



## THREAT INSIGHT

# Involuntary Celibates (Incels) and the New Zealand context

Issued: 10 June 2021

21-79-TI

(R) This Threat Insight assesses the threat posed by the involuntarily celibate ('incel') ideology in New Zealand, drawing on international examples to determine whether the ideology meets a violent extremism threshold.

(R) CTAG has high confidence in the assessments made, based on a significant body of credible international and domestic partner, and open source reporting, as well as our understanding of the incel ideology and the New Zealand terrorism threat environment.

### Key Judgements

1. (R) The involuntary celibate ('incel') ideology is not inherently violent, but has a fringe violent extremist element that falls within identity-motivated violent extremism (IMVE).
2. (R) The number of identified incels in New Zealand is comparatively small and do not appear to have a unified community.
3. s6(a) [REDACTED]
4. (R) There is a realistic possibility the absence of a separate incel community in New Zealand is driving incels towards WIE ideologies.
5. (R) Should a New Zealand-based incel mobilise to violence, the individual would almost certainly adhere to at least one other violent extremist ideology.

### Involuntary Celibates

6. (R) Incel refers to individuals who describe themselves as 'involuntary celibate', and blame the opposite sex for denying them sexual relationships to which they believe themselves entitled.
7. (R) While the majority of incels identify as male, incel ideology can more broadly refer to any individual who believe society unjustly denies them sexual or romantic attention and therefore does not preclude female or non-binary incels. The term 'incel' originated from a bisexual woman who created a website for

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“anybody of any gender who was lonely, had never had sex or had not had a relationship in a long time”.

8. (R) At their most extreme, incels advocate for, and engage in, violence in response to their perceived rejection. Further, some incels advocate a ‘Beta rebellion’, in which the current systems of government are overthrown and replaced with a male supremacist system that will impose laws to disenfranchise women and enable incels to receive their ‘due’.
9. (R) Incel is largely an online subculture, sometimes referred to as the ‘manosphere’. It is often hosted on the same online platforms used by WIEs, and often using a similar meme culture to generate a common identity. Colloquial language and terms used by incels is heavily standardised online, resulting in a high degree of uniformity and sense of belonging over shared grievances.
10. (R) Incel is also not exclusive to European individuals, although the ideology can spread into disdain for non-Europeans because they are seen as competition for incels trying to find a romantic partner. For example, some Asian incels refer to themselves as ‘currycels’ or ‘ricecels’ to distinguish them as non-European.

#### **Incels and violent extremism**

11. (R) The majority of individuals adhering to an incel ideology are non-violent, but because its online subculture regularly converges with WIE equivalents, CTAG assesses it is likely incel can act as a ‘gateway’ extremism to violence.
12. (R) CTAG assesses the convergence of incel and WIE subcultures could result in individuals pursuing male supremacist ideologies deliberately, or inadvertently being indoctrinated into violent extremist ideologies. Incel individuals attempting to identify a root cause or ‘mastermind’ behind their problems routinely reproduce anti-Semitic, racist and anti-immigration rhetoric. We assess the relationship between these extremist ideologies is consistent with other forms of online extremism and processes of radicalisation.
13. (R) A violent incel ideology has been linked, at least partially, to a number of international attacks, with the majority taking place in North America:
  - a. In 2014, Elliot Rodger killed 6 and injured 14 in a shooting at the University of Santa Barbara. He uploaded a YouTube video titled ‘Elliot Rodger’s Retribution’, in which he described his attack plan, his grievance towards women who had denied him, and a manifesto detailing his plan for the mass imprisonment and murder of most women. The victims were a mixture of females and males. Although he is commonly cited as inspiration for incels, he did not publicly self-identify as one.
  - b. In 2018, Nikolas Cruz, killed 17 and injured 17 at a shooting at a Florida high school, after praising Rodger and stating “Elliot Rodger will not be forgotten”. The victims were a mixture of females and males.


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- c. In 2018, Alek Minassian killed 10 and injured 16 in a van attack in Toronto. Prior to his arrest, Minassian called for an "incel rebellion" in a Facebook post, which included reference to "Supreme Gentleman" Elliott Rodger. The deceased victims were a mixture of females and males, although the majority were female.
- d. In 2020 an individual conducted a machete attack at a Toronto massage parlour and stabbed the female owner; open source reporting cited the individual as being inspired by incel because of his familiarity with Rodger and Minassian.
- e. In the United Kingdom, at least two recent terror trials included discussion of incel ideas as motivation.

### **Incels in New Zealand**

- 14. (R) CTAG assesses the incel ideology likely has a small number of adherents in New Zealand, and do not appear to have formed a coherent community, online or in the real world.
- 15. (R) CTAG assesses incel will likely remain a motivating factor for violent extremist individuals in New Zealand, but is unlikely to be the sole motivation for a terrorist attack. s6(a)  

- 16. (R) We judge there is a realistic possibility the absence of a coherent incel community in New Zealand is driving incels towards WIE ideology through shared rhetoric. This progression from incel to WIE has the potential to motivate individuals to mobilise to violence because of WIE's overtly violent nature.

s6(a)



- 18. (R) As with all ideologies, determining whether incel as an ideology condones violence is subject to individual or groups' own interpretations, to include those who cherry-pick ideologies that fulfil their own personal justifications.

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19. s6(a) 

*Intelligence cut-off date: 10 June 2021*

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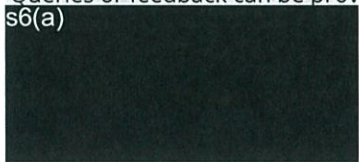


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**CTAG Threat Definitions**

Likelihood Assessment	Threat Level
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is expected	<b>EXTREME</b>
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as highly likely	<b>HIGH</b>
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as feasible and could well occur	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as a realistic possibility	<b>LOW</b>
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as unlikely	<b>VERY LOW</b>

**Probabilistic language**

<< Lower likelihood		Even chance		Higher likelihood >>	
Remote/Highly unlikely	Unlikely	Realistic possibility	Likely Probable Probably	Highly likely	Almost certain