



# EgyptAir reveals more security gaps in Europe

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If — and that is a big if — terrorists are responsible for the downing of EgyptAir MS804 yesterday on its flight from Paris to Cairo, it reveals an enormous security gap in Europe that threatens flights to the United States. News outlets are [reporting](http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/national-international/Egyptair-Flight-From-Paris-to-Cairo-Vanishes-From-Radar-380056021.html) (<http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/national-international/Egyptair-Flight-From-Paris-to-Cairo-Vanishes-From-Radar-380056021.html>) that “the cause of the crash remains unclear, but infrared and multispectral imagers indicate strongly there was an explosion on the flight.” It would appear that terrorists in Paris placed a bomb on EgyptAir MS804 during its seven-hour stop at Charles de Gaulle (CDG) Airport. That implicates airport workers at CDG who are [now being investigated by French prosecutors](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/19/egyptair-flight-from-paris-to-cairo-disappears-from-radar/) (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/19/egyptair-flight-from-paris-to-cairo-disappears-from-radar/>).



[http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/RTSEZRR\\_egyptair-e1463692777703.jpg](http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/RTSEZRR_egyptair-e1463692777703.jpg)

An EgyptAir plane taxis on the tarmac at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris, France, May 19, 2016. REUTERS/Christian Hartmann.

With airport workers potentially being responsible for planting a bomb on the flight, it would make all flights in France and potentially Europe open to similar attacks, including flights to America. After the November Paris attack, I raised concerns with Europe's security screening as it related to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). I noted that the VWP essentially [outsourced our security making us reliant on European processes](https://www.aei.org/publication/what-we-do-and-still-dont-know-about-the-paris-attack/) (<https://www.aei.org/publication/what-we-do-and-still-dont-know-about-the-paris-attack/>).

My concern had two components: [stopping terrorists from reaching our shores who could then plan and execute attacks and stopping terrorists from boarding planes who could bring a bomb on the plane for detonation mid-flight](https://www.aei.org/publication/the-importance-of-fingerprints-to-americas-security/) (<https://www.aei.org/publication/the-importance-of-fingerprints-to-americas-security/>). If terrorists evaded French security screening to obtain jobs at CDG with access to airplanes, then why should we have any faith that their screening of passengers also isn't suspect?

It had been nearly 6.5 years since the last successful attempt to bomb an airplane departing Europe or America.

House Homeland Security Chairman Mike McCaul is also voicing [concern](http://www.politico.com/story/2016/05/mike-mccaul-egypt-air-crash-223379) (<http://www.politico.com/story/2016/05/mike-mccaul-egypt-air-crash-223379>) with a lack of security at overseas airports such as Cairo, where MS804 had previously taken off. Lawmakers have been pressuring the TSA to send screening equipment to overseas airports, but the agency has been slow to comply.

Keep in mind, an airplane originating in Europe or America has not carried a bomb on it since December 25, 2009, when [Northwest Airlines Flight 253](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northwest_Airlines_Flight_253) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northwest\\_Airlines\\_Flight\\_253](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northwest_Airlines_Flight_253)) from Amsterdam arrived in Detroit with Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. Abdulmutallab had hidden explosives in his underwear that he failed to detonate.

Other than that flight, the only other flight carrying a bomb was [American Airlines Flight 63 from CDG to Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001_failed_shoe_bomb_attempt) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001\\_failed\\_shoe\\_bomb\\_attempt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001_failed_shoe_bomb_attempt)) on December 22, 2001. AA63, diverted to Boston, carried Richard Reid who had hidden a bomb in his shoe that he couldn't ignite. That means before yesterday, terrorists had been able to get a bomb on just two flights out of tens of thousands of flights departing from Europe or America since September 11, 2001. It had been nearly 6.5 years since the last successful attempt to bomb an airplane departing Europe or America.

Yesterday's likely successful attack makes it clear Europe needs to do much more work to ensure that terrorists cannot board or plant bombs on airplanes. US intelligence entities and US Customs and Border Protection should insist European intelligence entities provide us with the data we need to keep terrorists off of and from getting access to planes headed to America, and the TSA has to expedite its support in beefing up security at foreign airports with nonstop flights to the US.

This article was found online at:

<http://www.aei.org/publication/egyptair-reveals-more-security-gaps-in-europe/>