BACKGROUND

This research highlight provides an overview of the arsons and bombings conducted by perpetrators affiliated with the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) between 1995 and 2010, and analyzes the characteristics of the individuals convicted of these crimes. Data are drawn from the U.S. Extremist Crime Database.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Between 1995 and 2010, 239 arson and bombing attacks were committed by ELF and ALF, with 55% attributed to ELF and 45% to ALF.
- Of these 239 incidents, 62% were bombings and 38% were arsons.
- 66% of incidents occurred in the West, 14% in the Midwest, 13% in the Northeast, and 7% in the South.
- Only 39% of incidents were isolated, or, not related to other incidents.
- One or more arrest was made in only 34% of incidents.
- The majority of offenders were male (74%), white (100%), not married (88%), and had at least some college education (69%).
- Some offenders had ties to only ALF (6%) or ELF (39%), but most of them (55%) were connected to both groups.
- 45% of the incidents were motivated by the need to protect animals and/or prevent testing with animals, 23% by anti-sprawl concerns, and 20% by anti-corporation/business development views.
This research was supported by the Resilient Systems Division of the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through Award Number 2009-ST-108-LR0003 made to the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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