Active Shooter Guidelines for Places of Mass Gathering

# Appendix A

## Current security context

In September 2014, the National Threat Assessment Centre raised the general terrorism threat level for Australia to HIGH. While this advice did not indicate a terrorist attack was imminent, an attack in Australia is now assessed as likely. Recent low-capability attacks and disrupted plots in Australia and overseas reinforce the elevated threat and provide cogent examples of the enduring terrorist threat.

The most significant threat to Australia comes from individuals and networks who have adopted the violent extremist ideologies associated with groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), al-Qa‘ida and its affiliates. These media-savvy groups are very effective at utilising social media avenues to recruit, motivate and radicalise. On-line terrorist propaganda continues to encourage supporters and sympathisers—particularly those based in Western countries—to conduct attacks at home. Those with overseas combat experience or training also pose a threat, both directly and by their potential to motivate others to act due to their enhanced extremist credibility and status.

The conflict in Syria and Iraq continues to resonate strongly with those who may be susceptible to the extremist rhetoric of these groups. Individuals who are attracted to the jihadist narrative but have not travelled to these conflict areas—especially those prevented from travelling— pose an enduring threat and may be inspired to conduct an onshore attack.

The threat of self-directed ‘lone actor’ attacks using firearms, home-made explosives or basic weapons presents a significant challenge for security and law enforcement agencies. Terrorist attacks in Canada, the United States, France, Denmark and Australia in late 2014 and early 2015 continue a trend towards this type of attack in the West.

Places of Mass Gathering and some Critical Infrastructure sectors - due to their symbolic nature, concentration of people and economic or social importance – will continue to be a particular focus for attacks by those holding violent extremist views. Personnel and premises readily identifiable with Australia’s counter-terrorism and defence policies may also be considered attractive targets, with recent low-capability attacks on uniformed police and military personnel in Australia and overseas underscoring this threat.

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation

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