



# THREAT ASSESSMENT New Zealand Terrorism 2015

Issued: 9 July 2015

67/15/TA

DMS0-163-860

This assessment is based on information drawn from a variety of domestic and international resources and open source data. The intelligence cut-off date for this assessment is 25 May 2015. A Confidence Statement can be found at the end of the main body of this assessment. Threat definitions can be found on the last page.

## (U) Summary

- (R) CTAG assesses there is a small number of extremists in New Zealand who espouse attack rhetoric and have the capability to commit an unsophisticated terrorist attack. However, CTAG has not seen credible intelligence to indicate any group is advancing plans to conduct an attack in New Zealand.
- (S FVEY) CTAG assesses the general terrorism threat level for New Zealand is **LOW**; *terrorist attack is assessed as possible, but is not expected.*
  - s6(a): specific details about counter-terrorism threats  
[REDACTED]
- (R) We note, however, the following general trends apply to Islamist inspired terrorism in New Zealand:
  - There are radicalised individuals in New Zealand who intermittently espouse attack rhetoric and have the capability to conduct small-scale attacks.
  - Like-minded countries, such as Canada and Australia, have recently experienced Islamist terrorism inspired spontaneous acts of violence.
  - The deployment of NZDF personnel to Iraq is likely to make conducting an attack in New Zealand or against New Zealanders more permissible to a wider range of extremists.

As such, New Zealand's threat level could change at short notice if credible information about specific attack plans is sighted by CTAG.

**(U) Introduction**

1. (R) This assessment uses the definition of 'terrorism' as provided in Section 5 of the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002 (TSA). The TSA definition of terrorism involves homicide or assault causing serious bodily injury, when coupled with the requisite intention to terrorise the wider population or coerce the Government.
2. (S FVEY) This assessment updates New Zealand threat assessments 134/14/TA and 173/14/TA, issued 10 October 2014. ~~s6(a): specific details about counter-terrorism threats and previous assessments~~  
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3. (S FVEY) CTAG assesses the primary terrorism threat to New Zealand emanates from individuals and groups, based in New Zealand but with inspiration from abroad, who subscribe to extreme Islamist ideologies. This threat assessment focuses on that threat; it does not examine the terrorism threat to New Zealanders or New Zealand interests overseas. CTAG assesses if a terrorist attack was to occur in New Zealand it would almost certainly not come from the direct action of an international terrorist organisation, but rather from individuals, sympathetic to those organisations, who are radicalised to the point of employing violence. Any such attack would likely be self-directed, low-capability with little or no planning, and might easily develop quickly with no intelligence forewarning. Plans to conduct an attack could emanate from any segment of a radicalised community; persons already known to be of security concern, their associates or as yet unidentified individuals.

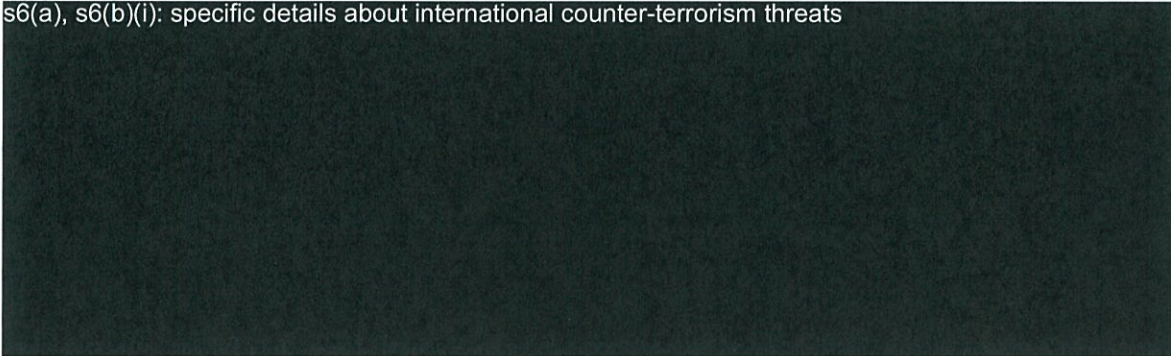
**(U) International influences**

4. (S FVEY) Transnational terrorist groups continue to inspire, plan, facilitate and direct terrorist attacks. In September 2014, the United States (US) and coalition action began against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and al-Qa'ida (AQ) targets in Iraq and Syria. In response, ISIL publically denounced the West and requested its sympathisers come to Syria and Iraq to fight. Where sympathisers can not, or are prevented from travelling, ISIL has sanctioned and encouraged them to conduct attacks in their countries of origin. ISIL's call to arms has included a media-savvy and sophisticated online propaganda campaign providing a graphic narrative of Sunni Muslims' fight against oppression in Syria.
5. (S FVEY) Social media has been used by terrorist groups to disseminate online propaganda that has significantly influenced and inspired their supporters and sympathisers. Recent attacks in Denmark, France, and disrupted plots in Belgium and Germany demonstrated ISIL and AQ's ability to promote and inspire small-scale attacks. Additional acts of spontaneous violence were perpetrated by extremists in Canada, the US, and Australia. We judge these kinds of attacks are possible in any country, including in New Zealand, but are probably more likely in countries singled out by ISIL and AQ as priority targets, as was Canada following its support for anti-ISIL action in Iraq.
6. (C FVEY) In the last 12 months numerous terrorist related incidents and attacks have occurred. Two attacks took place in Canada within three days and were followed closely by an attack on police officers in the US, and at least five attacks of varying lethality and

multiple disruptions have occurred in France. Since September 2014, there have been two low-capability attacks in Australia:


- On 23 September 2014, Ahmad Numan Haider stabbed two police counter-terrorism officers outside the Endeavour Hills Police Station in Melbourne.
- On 15–16 December 2014, Mohammad Hassan Manteghi perpetrated the Sydney Lindt Café siege incident.

s6(a), s6(b)(i): specific details about international counter-terrorism threats










**(U) Domestic Update**

7. (S FVEY) CTAG is aware of a small number of New Zealanders who adhere, or are at least sympathetic, to an extreme Islamist ideology which portrays Western countries as enduring enemies of Islam, responsible for the oppression of Muslims worldwide. Those who adhere to this ideology in New Zealand have shown their support by facilitating funds and travellers to offshore conflict zones, aspiring to fight offshore, successfully fighting alongside terrorist organisations overseas s6(a): operational detail






8. (S FVEY) Individuals based in New Zealand have enthused about extremist material online depicting activities conducted by ISIL, including beheading videos and speeches calling for sympathetic individuals in the West to conduct attacks where they are. These individuals were similarly excited about the ISIL-inspired stabbing of police officers in Australia, and expressed support for the perpetrators of the French terrorist attacks and a number of publicised Syria-based ISIL murders.

9. s6(a): specific details about counter-terrorism threats



10. (S FVEY) s6(a) individuals of security concern remain intent on travelling offshore to join the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. Since the start of the conflict, the New Zealand Government has prevented several New Zealand citizens from travelling, on grounds of national security, by means of passport cancellations. s6(a): operational detail



s6(a)

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
11. (S FVEY) CTAG continues to judge the deployment of NZDF personnel to Iraq is likely to make an attack in New Zealand or against New Zealanders more permissible to a wider range of extremists. Should ISIL 'officially' respond to the deployment, and call for ISIL sympathisers to target New Zealand in retaliation, as was the case following Canada's support for anti-ISIL action in Iraq, reporting indicates there are aspirational jihadis in New Zealand who may consider that as justification to conduct an attack here.
  12. (S FVEY) As evidenced by recent attacks in the West, low levels of capability is not a barrier for an effective terrorist attack. Many of these attacks have been spontaneous, opportunistic and aimed at less well-defended targets. The nature of these attacks is applicable in New Zealand, where an unsophisticated attack would be easy to plan and implement, with materials readily available (such as a car and kitchen knives as in the case of the 2013 murder in the UK of Fusilier Lee Rigby). Given the plans and intentions of individuals or small groups are more difficult for security agencies to detect, self-directed low-capability attacks might develop with little or no planning, or intelligence forewarning.
  13. (S FVEY) Social networking platforms have expanded the means extremists use to communicate and share their ideologies and methods. CTAG is aware of at least one instance of an alleged ISIL fighter using Twitter to advocate for terrorist attacks in New Zealand. Separately, on 20 April 2015, a Syria-based New Zealand ISIL member used YouTube to call for New Zealanders and Australians to undertake violent action in New Zealand and Australia. The video is not believed to have been officially sanctioned by ISIL. s6(a): operational detail

**(U) Conclusion**

14. (S FVEY) Overseas terrorist groups continue to inspire, plan, facilitate and direct terrorist attacks around the world, including in like-minded countries to New Zealand, such as Canada and Australia. New Zealand is not immune from this trend. CTAG is aware of individuals residing in New Zealand who are directly supportive of ISIL, some of whom espouse attack rhetoric and have the capability to conduct small-scale attacks. Moreover, CTAG assesses the deployment of NZDF personnel to Iraq is likely to make an attack in New Zealand or against New Zealanders more permissible to a wider range of extremists.
  15. (S FVEY) While such features of the global security environment will continue to influence the domestic threat situation, we emphasise CTAG is not aware of any credible intelligence indicating a terrorist attack in New Zealand is being advanced at this time.  
s6(a): specific details about counter-terrorism threats
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
16. (R) CTAG assesses the general terrorism threat level for New Zealand is **LOW**; *terrorist attack is assessed as possible, but is not expected*. This threat level could change at short notice if credible information about specific attack plans is sighted by CTAG.

**(U) Confidence statement**

(S FVEY) This Threat Assessment draws on intelligence from New Zealand Police, New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, and international partner agencies, using multiple methods of intelligence collection.

(R) CTAG has high confidence in the intelligence reporting related to ongoing investigations.

s6(a)  
[Redacted]

s6(a): operational detail  
[Redacted]

s6(a): author information

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Intelligence cut off date:	25 May 2015
Released by:	s6(a)

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CTAG assessments aim to provide high value products that are of use to your organisation. In order to ensure that assessments continue to meet these requirements we request that you complete this feedback form. Please use this as an opportunity to judge the value of the assessment provided and to highlight areas for future assessment. This will allow CTAG to tailor products to meet your current and on-going requirements.

**CTAG Assessment Number: 67/15/TA**

1	Does this assessment meet your current information requirements?	Yes	No
2	Does this assessment provide detail that assists in decision making?	Yes	No
3	Has the assessment been relevant and of value?	Yes	No
4	Was the assessment provided in time to be of value?	Yes	No
5	Was the assessment clearly presented and understood?	Yes	No
6	Do you have any follow up questions resulting from this assessment?	Yes	No
7	Would you like a CTAG representative to contact you concerning this report?	Yes	No

*Please provide further detail if you answered NO to questions 1-5 or YES to question 6 (as applicable).*

*.... please attach additional sheets if required*

*CTAG understands that your response is not a Departmental or Organisational statement.*

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*Please send this form and/or information which may supplement our holdings on this topic to: CTAG at s6(a)*

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DMS0-163-860

CTAG 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.

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