



THREAT ASSESSMENT

New Zealand Terrorism Threat Level remains at MEDIUM

Issued: 4 March 2020

99A/20/TA

DMS6-14-459

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New Zealand Terrorism - MEDIUM

(R) CTAG continually monitors the threat from terrorism in New Zealand, and is introducing an annual review of the New Zealand Terrorism Threat Level (TTL). This routine Threat Assessment (TA) does not preclude a change in New Zealand's TTL outside of the annual reporting cycle.

(R) This TA follows CTAG's TA 'New Zealand Terrorism Threat Level revised to MEDIUM', issued on 16 April 2019 [TA/154/19 refers] and should be read in conjunction with CTAG's TA 'The New Zealand terrorism threat environment', issued on 18 December 2019 [83/20/TA refers].

(S FVEY) CTAG has consulted with a range of agencies in preparing this TA and our assessments are informed by a range of credible sources. Assessment confidence levels are commented on in text as appropriate.

Summary

1. (R) CTAG continues to assess the New Zealand terrorism threat level (TTL) as **MEDIUM**; *terrorist attack is assessed as feasible and could well occur.*
2. (R) We assess New Zealand is unlikely the target of specific or current attack plans by individuals or groups who adhere to any extreme ideology. Nevertheless, we are aware of individuals who adhere to extreme right-wing (XRW) and Islamist extremist ideologies who probably have the intent, and almost certainly the capability, to conduct a terrorist attack in New Zealand. We further assess there is a realistic possibility individuals, especially lone actors, could mobilise to violence without coming to the attention of intelligence and law enforcement agencies.
3. s6(a)
[Redacted]
4. (R) We assess the threat environment remains elevated in New Zealand compared to the environment prior to 15 March, and New Zealand continues to be influenced by global trends in extremism and terrorism, which remain resilient and readily accessible online [83/20/TA refers].
5. (R) The long term impacts of 15 March on New Zealand's threat environment remain unclear, and we assess a retaliatory or inspired attack in New Zealand is a realistic possibility over the next 12 months. s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]

s6(a), s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]. The expected domestic and international attention for the one year anniversary of 15 March, and trial of the alleged attacker in June, will also likely draw the initial event back into focus.

Intent

Right-wing extremism

6. (R) Right-wing extremism encompasses a broad set of ideologies including, but not limited to, white supremacy, anti-Semitism, National Socialism, anti-immigration, anti-Islam, anti-left-wing and ethnic-nationalism. CTAG continues to assess XRW ideology in New Zealand is fragmented and comprises a spectrum of motivations.

s6(a)



8. (R) CTAG continues to assess XRW-aligned individuals who develop the intent to conduct an attack in New Zealand will highly likely operate alone or in very small groups. This is based on the fragmented nature of XRW adherents in New Zealand, and the possibility an individual or small group could mobilise to violence without coming to the prior attention of law enforcement and security authorities. The typically individual nature of XRW attacks is also evidenced by 15 March, and recent XRW attacks offshore.

9. s6(a) [REDACTED]

10. (R) We assess there is a realistic possibility a 15 March inspired XRW attack could occur in New Zealand over the next 12 months. The one year anniversary of 15 March, and trial of the alleged attacker, will very probably bring the initial attack, and associated propaganda, back into sharp focus for individuals supportive of a violent

XRW ideology in New Zealand. CTAG is also aware of threats, and disrupted or successful attacks offshore, that were at least partially inspired by 15 March.

11. (R) ~~s6(a)~~ [REDACTED] domestic and international experience suggests various elements of significant XRW attacks have partially inspired individuals to engage in ideologically motivated violence years later, and in some instances involved attack planning over an extended period of time. The alleged Christchurch attacker, for example, claimed their manifesto and attack was partially inspired by Anders Breivik, who killed 77 and injured 151 during an ideologically motivated attack in Norway in July 2011.
12. (R) Since the 15 March attacks, CTAG has seen an enduring prevalence of possibly New Zealand-based individuals making online threats to conduct potentially XRW-aligned attacks. The true intent and ideology in each instance is generally difficult to initially establish, particularly as threats are made in forums that host a myriad of XRW humour, internet memes, and in-group signalling to subvert cultural taboos and promote extreme messages. The majority of those making threats likely have no intent to mobilise to violence, and/or have other non-ideological motivations. While this phenomenon is not unique to XRW-aligned individuals, we assess a comparatively greater volume of XRW-aligned threats are likely to persist, and identifying those with legitimate intent will continue to challenge law enforcement and security agencies.

Islamist extremism

~~s6(a)~~



14. (R) CTAG further assesses a lone actor mobilising to violence without prior intelligence forewarning is also a realistic possibility. This is based on our assessment of the probable existence of other New Zealand-based Islamist extremists for whom the extent of their radicalisation and mobilisation to violence may not be fully known to law enforcement and security agencies. Conversely, we assess New Zealand-based Islamist extremists are unlikely to coordinate an act of ideologically motivated violence as a small group due to the typically incohesive and isolated nature of these individuals.

15. (R) s6(a) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] we note 15 March was unprecedented in New Zealand and the longer-term impacts on Islamist extremism in New Zealand remain unclear. We are aware of threats and disrupted attacks offshore with at least a partial retaliatory nexus; s6(a) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

16. (R) The 15 March attacks raised the profile of New Zealand amongst international Islamist terrorist organisations. CTAG assesses New Zealand's profile will very likely be heightened again during the upcoming one year anniversary of 15 March and the trial of the alleged attacker. CTAG assesses a likely increase in domestic and international attention during these events will probably further amplify and draw out the impacts of 15 March, including new threats of retaliation. We therefore assess there is a realistic possibility a retaliatory attack could still occur in New Zealand over the next 12 months.

Other ideologies

17. (R) A limited presence of potentially extreme fringes of other ideologies and issue motivated groups exists in New Zealand [refer 83/20/TA for examples of other ideologies]. Whilst some individuals and groups have lawfully advocated for significant change to the current political/social system, few have demonstrated any serious intent to engage in ideologically motivated violence.

18. s6(a) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

19. (R) CTAG assesses there are almost certainly New Zealand-based individuals for whom the extent of their radicalisation and mobilisation to violence may not be fully known to law enforcement and security agencies, and although unlikely, a lone actor or small group who adhere to extreme fringes of other ideologies could mobilise to conduct a terrorist attack without prior intelligence forewarning.

Capability

Right-wing extremism

20. (R) CTAG assesses some individuals in New Zealand who support an XRW ideology almost certainly have the capability to conduct an attack. We assess some of these individuals have legitimate and illegitimate access to, and training or experience in the use of, firearms. CTAG further assesses individuals supportive of an XRW ideology also have access to rudimentary weapons, such as knives and vehicles.

21. s6(a) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] We are aware of international trends of individuals who adhere to XRW ideologies working for military

or law enforcement agencies and gaining combat expertise, capabilities and specialised skills. We are aware of individuals with XRW views who have been employed by, or attempted to join, the New Zealand Defence Force.

22. (R) Recent media coverage, detailed manifestos, live-streaming of recent XRW attacks and online commentary provide individuals seeking to engage in violent acts with inspiration and instruction to improve capability. Attacks such as 15 March also demonstrate to potential attackers which methodologies are likely to be successful if replicated. We assess individuals who adhere to a violent XRW ideology in New Zealand are consuming this readily available material.

23. s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The alleged 15 March attacker's capability to personally radicalise others or encourage mobilisation to violence is currently constrained; however, we assess there is a realistic possibility the alleged attacker will use the upcoming trial as a platform to inspire those who adhere to an XRW ideology, including to take violent action.

Islamist extremism

24. (R) Since the previous TTL assessment, available information has not indicated a meaningful change in capability among known Islamist extremists. CTAG continues to assess individuals supportive of an Islamist extremist ideology in New Zealand almost certainly have access to rudimentary weapons. Notwithstanding new firearms reforms, CTAG also continues to assess Islamist extremists could still feasibly gain access to firearms due to their prevalence in New Zealand. s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

25. (R) s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CTAG notes Islamist extremists in New Zealand consume readily available online propaganda which provides encouragement and instruction on conducting successful terrorist attacks of varying sophistication. Recent international experience also demonstrates rapid mobilisation by attackers, even when extensive mitigations are in place.

Other ideologies

26. (R) The potentially extreme fringes of other ideologies in New Zealand encompasses a broad range of individuals and groups with varying capability to conduct a terrorist attack. CTAG assesses the majority of individuals who adhere to these potentially extreme ideologies almost certainly have access to rudimentary weapons. While a limited firearms capability exists, available information does not indicate such capability exists more broadly across the majority of groups and individuals supportive of potentially extreme fringes of other ideologies.

27. s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Conclusion

28. (R) CTAG continues to assess the terrorist threat environment remains elevated compared to the environment prior to 15 March, and that a terrorist attack is feasible and could well occur. New Zealand continues to be influenced by global trends in extremism and terrorism, which remain resilient and readily accessible online [83/20/TA refers].
29. (R) CTAG assesses there are individuals in New Zealand supportive of XRW and Islamist extremist ideologies who probably have the intent, and almost certainly the capability, to conduct a terrorist attack. However, we have not seen any credible intelligence to indicate New Zealand is the target of specific or current attack plans by individuals or groups who adhere to any extreme ideology. Nonetheless, we assess there is a realistic possibility individuals, especially lone actors, could radicalise and mobilise to violence without coming to the attention of intelligence and law enforcement agencies.
30. (R) The long term impacts of 15 March on New Zealand's threat environment remain unclear, but we judge they will be enduring and will continue to evolve following the one year anniversary of 15 March and trial of the alleged attacker. CTAG continues to monitor the New Zealand terrorism threat environment. We note a change in the New Zealand TTL could occur at short notice.

Threat Level

31. (R) CTAG assesses the New Zealand terrorism threat level as **MEDIUM**; *terrorist attack is assessed as feasible and could well occur.*

s6(a)



Intelligence cut off date: 12 February 2020

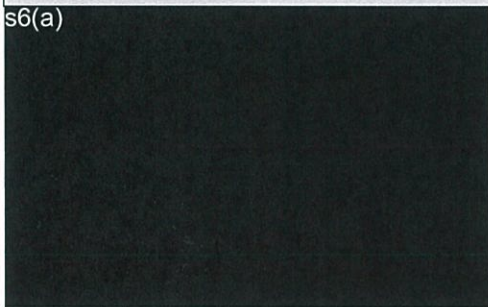
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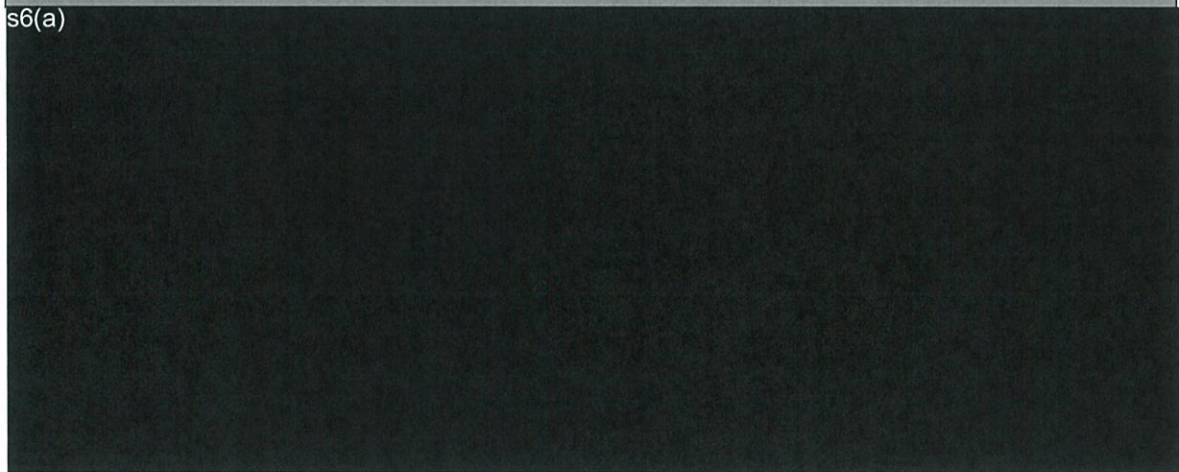
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s6(a)



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CTAG THREAT DEFINITIONS

Threat Level	Definition	Qualitative Statement
Negligible	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is assessed as very unlikely	Remote / Highly unlikely
Very Low	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is assessed as unlikely	Improbable / Unlikely
Low	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is assessed as possible, but is not expected	Realistic possibility
Medium	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is assessed as feasible and could well occur	Probable / Likely
High	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is assessed as very likely	Very probable / Highly likely
Extreme	Terrorist attack, violent protest activity or violent criminal behaviour is expected imminently	Almost certain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless otherwise stated, all threat levels in CTAG's 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 		

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