



The London Free Press NEWS



The Next London. You're Invited!

News

- Photo radar may return
- Bush unveils space vision
- Prank caused Howlett's stress
- Police probe disappearance of cash in donated appliance
- Mars rover ready to roll
- Power alarm sounded
- Police seize \$914,000 in pot from Glanworth-area home
- Only paperwork standing in way of Fulkerson's return
- Stronach expected to run for Conservative leadership
- Alliance MP sees no future within new party
- NDP courts Sheila Copps
- Chief obsessed, opponent says
- Frozen woman recovers, thanks 'guardian angels'
- Aboriginal student discovers artifacts
- Palestinian mother of 2 latest bomber
- 9/11 memorial design changes win approval
- Phallic snow figures turning off residents
- Cost of JLC to drive up city's taxes
- Oxygen line cut at St. Joe's
- Bidding farewell
- Development fund to be used for new ice pads
- Around the Region
- Influenza situation said to be improving
- Rotary Day of Giving set Jan. 31
- Deep freeze fills ditches

Select a guide: Search for: Go

RCMP cruisers to patrol with radiation detectors

Dirty bomb detectors are intended to counter fears of a possible terrorist attack on sites in Ottawa.

JIM BRONSKILL, CP

2004-01-15 03:31:04

OTTAWA -- As many as 40 RCMP cruisers patrolling the capital will be fitted with "dirty bomb" detectors amid rising fears of a terrorist strike involving radiological weapons. The system is intended to provide early warning of a pending attack, giving police a chance to locate a deadly device before it can be detonated near Parliament Hill or another prominent Ottawa site.



"When the radiation background level rises above normal, an alarm will sound," says a description of the detection system published by the Mounties.

"This will allow for immediate action by police and other emergency personnel."

The RCMP will advise federal officials on installation of the detection technology in the patrol cars and train officers to use the units.

The vehicles are considered an ideal spot for the devices in order to ensure widespread monitoring of potentially vulnerable landmarks in the capital area.

The project underscores the degree of concern in federal security circles about the possibility of an attack involving radiological materials in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

Officials are particularly concerned about a so-called dirty bomb packed with conventional explosives such as dynamite to scatter radioactive material.

The initial blast can kill or maim bystanders, while the radioactive fallout may claim more victims. In addition, the resulting contamination would place the area off-limits to people for lengthy periods, causing panic and wreaking economic havoc.

A dirty bomb could be made from a softball-sized amount of radioactive material pilfered from a medical laboratory, industrial operation or nuclear-fuel disposal site.

Documents discovered in the Afghan city of Herat early last year indicated



Young males target of stalker

Premier defends costs of Blair adviser's visit

Pot called 'serious issue'

RCMP cruisers to patrol with radiation detectors

Duck knew where to go in seeking help

Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network may have successfully assembled a dirty bomb.

The new detection units will include radiation sensors that work in tandem with global positioning technology, cellular communication and mapping devices to report radiation readings to a central monitoring post.

A prototype of the system was unveiled recently at RCMP headquarters.

The initiative, funded through the federal anti-terrorism budget, is a collaboration between the Mounties, the Health Department's radiation protection bureau, the Geological Survey of Canada and private industry.

The project is part of the federal science community's effort to beef up chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear counter-terrorism preparedness, known as the CBRN Research & Technology Initiative, or CRTI.

A CRTI summary of the project warns the psychological impact of a dirty bomb attack on a Canadian city could be severe.

"Significant radiological resources could be acquired by terrorists through clandestine theft or low-level military operations and moved, possibly undetected, to urban population areas or to targets of high symbolic value."

Such targets in the national capital region might include high-profile sites such as the Parliament buildings, the Supreme Court of Canada or the U.S. Embassy.



Copyright © The London Free Press 2001,2002,2003

Sections:

News | Sports | Business | Today | Opinion | Weekly Sections | Classifieds

Important Links:

Place an Ad | Subscribe | Become a Carrier | Email Directory | Customer Service
Comments | Terms and Conditions | Privacy Statement

