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Times Square Recruiting Station Bombing Causes Minor Damage

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 6, 2008 – No one was injured and only minor structural damage was reported after a bomb went off outside the Armed Forces Recruiting Station in New York City's Times Square early this morning.

The bomb went off at about 3:45 a.m., cracking the glass door, bending the door frame and shattering the large glass window in front of the station, said Army Capt. Charlie Jacquillard, the commander for the six Army recruiting stations in Manhattan.

The station, jointly manned by Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps recruiters, is possibly the most well-known recruiting station in the world.

"Our troops are dedicating to carrying out our mission despite obstacles or adversity," Jacquillard said. "We will demonstrate strength of character by remaining open despite this incident."

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, has begun assessing damage for immediate repair to get the station back to operation as soon as possible.

Times Square recruiting station commander, Army Sgt. 1st Class James Latella said he is very happy to be opening tomorrow to demonstrate to the public that his troops' mission will continue on as usual.

"Although not confirmed as a deliberate act against the U.S. Army or military in general, our soldiers remain committed to their recruiting mission and it's our intent to have the Times Square recruiting station reopened as soon as possible," said Army Col. Michael Negard, U.S Training and Doctrine Command chief of Public Affairs.

Incidents of harassment and vandalism against military recruiters – in the form of spitting, threatening words, graffiti and broken windows – are not uncommon since many recruiters reside in leased office buildings outside the confines of military installations and are susceptible to personal attacks, Air Force officials said.

“This is not the first time one of our offices has been used to demonstrate, but violence is not tolerated and law enforcement officials will find the perpetrator and prosecute,” said Brig. Gen. Suzanne M. Vautrinot, Air Force Recruiting Service commander. “I must commend Air Force officials for doing a superb job of responding, reporting and accounting for their people.”

Army officials said that while the incident is being investigated, all Army recruiting stations have been told to assume a higher level of awareness.

Civil and federal authorities are investigating the bombing.

(Air Force Recruiting Service and U.S. Army news releases were used in this report.)