



Suicide Bomb Attack at Afghan CIA Base

A suicide bomber somehow managed to gain entry to a CIA base in eastern Afghanistan on December 30 and detonated explosives that killed at least eight Americans. This is thought to represent the deadliest single attack on U.S. intelligence personnel during the war in Afghanistan and one of the worst attacks ever suffered by the CIA.



The targeted facility is known as Forward Operating Base Chapman and is located in the eastern Afghan province of Khost. This area borders North Waziristan, the part of Pakistan where al-Qaeda's home base is believed to be located.

According to a *Washington Post* [story](#) on December 31, U.S. government officials report that eight other people were wounded, several seriously. U.S. sources confirmed that all the dead and injured were civilians, and said they thought all or most were CIA employees or contractors. Additionally, sources mentioned that at least one Afghan civilian was killed in the attack.

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Details are vague at the moment, though it is possible this attack has killed more U.S. intelligence officers than have died during the previous eight years of conflict in Afghanistan. Prior to this attack, the CIA had admitted to four officers being killed in Afghanistan.

One U.S. official stated that the suicide bombing took place in the base's fitness center, but how the bomber infiltrated the heavily guarded U.S. post, which is an operations and surveillance center for the CIA, remains unknown. The Associated Press reported that the Taliban has taken responsibility for the bombing, with a Taliban spokesman claiming the perpetrator was "an Afghan National Army officer wearing a suicide vest."

Neither U.S. nor Afghan officials could confirm if this accurately described the bomber, though a U.S. military official speaking anonymously did say that Afghan national security forces are stationed at the base. Acknowledging the eight civilian deaths from the bombing, State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said, "We mourn the loss of life in this attack."

U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan during 2009 have hit 310, the highest single-year total since the war began. The number of U.S. troops killed since December 1 stands at 12. The CIA has so far declined to officially comment on the attack because relatives of the deceased have yet to be notified.

"It is the nightmare we've been anticipating since we went into Afghanistan and Iraq," said John E. McLaughlin, a former CIA deputy director who now serves on a board that aids the children of slain CIA officers. "Our people are often out on the front line, without adequate force protection, and they put their lives quite literally in jeopardy."

One former senior CIA official stated this is the worst one-day death toll for the agency since eight officers were killed during the 1983 attack on the U.S. embassy in Beirut. "I know that the American



Written by [Steven J. DuBord](#) on December 31, 2009

people will appreciate their sacrifice. I pray that the government they serve does the same," the official said, requesting anonymity since the agency has yet to acknowledge the casualties.

But should the blood of American military and intelligence personnel really be sacrificed in Afghanistan to sustain a corrupt regime that is openly allied with the radical Islamic regime in Iran? The best way for the government and the country to recognize and support their service would be to bring them home as soon as possible in the New Year of 2010 — and to never again send them to war except when absolutely necessary to defend our own country and freedom.



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