

Virginia Man Indicted for Attempting to Provide Material Support to ISIS

Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs
Thursday, December 5, 2019

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/virginia-man-indicted-attempting-provide-material-support-isis>

The Department of Justice announced the indictment of Romeo Xavier Langhorne, 30, of Roanoke, Virginia, who has been charged with attempting to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, or ISIS, a designated foreign terrorist organization. Langhorne was arrested in Roanoke, Virginia, on Nov. 15, 2019, pursuant to a criminal complaint, and he has been ordered detained pending trial.

According to an affidavit supporting the criminal complaint, Langhorne has been a follower of ISIS since 2014 and has recently publicly reaffirmed his support for ISIS. Beginning in February 2019, Langhorne began communicating with an undercover employee (UCE) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) who was posing as someone working on behalf of ISIS. Langhorne told the UCE about his plans to create and disseminate an instructional video on making a deadly explosive – triacetone triperoxide, also known as “TATP” – and sought the UCE’s assistance in creating the video. Langhorne told the UCE that, in order to ensure that the video was not removed from the internet by service providers, the video should include disclaimers advising that it was intended for educational purposes. However, Langhorne informed the UCE that his true purpose in making and distributing the video was to arm ISIS adherents and others with knowledge of how to make TATP and use it for terrorism-related purposes in support of ISIS.

The FBI produced a video in accordance with Langhorne’s instructions, but – unbeknownst to Langhorne – it featured an inert chemical formula for TATP that would not produce an explosion. In November 2019, the UCE provided versions of the TATP video to Langhorne, and Langhorne distributed the video by uploading it to a video-sharing website.

An indictment is merely a charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty. If convicted, Langhorne faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison.

This case was investigated by the FBI, including agencies participating in the Northeast Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force. Investigative support was provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Border Patrol, and the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Laura Cofer Taylor and Trial Attorney D. Andrew Sigler of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section.