



# THREAT ASSESSMENT

## Significance of June 2017 London and Melbourne terrorist attacks for New Zealand

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This assessment is based on information drawn from a variety of domestic and international resources and open source data. Threat definitions can be found on the last page.

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New Zealand

Terrorism - LOW

### Introduction

1. (R) This Threat Assessment follows on from TA 483 which looked at the implications for New Zealand of the 22 May Manchester terrorist attack. Two more recent terrorist attacks, one in London, UK and one in Melbourne, Australia, have prompted further queries as to the effect on New Zealand's domestic threat environment. This Threat Assessment outlines and assesses the implications of those terrorist attacks for New Zealand.
2. (R) On 3 June at about 10 pm (local time) a van mounted the footpath on London Bridge and hit pedestrians. Three men exited the vehicle and moved down Borough High Street in Central London, indiscriminately attacking and stabbing members of the public. MPS (Metropolitan Police Service) responded to the incident and shot dead the three attackers in Borough Market (about 300m from London Bridge). MPS also stated the attackers were wearing hoax suicide vests. Eight people were killed, and 48 injured in the attack.
3. (R) JTAC (Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre) has not altered the UK threat levels in the wake of the London attack, and the terrorism threat level for the UK remains at **SEVERE**; terrorist attack is assessed as highly likely. CTAG assesses the terrorism threat level for the UK remains at **HIGH**; *terrorist attack is assessed as very likely*.

4. (R) On 5 June, a gunman shot and killed a member of the public and took a woman hostage at an apartment complex in Brighton, Melbourne, Australia. s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The caller also contacted a media outlet stating 'this [hostage taking] is for IS, this is for al-Qa'ida'. The hostage taker, 29-year-old Yacqub Khayre, hid outside the building armed with a sawn-off shotgun and waited for police to arrive. As police assembled nearby Khayre fired at them, injuring three officers, before Police shot and killed Khayre.
5. (R) s6(a), s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] NTAC has not altered the general terrorism threat level for Australia, which remains **PROBABLE**. This threat level is comparable to elements of CTAG's **HIGH**; *terrorist attack is assessed as very likely*.
6. s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
7. (R) Both the London and Melbourne attacks have been claimed by ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Levant). The *Amaq* news agency stated soldiers of the caliphate had conducted the attacks. CTAG assesses it is likely that the attackers planned and resourced the attacks themselves and were not directed, or directly assisted, by ISIL core. ISIL has previously claimed attacks without having prior knowledge of them.

### New Zealand Impacts

8. (S FVEY) One New Zealander is believed to have been injured in the London attack. CTAG continues to judge that, of the terrorism threats facing New Zealanders, being caught in attacks offshore is amongst the more probable scenarios.
9. (S FVEY) CTAG is currently not aware of any direct link between the London and Melbourne attackers, or associates arrested in connection with the incidents, and New Zealand. s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. We do note that investigations and intelligence exploitation are ongoing and we cannot fully anticipate what these might reveal.

### Reaction of New Zealand-based Islamist extremists

10. (S FVEY) Previous terrorist attacks in the West, such as Manchester in May 2017, Westminster in March 2017, the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando in June 2016, and the 2015 Paris attacks, evoked a range of reactions from Islamist extremists in New Zealand, s6(a) [REDACTED]. Responses included anti-Western statements and rhetoric, generalised support for the attacks, and comments on perceived media bias in the way events were reported.
11. (S FVEY) s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

s6(a)

We will continue to monitor and assess actual reactions and responses as these develop.

### Attack methodology

12. (S FVEY) The methodologies used in both attacks have been promoted by ISIL in the latest issue of their English language magazine, *Rumiyah*. Potential attackers are advised to use larger load-bearing vehicles to run over people, and ideal targets include celebrations, parades, pedestrian congested streets and outdoor markets. The latest issue of *Rumiyah* also suggests rather than taking a large number of hostages in order to negotiate demands, the attacker should use the opportunity to 'create as much carnage and terror' as possible until the attacker's location is stormed and they are killed. CTAG assesses that in the Melbourne incident Khayre lured law enforcement to the apartment in order to intentionally target them.
13. (S FVEY) The use of easily obtainable weapons such as vehicles and knives has also been widely promoted in ISIL propaganda and been used with deadly effect in multiple attacks in the West. CTAG assesses that both the London and Melbourne attacks involved methodologies and targets that are reasonably easy to replicate in New Zealand. Vehicles and knives are easy to obtain and are assessed to be within the current capability of New Zealand-based Islamist extremists.
14. (S FVEY) While firearms are more difficult to obtain in New Zealand, CTAG assesses a hostage, or hostages, could be taken and held using sharp objects, imitation explosives or firearms, or hoax threats of the possession of explosives or firearms. Given the lack of technically sophisticated or prolonged preparation needed to carry out similar attacks to London and Melbourne, CTAG assesses that it is possible there could be little or no forewarning of an attack if one was conducted in New Zealand.

### Attack Targets and Timing

15. (R) Recent propaganda distributed by ISIL has also called for attacks during Ramadan (26 May - 24 June). Similar calls were issued in 2016 and it is possible they materially influenced decisions to conduct attacks during this time. Major attacks during Ramadan in 2016 included Orlando, Istanbul and Dhaka. While the exact influence of propaganda and specific terrorist incidents on an individual is difficult to measure, continued reinforcement of a particular weapon, tactic or target may increase the likelihood of these weapons and tactics being used – or particular targets being considered – for a terrorist attack.
16. (S FVEY) CTAG assesses it is likely the London attackers intentionally targeted the London Bridge and Borough Market areas on a busy Saturday night. The large numbers of pedestrians, tourists, and patrons at bars and restaurants in the central city location provided a concentrated and symbolic target. CTAG continues to assess that attacks are more likely to be carried out in an area the attacker is familiar with.
17. (S FVEY) The *Rumiyah* magazine has advocated the use of siege and hostage tactics in terrorist attacks in the West. This publication gave detailed guidance on luring potential victims into situations where they can be killed. The method of operation in Melbourne may well have been motivated by the ISIL propaganda. The

apartment offered the attacker the opportunity to lure law enforcement into a place advantageous to him.

**Threat Level**

18. (S FVEY) s6(a) [REDACTED] it is possible an attack could occur in New Zealand with little or no intelligence forewarning.
19. (R) The terrorism threat level for New Zealand remains **LOW**; *terrorist attack is assessed as possible, but is not expected.*
20. (R) CTAG continues to monitor all available domestic and international streams of threat intelligence and will advise accordingly on any revision of the terrorism threat level for New Zealand.

Prepared by s6(a) [REDACTED]

Reviewed by [REDACTED]

Released by s6(a) [REDACTED]

Intelligence cut off date: 09 June 2017

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## CONFIDENCE STATEMENT

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(R) This Threat Assessment draws on intelligence from a range of sources on whose reliability we comment in the main text where appropriate.

(R) Our judgements regarding the threat of terrorism have been drawn from classified and open source material, of which we are confident of the accuracy.

(R) The assessment is reliant upon an absence of threat reporting rather than positive reporting that threats are not extant. CTAG notes that activity could occur, or may have already occurred, that is not detected by available sources.

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s6(a)



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CTAG THREAT DEFINITIONS

Threat Level	Definition	Qualitative Statement
Negligible	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is assessed as very unlikely	Remote / Highly Unlikely
Very Low	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is assessed as unlikely.	Improbable / Unlikely
Low	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is assessed as possible, but is not expected.	Realistic Possibility
Medium	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is assessed as feasible and could well occur.	Probable / Likely
High	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is assessed as very likely.	Highly/Very Probable/Likely
Extreme	Terrorist attack, or violent criminal behaviour, or violent protest activity is expected imminently.	Almost Certain

- Unless otherwise stated, all threat levels in CTAG threat assessments reflect the country-specific threat level.
- Numbers of New Zealanders in overseas countries are provided by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade based on a voluntary registration system. The numbers do not include non-registered New Zealanders.
- Please advise CTAG of events or developments that relate to our threat warning function.