

Photos force bombing suspects' move

Experts evaluate the strategy of releasing their images to the public

By ADAM GELLER
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Moments after investigators went before television cameras to broadcast photos of two men in ball caps wanted for the Boston Marathon bombing, queries from viewers started cascading in — 300,000 hits a minute that overwhelmed the FBI's website.

It marked a key turning point in a search that, for all the intensity of its first 72 hours, had failed to locate the suspects.

While it's unclear how much the tips that resulted helped investigators zero in, experts say it instantly turned up already intense pressure on the two men to flee or almost certainly be recognized — increasing the chances they'd make mistakes that would lead to them being exposed.

Late Friday, the manhunt at last reached an end in the Boston suburb of Watertown, when police cornered 19-year-old suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, hunkered down inside a blood-spattered boat parked in the backyard of a three-bedroom house.

The decision that led to their quarry — whether to make photos of the suspects public — was something of a gamble, one that investigators had to weigh carefully.

"It was a good decision to put this out to the public ... and this would have been a calculated risk. But the in-



The Associated Press

Onlooker Bob Leonard's photo, taken approximately 10 minutes to 20 minutes before the Monday blasts, shows (second from left) Tamerlan Tsarnaev, later dubbed Suspect No. 1, and (third from left) Dzhokhar A. Tsarnaev, who became known as Suspect No. 2.

tent would have been to get these guys to change their pattern" of behavior, said Martin Reardon, who spent 21 years as an FBI agent and is now a vice president of security consultant The Soufan Group.

Releasing the photos greatly increased the odds the two men would be recognized and turned in, even as it significantly upped the chances they would try to vanish or commit more mayhem — exactly the scenario that played out.

"Clearly these guys were reacting and responding exactly as (law enforcement) predicted," said Robert Taylor, a criminologist at the University of Texas at Dallas who studies terrorism. "If you saw your face on TV and everywhere else as asso-

ciated with the bombing ... you would act irrationally, and that's exactly what they did."

After three days without being able to identify a suspect by name, investigators clearly made the decision to release the photos Thursday on the belief that, without doing so, the suspects might remain at large for weeks or months, with the chance to flee or to act again, said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor in Miami.

So with photos in hand, investigators made a choice deemed both necessary and prudent.

"And then the worst possible thing happens," Weinstein said. "They do actually begin their flight and then start to wreak vengeance on the whole

city of Boston."

Weinstein, Reardon and other experts had differing opinions on whether investigators' decision to release the photos was worth the cost exacted by the two men: the killing of a Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer, a carjacking, the shooting of another transit police officer and a block-by-block manhunt that led officials to shut down Boston and many of its surrounding suburbs.

But all agreed the photo release was pivotal in breaking open the case, because it instantly deprived suspected bombers Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, and his brother, Dzhokhar, of time, anonymity and options.

The chaos of the pur-

suit contrasted sharply with the sweeping, methodical investigation that began almost immediately after the Monday afternoon bombing that killed three and wounded more than 180, and was marked by officials' notable reluctance to disclose information.

In the hours and days after the bombing, dozens of investigators in white hooded suits carefully combed, cataloged and photographed evidence at the scene, even canvassing the roofs of nearby buildings to search for items blown into the air by the bomb's force.

Investigators gathered hours of videotape footage from security cameras that scanned the area around the bombing and appealed to the public to turn in their own video and photos, for help in determining the sequence of events and identifying a suspect.

They then used software to search for certain types of objects or people matching a height and weight description. The technology can also spot patterns that human analysts might not notice, such as a car that turns up in different places, said Gene Grindstaff, a scientist at Intergraph Corp., a company that makes video analysis software used by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

"Back in the days of 20 years ago, you were lucky if you had video

and it was probably of poor quality and it took a tremendous amount of enhancement. Today you have a completely different issue," Grindstaff said.

"Here's the first thing that the computer was told: Tell me if you can find the same people at both of those (bombing) locations," said Taylor, the criminologist.

Additional parameters would further narrow the search to, for example, look for people carrying backpacks.

"It's kind of like going through a series of strainers and filters," Taylor said.

But with the video winnowed down, the process required examination frame-by-frame, a laborious process done by an FBI unit called the Operational Technologies Division, said Joe DiZinno, former director of the FBI lab in Virginia.

By Thursday, once facial recognition software and agents had narrowed the search to images of two young men, investigators had to make a decision about how to proceed.

By Thursday afternoon, the brothers had to know their options were narrowing quickly. And then the FBI released their photos to millions of viewers across the city, and around the world via newspaper, television stations and websites.

The time to move was now.

UO professor sees lockdown firsthand

In Boston to give a lecture, she spent the day inside as police continued the manhunt

By JOSEPHINE WOOLINGTON
The Register-Guard

From the rooftop terrace of her rental home in downtown Boston, Jennifer Freyd could hear an unusual amount of birds chirping over the stillness of the city that had been locked down Friday.

Nearly businesses all were closed. Sirens and helicopters were audible.

Freyd, a trauma psychologist and University of Oregon professor, flew to Boston on Wednesday to give a lecture at Harvard University and attend a conference at Yale School of Medicine on Thursday related to her research on trauma and institutional betrayal.

Her visit, however, took an unusual turn due to the manhunt outside of Boston for a 19-year-old man suspected of being responsible for Monday's Boston Marathon bombings, along with his 26-year-

old brother, who died in a firefight with police early Friday.

Freyd woke up at 6 a.m. Friday morning and began making breakfast, unaware of what was happening in the Boston suburb of Watertown, about 8 miles away.

Around 7 a.m., Freyd said she received an automated phone call telling her to lock her doors and stay inside.

Her 19-year-old daughter, Sasha, is a Harvard student. She spent Thursday night with her mother, planning to take the subway to her 9 a.m. class.

Then Sasha checked her Harvard e-mail account and found more than 100 messages warning students what was going on, Freyd said.

While she was cooped inside her rental home all day, Freyd said, she started thinking about the week's events and how they relate to her trauma research after reading an ABC News



Jennifer Freyd

article on the topic.

"It's interesting," she said. "It's an interesting opportunity to use all of my work and research to try to understand what's been happening."

Freyd's research about trauma focuses on how institutions — such as government, military branches, churches, athletics teams and other groups — can add to the psychological harm victims of traumatic events feel if the institutions fail to support them.

She has authored several books and studies that found those who experience institutional betrayal have higher levels of depression, anxiety, sleep disruptions and sexual problems.

Those who knew the two suspects related to the bombings may experience some signs of institutional betrayal, she said.

"They were led to believe that these two young

men were very nice," she said. "And now, there's a strong realization that maybe that's not true."

Although she doesn't want to jump to any conclusions, Freyd said, runners and athletes also may experience some sort of betrayal.

Athletes who think of marathons as joyous, family events may not trust the event now.

"People might be experiencing a new normal, where they live in a state of heightened fear," she said. "They may feel they can't trust anyone."

Freyd said she was impressed with responses from local law enforcement and universities to the bombings. She pointed to automated messages sent to people in the Boston area and e-mails sent to Harvard students as an example.

Freyd has visited countries during an emergency or natural disaster, but has never been in a lockdown situation.

"I haven't seen anything quite like this," she said.

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