

*The following is summarised information from a Security Intelligence Report produced by the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) and the Combined Threat Assessment Group (CTAG). Where possible, excerpts of the original document have been used. Some details are withheld under section 6(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 as release would prejudice national security.*

## **Excerpt from New Zealand returning foreign terrorist fighters: a threat picture**

Report Date: **1 August 2018**

Report No: DMS6-15-532

### **Summary**

- NZSIS is aware of some New Zealand citizens who have travelled to Syria to engage with terrorist entities.
- NZSIS assesses there is a low likelihood that known New Zealand FTFs will actively or intentionally seek to return to New Zealand.
- Should a New Zealand FTF successfully return to New Zealand there are a range of threats those individuals may present to New Zealand's domestic security. The level of threat posed by a returnee is dependent on the individual's intent and capability to undertake threat-related activity.

### **Threat posed to New Zealand's national security by returning New Zealand foreign fighters**

- A foreign terrorist fighter is defined in this report as any New Zealand citizen who has travelled to Syria or Iraq to engage with terrorist entities in both combat and non-combat roles.
- In previous reporting, CTAG assessed that the level of threat posed by a returnee FTF is dependent on the individual's intent and capability. CTAG assesses these factors must be considered on an individual basis to determine the appropriate level of associated threat. While there is intelligence to indicate the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has encouraged returnee FTFs to conduct attacks upon their return, CTAG assesses a threat could take some time to manifest.
- New Zealand has remained largely unharmed by ISIL's global terrorist campaign. While some New Zealand persons are assessed to have pledged allegiance to ISIL's Caliph and ISIL propaganda has reached New Zealand's shores, we have yet to see a New Zealand person be inspired to undertake a large-scale domestic attack on ISIL's behalf.
- We assess this could be due to a number of factors, including New Zealand's small extremist population and New Zealand's perceived lack of prominence on the world stage. New Zealand is yet to experience a successful terrorist attack.

### **Methodology**

- There are a range of threats returning FTFs may present to New Zealand's domestic security, should they return to New Zealand. These threat vectors broadly fit into the categories defined below.

- **Attack:** intelligence indicates that a person
  - a) aspires to conduct, or expressed a desire to conduct a terrorist or violent extremist attack;
  - b) is preparing to conduct, is involved in, or is aware of a terrorist or violent extremist attack; or
  - c) has already conducted a terrorist or violent extremist attack.
- **Travel:** intelligence indicates a person has already travelled, is preparing to travel, or aspires to travel offshore to engage in or support a terrorist or violent extremist activity or group.
- **Radicalisation:** intelligence indicates a person has radicalised or encouraged, or intends to radicalise or encourage, others to engage in, facilitate or promote a terrorist or violent extremist activity or group.
- **Supporter:** intelligence indicates a person supports, promotes or sympathises with terrorist or violent extremist activities or groups.
- **Association:** intelligence indicates a person is an associate with a person of counter-terrorism interest or subject of a counter-terrorism investigation.