

Israel tested out a "focused lethality" weapon that minimizes explosive damage to structures while inflicting catastrophic wounds on its victims.

Dr. Fosse was describing the effects of a U.S. "focused lethality" weapon that minimizes explosive damage to structures while inflicting catastrophic wounds on its victims. But where did the Israelis get this weapon? And was their widespread use in the attack on Gaza a field test for a new generation of explosives?

The specific weapon is called a Dense Inert Metal Explosive (DIME). In 2000, the U.S. Air Force teamed up with the University of California's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The weapon wraps high explosives with a tungsten alloy and other metals like cobalt, nickel, or iron in a carbon fiber/epoxy container. When the bomb explodes the container evaporates, and the tungsten turns into micro-shrapnel that is extremely lethal within a 13-foot radius. Tungsten is inert, so it doesn't react chemically with the explosive. While a non-inert metal like aluminum would increase the blast, tungsten actually contains the explosion to a limited area.

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