

James T. Thurman (Tom)

Personal History and Education

Retired: Professor, College of Justice and Safety; Fire, Arson and Explosion Investigation Program, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky (1998 – 2018) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (1997 – 1998)

Current: United States and International consulting on a variety of topics.

Education

MS, Forensic Science, George Washington University, Washington, DC, 1983

BA, Political Science with teaching certificate, Eastern Kentucky University, 1969

Specialized Education

National Association of Fire Investigators (NAFI)

Vehicle Fire, Arson & Explosion Investigation 2002

Fire Arson & Explosion Investigation 2003

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Washington, DC

Explosion and Fire Investigation, 1996

Aircraft Accident Investigation – Advanced, 1993

Aircraft Accident Investigation, 1991

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)/Sandia National Laboratory, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Investigation of Building Failure from Explosion, 1990

FBI (1977 – 1997)

New Agent Training; Bombing Investigations Coordinator, Bombing Crime Scene Investigations, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Crisis Management (response to the threat/use of nuclear weapons as an instrument in terrorism), and Domestic and International Terrorism,.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (1971 – 1977)

US Naval Explosive Ordnance School, Indian Head, Maryland

Chemical, Conventional, and Nuclear Weapons Training, 1971, 1973, 1976

US Army

Ordnance Officers Basic (1969)

Technical Escort Center, Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland

Chemicals/Hazardous Materials, 1969

Ammunition Officer's Course (1976)

Professional Experience

Summary of Professional History

Author and Consultant (1998 – Present)

Part-time Professor, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky (2016 - 2018)

Professor, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky (1998 - 2016)

Unit Chief, Bomb Data Center, FBI Laboratory, Washington, DC (1997 – 1998)

Unit Chief, Explosives Unit-BDC, FBI Laboratory, Washington, DC (1994 – 1997)

Supervisory Special Agent – Bomb Technician, Explosives and Hazardous Devices Examiner, FBI Laboratory, Washington, DC (1981 – 1994)

Special Agent – Bomb Technician, FBI Field Division, Charlotte, North Carolina (1978 – 1981)

Ordnance Officer-Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Captain U.S. Army (1972 - 1977)

Commanding Officer, Ordnance Company (Ammunition) Korea (1971)

Maintenance Platoon Commander, Ordnance Company (Ammunition) Korea (1971)

Escort Officer, U.S. Army Technical Escort Center, Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland (1969 - 1970)

Summary of Professional Achievements

Developed a one-a-kind academic program in explosives - bombing investigations at ECU

Expanded FBI Explosives Unit responsibilities in domestic and international investigations and training

For 14 years, forensically examined Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's), Explosives and the components used therein, in the FBI Laboratory

Played key role in investigations leading to the identification, prosecution, and conviction of numerous individuals and terrorists by successfully processing bombing crime scenes throughout the United States and numerous foreign countries. Such as, the 1983 & 1984 bombings of the American Embassy and the 1983 of the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon; Bombing of Pan American Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988; Mail bombings of U.S. District Judge Robert Vance and attorney Robert Robinson in 1989; Accident Investigation into the crash of TWA Flight 800, 1996.

Testified in federal & state courts as an expert in explosives and hazardous devices (improvised explosive devices)

Education, Training & Consulting Experience

Educator – Professor, Eastern Kentucky University 1998 – 2018, Developed the curriculum and taught in the unique academic program of Fire, Arson and Explosion Investigation.

Consultant – Consultant to numerous companies, 2000 – present, aircraft crash investigations, fire investigation, explosives, explosives detection technology, security and accountability of explosives, health care facilities security and assessment of critical infrastructure.

Curriculum Development – Lead consultant for the United States Department of State, Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program for the extensive revision of the three week Post Blast Investigation (PBI) school curriculum. Developed and taught the following courses at Eastern Kentucky University: Introduction into Fire, Arson & Explosion Investigations; Fire, Arson and Explosion Investigation I; Advanced Fire, Arson and Explosion Investigation; Fire, Arson and Explosion Investigation Case Preparation; Technical Writing for Emergency Services; Supervisory Management Principles for Public Safety Professionals; Principles of Emergency Services and Hazardous Materials and Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Trainer– United States Department of State, Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program, Washington, D.C., assessment and training of Advanced Explosives Incident Countermeasures course (EIC); Lead Instructor for the Post Blast Investigation (PBI) school; Lead Instructor for the Suicide Bomber Workshop SBW in Afghanistan; Instructor in Terrorist Crime Scene Investigation Forensics for the Prevention, Interdiction, Investigation for Anti-Terrorism (PIIAT) and the Terrorist Crime Scene Investigation (TCSI) for foreign law enforcement agencies. Foreign countries taught in include Australia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Republic of Georgia and Indonesia.

Trainer – FBI Academy, Quantico, Va. 2002, University of Virginia Instructor for International Training and Assistance Unit, in support of U.S. Department of State, Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program, conducting Terrorism Crime Scene Investigation (TCSI) training.

Publications

Computational Modeling and Forensics for Airplane Bombing, with a Case Study of Laptop Bombing of Daallo Airlines Flight 159 in February, 2016. 2018 Co-author with Goong Chen, Et Al. Published: Engineering Fracture Mechanics 2019.

Practical Bomb Scene Investigation, Third Edition, CRC Press, 2017, Boca Raton, FL.

Practical Bomb Scene Investigation, Second Edition, CRC Press, 2011, Boca Raton, FL.

Practical Bomb Scene Investigation, CRC Press 2006, Boca Raton, FL.

The Investigation of Explosion Scenes, The Detonator, International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators, July-August 2009

Performance of a Handheld Raman Spectrometer for Explosives Identification, 2009 and 2016

Wiley Encyclopedia of Forensic Science, The Investigation of Bombing Scenes, James T. Thurman, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, West Sussex, England, 2009

National Institute of Justice, Crime Scene Investigation: A Guide for Law Enforcement 2000

National Institute of Justice, A Guide for Explosion and Bombing Scene Investigation 2000

Awards and Recognition

Featured in a number of National Geographic, Discovery and History Channel and Public Broadcasting System (PBS) segments concerning bomb disposal and bombing crime scene investigation.

U.S. Attorney General's Award in 1990 and 1991 for exemplary performance regarding international & domestic terrorism investigations

Numerous letters of commendation from the Director of the FBI, FBI Division Directors, and others for work involving crime scene management, operational support, and international and domestic forensic investigations, 1983 – 1997

Professional Organizations

International Association of Bomb Technicians & Investigators (IABTI), 1985 – Present
Advisor Emeritus to the IABTI, 2021

Professional Certifications

Certified Hazardous Devices Examiner (1982), FBI Laboratory, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C.

Certified International Post Blast Investigator 2014, International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators