

ISIS militants fire crude chemical weapons on US troops in Iraq

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Islamic State militants are suspected of firing a shell loaded with a chemical agent during an attack on US and Iraqi troops in northern region, a Pentagon spokesman said.

The attack came from a powdered mustard agent delivered in a mortar or rocket shell and fired on US forces on Tuesday at the Qayyarah West air base near Mosul.

If confirmed, this will be the first recorded chemical attack on US troops since the ISIS captured parts of northern and western Iraq in 2014.

“There were no US casualties,” Navy Captain Jeff Davis said.

The air base, recaptured from ISIS in July, is a pivotal staging ground for a highly anticipated attack on Mosul.

Mustard, a banned chemical weapon, is relatively easy to manufacture and has a low incidence of lethality in all but extreme doses, such as the bombardment that former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein used on Kurdish civilians and Iranian soldiers in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The blistering agent is most dangerous when concocted in a gas form, but a Pentagon spokesman stated on Wednesday evening that tests performed indicated ISIS had delivered the “imprecise and crude” weapon in a powdered state.

“It was mustard agent in a powderized form” the same thing we have seen ISIS use to little effect many times in the past in both Syria and Iraq. No service members showed signs or symptoms of mustard exposure. This attack has not impacted our mission in any way, nor have we changed our security posture in the area around Qayyarah,” the spokesman said.

ISIS has used chemical munitions on a number of instances in Iraq and Syria.