

Beat: News

U.S. man arrested over attempted car bombing at Kansas airport

-, 13.12.2013, 22:14 Time

USPA News - A Kansas man was arrested and charged Friday in connection with an alleged suicide terror plot to drive a van full of explosives into a terminal at the the state's largest and busiest airport, federal authorities said. Terry Lee Loewen, 58, of Wichita, Kansas, was arrested early Friday morning as part of a six-month undercover FBI operation in which Loewen believed the van he was attempting to drive into a terminal at Wichita Mid-Continent Airport was loaded with explosives.

He was arrested shortly after trying to enter the airport's tarmac and was taken into custody without incident. "There was no breach of Mid-Continent's Airport's security," said U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom. "At no time was the safety of travelers or members of the public placed in jeopardy." The suspect, who works as an avionics technician, faces one count of attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, one count of attempting to damage property by means of an explosive and one count of attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization. The Wichita Joint Terrorism Task Force began investigating Loewen this summer after authorities say he made threats to commit "an act of violent jihad" against the United States. A federal affidavit claims he spent months planning to carry out Friday's attempted attack by studying the layout of the airport, taking photographs of access points, assisting in acquiring components for the car bomb, and discussing his commitment to trigger the device. "Lone wolves - home grown violent extremists remain a very serious threat to our nation's security," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Michael Kaste. "Today's arrest emphasizes the continual need for the public to remain vigilant as law enforcement relies on the public's assistance." Kansas Governor Sam Brownback praised federal, state, and local agencies for the investigation. "In our ongoing war on terrorism, the good guys won one today," he said. "A joint operation with federal, state, and local components captured a would-be terrorist before he could cause harm. This is the way your government should work - united and effective." If convicted, Loewen could face a maximum penalty of life in federal prison.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1637/us-man-arrested-over-attempted-car-bombing-at-kansas-airport.html>

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619