



New Zealand  
Security Intelligence  
Service  
Te Pā Whakamarumaru

## Monthly Highlight Report: 1 – 30 April 2021

### Violent Extremism

Detecting, investigating and providing advice about threats to the wellbeing of New Zealanders

s6(a)

s6(a)

NZSIS continues to work closely with Police to prepare for the release from

custody of long-time mutual subject of counter-terrorism investigation Ahamed Aathil Mohamed Samsudeen. Samsudeen is expected to be released into the community in the second half of May on 'time served' for current charges, while awaiting trial for a recent violent assault of a prison staff member. A 2020 attempt by Police to charge Samsudeen under the Terrorism Suppression Act was unsuccessful.

Police and NZSIS have been advised that Samsudeen is refusing to accept options to be temporarily housed at one of two local Auckland mosques, an arrangement which had been developed by Police in cooperation with local Muslim community leaders in order to provide appropriate living arrangements and facilitate re-integration and deradicalisation options. NZSIS assesses Samsudeen has not moderated his Faith Motivated Violent Extremist ideology while incarcerated, and has further alienated any previous associates and support networks. Based on his previous actions to acquire capability and mobilise toward a domestic act of extremist violence, NZSIS assesses Samsudeen poses a significant threat to the New Zealand public. s6(a) [Redacted]

s6(a) [Redacted]

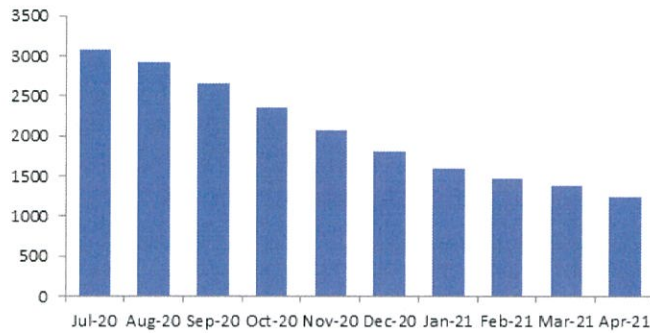
s6(a)





	s6(a)
<b>Foreign Interference</b>	
Mitigating espionage and hostile foreign intelligence threats	s6(a)
<b>Protective Security</b>	
Protective Security Services	<b>Security Vetting: positive trends continue</b>  <b>Reduction in total inventory:</b> The trend of reducing the vetting backlog continued in April 2021. The graph below shows the total number of security clearance applications waiting to be completed.

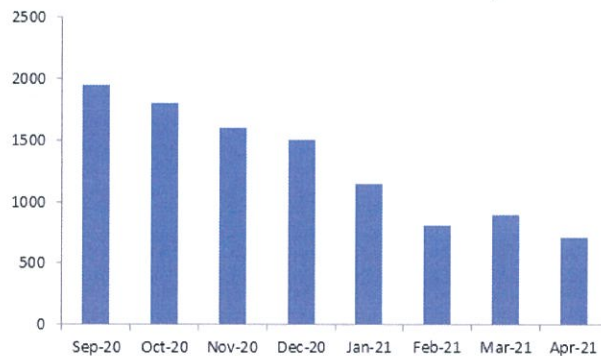
### Total Inventory



At the end of April there were 1238 total cases in the inventory. This is a reduction of 31% since December 2020. Throughout 2021 there has been an average monthly reduction in the total inventory of 142 cases a month. It is anticipated that this trend will continue throughout 2021.

**A reduction in the queue:** The graph below represents the total number of applications waiting for the security clearance assessment to start (waiting to be assigned). Throughout April 2021 the number of security clearances in the queue decreased by 184 to 711. This number reflects a 53% decrease in the number of security clearances in the queue since December 2020.

### Total number of cases in the queue



**Launch of Trusted Research:** The Director-General of the NZSIS and the Chief Executives of Science New Zealand and Universities New Zealand have jointly released Trusted Research Guidance. Branded under the Protective Security Requirements, this provides bespoke guidance to Institutions and Researchers on how to protect their research. It specifically mentions research collaborations offshore, as our intelligence shows that this can be the target of foreign interference.



	<p>The university sector has moved to establish a protective security programme across all eight universities. This programme is established at the Vice Chancellor level and focusses on governance, policies, best-practise collaboration and developing case studies. Our role is focussed on supporting this programme at both the steering group and working group levels. Our next priority for support will be to encourage the sector to measure their progress.</p>
<b>Our Workforce</b>	
People and Capability	<p><b>Recruitment:</b> Recruitment and growing our FTE and capability continues to be a key focus area for us. As reported in last month's report, we continue to see the benefits of our recruitment video campaign, launched on 20 October, with a significant number of new people joining, an increase in applicant numbers for most roles, and an overall increase in our FTE. Over the last quarter 49 new employees started with NZSIS. The majority of these were in the Intelligence and Capability Directorates. At the end of March we had an FTE of 416 of 422 funded FTE.</p> <p><b>Retention:</b> We continue to focus on implementing a range of initiatives captured in our GCSB and NZSIS retention strategy, to ensure we retain the great people we have. Core turnover within the NZSIS has continued to reduce since June 2020 and is now sitting at 8.65% as at 31 March 2021, which is below the Public Service average of 10.1%. We appreciate that Covid-19 and associated job security will be a factor in this reduction in turnover, but we think that our targeted attention on retention is also having an impact.</p>