:** Cartels have used drones previously, with one reportedly crashing whilst carrying
methamphetamine in San Ysidro Port of Entry in 2015. Recent developments in Iraq and Syria, where the use of
UAVs with air-dropped IEDs have demonstrated the effectiveness of such devices - to inflict casualties against
remote targets, maximise fear amongst opposing forces and gain notoriety - may have encouraged the cartels to
adopt similar tactics. It is possible that clashes between Los Zetas, the Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation
cartels may also be driving technological advances.

The drone was a probable 3DR Solo Quadcopter. This model claims to fly at over 55mph, dependant on carried
weight, which could be sufficient to follow a vehicle provided it is within a half mile radius of the controller. The
IED itself has been described as a ‘potato bomb’, which has been commonly evidenced in neighbouring
Colombia. It is possible that the composition of the devices could be similar and might include HME mixes based
on potassium chlorate, sulphur, aluminium powder or gunpowder. Reports stated that the device incorporated an
RC switch, indicating that the drone may have been intended for use in a kamikaze manner or programmed to drop the IED on command. **COMMENT ENDS**
SOUTH ASIA

SUMMARY

IED related incidents fell compared to recorded incidents during the same period last year.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban announced Operation Mansouri, the name given to their spring offensive, in April 2017. Various news outlets allude to the Taliban not letting up with attacks during the summer months and into the winter months.

However, the reduction in IED incidents may indicate the group is reducing IED-related attacks during the winter following the increased attacks since the announcement in April.

Terrorist attacks against security forces continue in Afghanistan. The majority of devices continue to be roadside/emplaced IEDs with PBIEDs continuing to be largely encountered in Kabul province. 74 IEDs were recovered as part of a SF operation in Logar province explaining the large number of IEDs in the province.

AFGHANISTAN

CENTRAL AFGHANISTAN

The most significant attack to take place in Central Afghanistan occurred on 20 October where at least 41 people were killed and 61 wounded when a suicide bomber detonated his device during evening prayer within the Imam Zaman Mosque in Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul, a predominantly Shia Hazara neighbourhood. Islamic State (IS) militants claimed responsibility for the attack. TRITON COMMENT: The attack happened hours after an attack on
the Khwajagan mosque in the Daleena district of Ghor province. Whether the attacks were linked is not known.

COMMENT ENDS

 Civilians were targeted in Wazir Akbar Khan, Kabul city in another high-profile attack on 31 October. The attacked was carried out by a boy, believed to be between 12-13 years old, and targeted people as they were leaving the Ministry of Defence building killing at least five people and injuring 22 with a PBIED. IS claimed responsibility for the attack. TRITON COMMENT: The attack occurred in the diplomatic ‘green zone’ of the city where many embassies are located. The area supposedly has heightened security. However, the attack indicates security measures may be more lenient than stated. In particular IS are likely aware that children tend not to raise suspicion. COMMENT ENDS

 Security forces continue to be targeted in central Afghanistan, particularly in Kabul, with a significant attack on SF taking place on 21 October in the Military University. 15 cadets were killed and four injured when a PBIED functioned near the bus they were travelling in.

 TRITON COMMENT: The university is located in Qargha district which houses various other Afghan Armed Forces educational institutes. This attack may indicate an evident lack of security in the area to protect students and hence the future security forces of Afghanistan. COMMENT ENDS

 However, security forces foiled several would-be terrorist attacks in Kabul this month. On 14 October police shot the driver of an explosive laden truck at a checkpoint in Khusal Khan in Kabul city. The intended target was believed to be the city centre or a government facility. SF also arrested three would-be suicide attackers and recovered two VBIEDs in two separate instances in Kabul.

 NORTH EAST AFGHANISTAN

 The North-Eastern region of Afghanistan continues to experience relatively low number of IED incidents with two recorded attacks taking place in Takhar province and Baghlan province on 22 October and 30 October, respectively.

 NORTH WEST AFGHANISTAN

 There were two recorded incidents in North West Afghanistan. On 02 October, an RCIED functioned killing two civilians and on 04 October an IED functioned at a police headquarters with no recorded casualties. Both took place in Faryab province. Identical to last month, the militants carried out two attacks, one targeting civilians and another targeting security forces.

 EASTERN AFGHANISTAN

 Three attacks took place this month in East Afghanistan with two taking place in Nangarhar province and one in Laghman province, unchanged from the previous month. Security forces were targeted in a roadside IED attack on 06 October in Olah area, Laghman province killing three soldiers. On 14 October three civilians were killed in
Haska Mena, Nangarhar province when their vehicle hit a roadside IED. Lastly, on 10 October seven Taliban militants were killed and nine injured in Allingar, Nangarhar province, when the IED they were planting functioned.

SOUTH EAST AFGHANISTAN

Security forces were once again the main target of attacks this month in South Eastern Afghanistan. Most significantly was a complex attack on the police headquarters and training centre in Gardez, Paktia province on 16 October. 21 police officers and 20 civilians were killed, and 49 police officers and 110 civilians were injured in the attack. The attack was carried out using two VBIEDs, carrying a combined weight of 4000 kg of explosives, with another two vehicles being used to carry Taliban militants. On the same day, a second complex attack took place on the council building of Andar district, Ghazni province. At least 15 police officers and five civilians were killed, and a further 24 policemen and 10 civilians were injured when a Humvee VBIED functioned at the front of the council building. Following the explosion, Taliban insurgents entered the building.

WESTERN AFGHANISTAN

This month marked a noticeable increase in casualties from IED-related incidents in Western Afghanistan. All attacks carried out last month targeted security forces and while the number of attacks did not increase during this month, the most significant recorded attack took place on the civilian population with heavy casualties. The attack took place on 20 October when an IED, believed to be a PBIED, functioned in a Sunni mosque killing at least 30 in the Khwajagan mosque in Duleena, Ghor province. The intended target was the local commander from the anti-Taliban Jamiat party. Conflicting reports indicate the mosque to be a Shiite mosque. TRITON COMMENT: It is possible that the mosque is more accurately a Sunni/Sufi mosque and Taliban targeted the mosque to eliminate the anti-Taliban party commander but had not claimed responsibility given the relatively high civilian casualties with which they do not want to be associated. COMMENT ENDS

SOUTH WEST AFGHANISTAN

Militants once again targeted a security forces base in Kandahar province with Humvee SVBIEDs this month. Last month, militants functioned a Humvee VBIED to gain entry into a joint military base in Ma’ruf district, Kandahar province. On 19 October, the Taliban functioned two Humvee SVBIEDs followed by a group of militants during an attack on an Afghan National Army (ANA) in Maiwand district, Kandahar province. Taliban militants killed 43 soldiers but ultimately failed to take control of the base. TRITON COMMENT: Terrorist groups continue to use Humvee’s captured from Afghan forces to carry out attacks. The vehicles are likely used as VBIEDs given their additional protection from small arms fire should security forces attempt to stop the vehicle. Captured Afghan forces vehicles also provide a suitable disguise which allows militants to get into closer proximity of their target before functioning the device. COMMENT ENDS

Afghan National Police (ANP) uncovered a substantial cache of 45 IEDs during an operation in Nada li district, Helmand province on 24 October.
INDIA

The number of recorded IED-related incidents continues to decline in India. However Communist Party of India -Maoist (CPI-Maoist) were exclusively responsible for all attacks against security forces. On 03 October, EOD rendered safe a 5kg IED near a security forces camp in Chhattisgarh. A District Reserve Guard (DRG) was killed when an IED functioned in Dantewada district, Chhattisgarh.

Civilians were targeted in Chhattisgarh on two separate occasions. On 03 October security forces rendered safe two IEDs in Bijapur near a high school in Tondapara village. On 25 October CPI-Maoist militants functioned an IED in a market in Narayanpur district. There were no reported casualties or injuries and EOD rendered safe a secondary IED in the area. Security forces uncovered IEDs and explosive materials during various operations on 05, 13, 14, 15 and 26 October.

Unusually CPI-Maoist functioned an IED against a cell tower in Visakhapatnam, a sub-district of Andhra Pradesh, belonging to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) which disrupted communication systems in the area.

PAKISTAN

The number of IED-related incidents recorded increased from the previous month. The bulk of incidents occurred in Balochistan province, in contrast to last month where the majority took place in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

The majority of attacks targeted civilians, the most significant of which took place on 05 October when an IS militant functioned a PBIED at the entrance to a Sufi Pir Rakhel Shrah shrine killing at least 19 people and injuring 27 others in Jhal Magsi district, Balochistan province. On 04 October outside a hospital on Ring Road, Peshawar, FATA, an IED functioned injuring 20 civilians. Two militants and four IEDs were recovered as part of an operation in response to the attack. Abdul Razzaq, the leader of the Awami National Party (ANP) and his brother were killed when an IED planted in their vehicle functioned on 26 October in Harani district, Balochistan.
The most significant attack targeting security forces occurred on 18 October in Quetta when a SVBIED functioned against a police vehicle as it was travelling in a convoy. Six police officer were killed and 22 injured, including one civilian. **TRITON COMMENT:** No group claimed responsibility for the attack. However, it is a notable attack as the police force were protecting two trucks carrying Elite Force Jawans. In addition to the police escort, police officers were deployed along the route to provide extra security. It is possible the intended target were members of the Elite Force Jawans but the attacker failed to reach their target given the surrounding security. **COMMENT ENDS**

On 31 October, three Levies personnel were injured when an IED functioned in the Khar area, Bajaur Agency district in FATA. According to reports the IED was targeting a polio vaccination team.