

Suspect in Boston Marathon Attack Charged with Using a Weapon of Mass Destruction

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US Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/ma/news/2013/April/TsarnaevComplaint.html>

WASHINGTON – Attorney General Eric Holder announced today that Dzhokhar A. Tsarnaev, 19, a U.S. citizen and resident of Cambridge, Mass., has been charged with using a weapon of mass destruction against persons and property at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, resulting in the death of three people and injuries to more than 200 people.

In a criminal complaint unsealed today in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Tsarnaev is specifically charged with one count of using and conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction (namely, an improvised explosive device or IED) against persons and property within the United States resulting in death, and one count of malicious destruction of property by means of an explosive device resulting in death. The statutory charges authorize a penalty, upon conviction, of death or imprisonment for life or any term of years. Tsarnaev had his initial court appearance today from his hospital room.

“Although our investigation is ongoing, today’s charges bring a successful end to a tragic week for the city of Boston, and for our country,” said Attorney General Eric Holder. “Our thoughts and prayers remain with each of the bombing victims and brave law enforcement professionals who lost their lives or suffered serious injuries as a result of this week’s senseless violence. Thanks to the valor of state and local police, the dedication of federal law enforcement and intelligence officials, and the vigilance of members of the public, we’ve once again shown that those who target innocent Americans and attempt to terrorize our cities will not escape from justice. We will hold those who are responsible for these heinous acts accountable to the fullest extent of the law.”

“The events of the past week underscore in stark terms the need for continued vigilance against terrorist threats both at home and abroad,” said John Carlin, Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security. “Friday’s arrest and today’s charges demonstrate what can be achieved by a collaborative, round-the-clock response involving law enforcement officers, intelligence professionals, prosecutors and the general public.”

“Today’s charges are the culmination of extraordinary law enforcement coordination and the tireless efforts of so many, including ordinary citizens who became heroes as they responded to the call for help in the hours and days following the Marathon tragedy,” said Carmen Ortiz, U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. “The impact of these crimes has been far-reaching, affecting a worldwide community that is looking for peace and justice. We hope that this prosecution will bring some small measure of comfort both to the public at large and to the victims and their families that justice will be served. While we will not be able to comment on

any possible communications between the suspect and law enforcement at this time, as a general rule, the government will always seek to elicit all the actionable intelligence and information we can from terrorist suspects taken into our custody.”

“The events of this week have moved at a breakneck pace. Yet the one consistent element of this investigation has been the collective efforts of our law enforcement and intelligence partners, working side-by-side, day and night, to identify and find those responsible for this attack, while keeping the public safe,” said Rick DesLauriers, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI’s Boston Division. “We are grateful to the American people for their assistance; we would not be successful without their trust and support. We will continue to investigate this matter with the greatest diligence and expediency, and we will do all that we can to protect those we serve.”

“Friday night’s capture of the suspect brought immediate relief to a community from a public safety viewpoint. However, much work remains and many questions require answers. Today’s charges represent another step on the long road toward justice for the victims of these crimes. On behalf of the citizens of this great Commonwealth, the Massachusetts State Police will continue to work diligently with our federal and local partners to bring this defendant to justice for his alleged acts and ensure the public’s safety,” said Colonel Timothy P. Alben, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police.

“Finding the alleged perpetrators of this savage act of terrorism four days after the attack on the City of Boston was a herculean effort and shows the true cooperation and dedication of the law enforcement community,” said Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis. “We were relentless in our pursuit of the suspects. The arrest of Tsarnaev and today’s charges should send a clear message to those who look to do us harm, the entire law enforcement community will go after you, find you and bring you to justice.”

This investigation was conducted by the FBI’s Boston Division, the Boston Police Department, the Massachusetts State Police, and member agencies of the Boston Joint Terrorism Task Force, which is comprised of more than 30 federal, state and local enforcement agencies, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement – Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority and others. In addition, the Watertown Police Department, the Cambridge Police Department, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Police Department, the Boston Fire Department, the National Guard and police, fire and emergency responders from across Massachusetts and New England played critical roles in the investigation and response.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys William Weinreb and Alope Chakravarty from the Anti-Terrorism and National Security Unit of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Massachusetts, with assistance from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.

The public is reminded that charges contained in an indictment or criminal complaint are merely allegations, and that defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.