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A Manual for RC-Driven VBIEDs, Inspired by Ansar al-Islam in Iraq

Source	<i>ye-forum</i>
Type	<i>Forum</i>
Affiliation	<i>Islamic Yemeni Forum</i>



➤ Site Description: *ye-forum* is an Islamic Yemeni forum in Arabic that contains various chat rooms and updates every day.

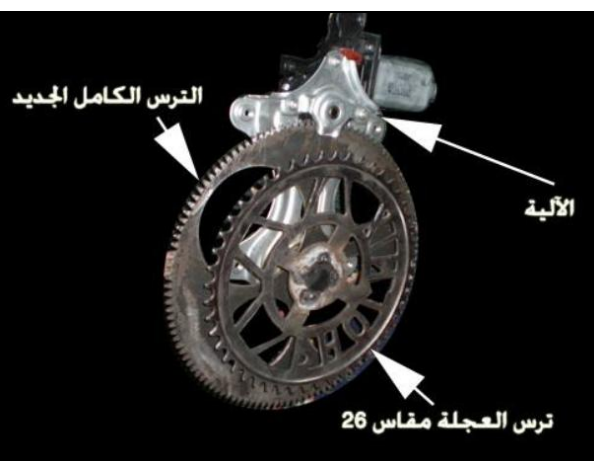
In late March, 2012, a jihadist sympathizer and Yemeni forum member uploaded a manual for designing RC-driven VBIEDs that was inspired by previously released video and magazine by the AQ affiliated Iraqi group, Ansar al-Islam (see TGA0075). According to the forum member, the manual was dedicated to the jihadist group Ansar al-Sharia, which operates primarily in southern Yemen.

The illustrated manual provides jihadists with technical knowledge for designing such VBIEDs as those depicted in the Ansar al-Islam video entitled "the Car of Terror". This is the first time we have identified such a comprehensive and detailed manual for guiding the construction of RC-driven VBIEDs.

The manual is divided into nine chapters and describes the structure of the unmanned VBIEDs, beginning with the mechanical system and gearbox, through to the electric motors and RC system, and ending with the transmitting camera and display system.



Car window regulator cannibalized for controlling the steering wheel



Bicycle derailleur – a part of the steering wheel control mechanism



Interestingly the manual was uploaded to a Yemeni forum after Al-Qaeda's main Internet forums had been offline for more than a week.

As indicated above, the manual was inspired by a previously released video originating from the Iraqi group Ansar al-Islam. The RC driven VBIED featured in the publication was presented as the group's greatest achievement.

The group claimed that such vehicles were operated effectively at ranges between 40m and 50m. The video offers a brief documentation of an RC-driven vehicle that was first operated in an open space and later in an urban environment.

**TG Note**

The development of a wireless system for controlling a vehicle is a complex operation, involving the integration of mechanical systems designed to control its movement with radio controlled electric motors. The operator is to control the entire vehicle with a video system fitted in the front of vehicle, which transmits images to the operator. Such a system is intended to provide the operator with a view of the vehicle's location and the route ahead.

This vehicle is difficult to control, as the video camera offers only a limited field of vision, which is insufficient for controlling a vehicle travelling in urban areas. In addition, the effective ranges of radio control systems are limited.

In order to serve as an effective weapon, such a vehicle must be both cunningly maneuvered and quickly driven, thus, suicide-driven VBIEDs are the more effective alternative. Although the official stated purpose for the deployment of RC devices is to utilize Mujahideen more effectively, the development of RC-driven VBIEDs may be an indication of a general shortage of recruits.



The Iraqi group Ansar al-Islam claimed that the RC-driven VBIED was conceived as early as 2005, and that it was first operated in 2007. Although the group asserted that RC VBIEDs have been mass-produced, no such vehicles have been documented in Iraq.

It is noteworthy that the usage of RC-driven and unmanned VBIEDs was documented by other insurgent/terrorist groups as early as the 1990s. On few occasions, the IRA reportedly attempted to launch radio controlled VBIEDs at British targets. Previously, the Basque separatist group ETA targeted the bases of Spanish forces by pushing VBIEDs downhill. The charges of these VBIEDs were rigged with impact-initiation systems that were designed to detonate upon impact with the perimeter wall. This tactic allowed ETA operatives to get VBIEDs near to intended targets without approaching the targets themselves.

As early as December 2002, the first RC-driven VBIEDs were documented in Latin America. At that time, five RC-driven VBIEDs were seized in the Colombian capital of Bogotá. The vehicles were prepared by the Columbian narco-terror group and were rigged with amateur model planes RC devices, servo motors. The operators were able to guide the vehicles to targets with tiny video cameras mounted on the front of the vehicles.



One of the RC-driven vehicles seized in Bogotá, Colombia, in December 2002



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