Proactive Release

The following documents prepared by the National Assessments Bureau relating to the extreme right-wing have been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet DPMC.

Document	Date	Title
Document 01	16/03/2019	Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism in the West
Document 02	26/03/2019	Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism – An Update [*4 page version*].
Document 03	26/03/2019	Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism – An Update [*3 page version*].
Document 04	12/06/2019	Extreme Right Wing in the West: Trends and Drivers
Document 05	5/07/2019	Extreme Right Wing in the West: Trends and Drivers
Document 06	29/11/2019	Summary: AR 079/2019-20 Assessment Report. [*Released as a Summary provided*].
Document 07	16/12/2019	Incels: A Violent Misogynist Subculture.

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and have been withheld as marked in the documents.

NATIONAL
ASSESSMENTS
BUREAU
TE RANGA TĀTARI TAKE

DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Wellington, New Zealand

16 March 2019

EXTREME RIGHT-WING TERRORISM IN THE WEST

This note is an initial assessment of the landscape of extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism in the West, prepared at 1600 on 16 March 2019.

- **Extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorist attacks are happening more frequently in the West, with the number of incidents on the rise (see appendix). From 2013-2017, XRW groups and individuals were responsible for 66 deaths and 113 attacks, that we are aware of. Of those, 17 deaths and 47 attacks were in 2017 alone. The majority of attacks were conducted by lone-actors with a mixture of far right, white nationalist, racist, and anti-Muslim beliefs. (R)**

- **But numbers on XRW violence and groups are unclear and probably too conservative. Every country also has a different legal framework in place. The picture is also unclear around the nature and activities of these groups, as they shade over into legitimate forms of political discourse and activities. (R)**

- **A number of knowledge gaps exist about XRW terrorism, but we know that it is growing in scope and scale across the West. It needs further examination. (R)**

Background and definitions

The terms "far-right" and "extreme-right" (XRW) are contested and confused. There is often a blurred line in beliefs between the two, but XRW groups differ from far-right groups in the fact that they are willing to use violence, and terrorism, to further their aims. (R)

2.   XRW terrorism (see Box 1) commonly refers to the use or threat of violence by non-state groups or individuals whose goals may include racial, ethnic, or religious supremacy; opposition to government authority; and the end of practices like abortion[i]. (R)

3.   XRW terrorism has a long history in the West. But it is becoming more common, against the backdrop of a shift to the right in politics in the West. In recent years, we have seen an increase in high profile XRW attacks in the West (see Box 2). (R)

> **Box 1: Legal definitions of terrorism (U)**
>
> *New Zealand:* A terrorist act as defined in the New Zealand Terrorism Suppression Act has several elements:
>
> - Motivation: ideological, religious or political;
> - Serious action, which includes causing death;
> - Intention to instil terror in a civilian population or to induce or compel the government to do or not do certain things.
>
> *USA:* US federal definition states that act in question was intended "(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping.
>
> US Federal legal definitions currently only enable "terrorism" action or charge against a person who is a member of a listed Foreign Terrorist Organisation, which excludes domestic actors.

4.   Numbers on XRW violence, however, are unclear and probably too conservative. Every country has a different legal framework in place. And a country's specific political and cultural factors are a further complicating factor. The nature and activities of these groups also shade over into legitimate forms of political discourse and activity. And the legal distinctions extend to different descriptors. (R)

Ideology

5.   Modern XRW groups and individuals are very diverse and hold a broad range of views and ideologies including, but not limited to, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, authoritarianism and anti-democracy[ii].

6.   The majority of the XRW spectrum holds pro-white and anti-immigration views. Some are openly white supremacist and hold the overt racist belief that the white race is superior to other races. Another strand of ideology is ethno-nationalism, which often does not promote overt white supremacism, but believes that minorities and immigrants are damaging European culture and belong elsewhere. (R) [iii]

7.   This ideology is evolving, and many of the different strands are beginning to be voiced in a range of areas, including relatively mainstream discussions. (R)

Groups and individuals

8.   The XRW landscape is fractured. While there are clear organised groups, there is probably a wider pool of individuals with extremist views spread across diffuse networks. This diffuse nature can be deliberate – some earlier XRW advocates deliberately promoted leaderless resistance and other steps to avoid counter-efforts against them. The nature of these groups differs between countries.

9.   The numbers of XRW groups and individuals are unclear but we judge there has been an increase in the last few years. The Southern Poverty Law Centre is currently tracking over 1000 known US "hate groups", a 10% increase since 2015[iv]. But the term "hate groups" is a broad one, with not all being considered terrorist groups. (R)

10.   Some notable European and American groups include:

- **National Action:** a UK-based neo-Nazi group that was established in 2013 and holds racist, anti-Semitic and homophobic views. The group's online propaganda material featured extremely violent imagery and language, and it promoted and encouraged acts of terrorism after the murder of MP Jo Cox in 2016. In December 2016, National Action became the first modern extreme right-wing group to be proscribed as a terrorist group. (R) [v]

> **Box 2: Timeline of key extreme-right wing terrorist attacks (U)**
>
> - **1980** Bologna (Italy) massacre. Bombing killed 85 and wounded over 200. Neo-fascist terrorist organisation takes credit.
> - **1988** anti-immigrant bombings in France. One killed 16 injured
> - **1992** Copenhagen bombing. One killed
> - **1995** Oklahoma bombing. 168 killed. Attack in revenge for government actions in Ruby Ridge and Waco
> - **1996** Centennial Olympic Park bombings in Atlanta during the 1996 Olympic Games. 2 killed and 111 injured
> - **2006** Moscow Market bombing. 13 killed 47 wounded. Racialist organisation takes credit.
> - **2008** Knoxville Unitarian Universalist church shooting. 2 killed 8 wounded
> - **2011 Anders Behring Breivik** bombed government buildings, killing 8 and wounding more than 200. He then shot 69 and wounded more than 110.
> - **2012** Wisconsin Sikh temple shooting. 6 killed 4 wounded.
> - **2015** Charleston church shooting by **Dylann Roof**. 9 killed 1 wounded.
> - **2016** murder of British MP Jo Cox by Thomas Mair
> - **2017** Quebec City mosque shooting. Carried out by Alexandre Bissonnette. 6 killed and 19 wounded.
> - **2017** Finsbury Park Attack. Carried out by **Darren Osborne**. 1 killed and 10 injured
> - **2018** Pittsburgh synagogue shooting. 11 killed 7 wounded

- **Ku Klux Klan:** the oldest and most notorious hate group in the United States. Today, the KKK is no longer a single, cohesive organization, but has instead splintered into at least four main offshoots and dozens of smaller factions. (R)[vi]

- **Nordic Resistance Movement:** a transnational, neo-Nazi organization that has carried out violence targeting gay people, ideological opponents and Muslim refugees. [vii]

The role of the internet

11.   The internet and social media is a vital tool of XRW groups. (R)

12.   Online content has been very effective in radicalising individuals towards right-wing causes. Notable examples include the "Pizzagate" conspiracy which led to a gunman storming a Washington DC pizzeria looking for hostages allegedly held by Hilary Clinton. This

demonstrates the role and interplay of various internet conspiracy theories in violence and extremism. (R)

13.   Internet platforms host significant amounts of XRW content, and their algorithms have been key in providing users with some interest in XRW with more content. Fringe forums, including 4chan and 8chan, host XRW discussions which are enabled by a lack of censorship policies. These platforms and forums function as echo-chambers, insulating their users from alternative viewpoints and content. (R)

14.   Many aspects of internet culture, like memes, have been appropriated for XRW purposes. These are used to recruit internet trolls and content creators to their cause. (R)

Outlook

15.   A number of knowledge gaps exist about XRW terrorism, but we know that it is growing in scope and scale across the West. It is a complex issue which needs further examination. (R)

Annex: XRW terrorism deaths and incidents, 2002-2017

Year	DEATHS			INCIDENTS		
	Western Europe	North America	Total	Western Europe	North America	Total
2002	0	0	0	0	1	1
2003	0	0	0	2	0	2
2004	0	0	0	0	3	3
2005	0	0	0	1	2	3
2006	0	0	0	0	4	4
2007	0	0	0	1	1	2
2008	0	0	0	0	2	2
2009	0	2	2	3	3	6
2010	0	4	4	0	3	3
2011	79	0	79	4	0	4
2012	0	7	7	0	10	10
2013	1	0	1	6	3	9
2014	0	11	11	3	7	10
2015	4	22	26	16	10	26
2016	11	0	11	17	6	23
2017	1	16	17	28	31	59
Total	**96**	**62**	**158**	**81**	**86**	**167**

Source: Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2018 (U)

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[i] Center for Strategic and International Studies, *The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States*
[ii] stopekstremisme.dk
[iii] Counter Extremism Project
[iv] Southern Poverty Law v
[v] www.gov.uk
[vi] Counter Extremism Project
[vii] Counter Extremism Project

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DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Wellington, New Zealand

AN 32/2018-19
Assessment Note

26 March 2019

EXTREME RIGHT-WING TERRORISM – AN UPDATE

This assessment note builds on two notes written by NAB and NZSIS on 16/03/19, to outline current understanding of extreme-right terrorism globally.

- **Extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism is not new, but even before 15/3, XRW attacks have been happening more frequently. We are aware of at least 113 XRW attacks worldwide from 2013-2017, of which 47 attacks were in 2017 alone. (R)**

- **But numbers on XRW violence are imprecise and probably too conservative, and internationally there are knowledge** ▓▓▓▓ **(S)**

- **The XRW covers a broad range of beliefs including, but not limited to, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism and authoritarianism and anti-democracy. Individuals often come to these ideas alone, and the internet provides a vital (and often anonymous) enabler of XRW beliefs.**

- **Recent XRW attacks have been carried out by lone actors, who are difficult to detect and disrupt.** ▓▓▓

Against the backdrop of the "migration crisis", Islamic extremist attacks and a shift to the right in Europe and the US, we have seen more XRW attacks and individuals drawn towards the ideology. There is often a blurred line in beliefs between the "far-right" and "XRW" but the XRW is openly willing to use violence, including terrorism, to further its aims. (R)

XRW ideology

2.   Modern XRW groups and individuals hold a broad range of views and ideologies including, but not limited to, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, authoritarianism and anti-democracy. Many are anti-liberal, partly due to opposition to liberalism, but also because "the left" is seen as an enabler of immigration and Islamic extremism. Some of these ideas, such as anti-government views, are not traditional right-wing beliefs. (R)

3.   A common ideological thread is an effort to preserve "white" Western culture, values and privileges, in the face of an imagined "inevitable race war". Some

advocate for "total attack" (engaging in an armed conflict to overthrow government structures) while others seek "total dropout" (disengaging from societal and political processes and awaiting the "war"). (C)

4.   Early indications from the 15/3 investigation suggest similarities between XRW ideologies and methodologies and those of the alleged attacker.

The organisational structure of the XRW

5.   The XRW is typically fragmented and disorganised. Some organised groups exist, but there is a wider pool of individuals with extremist views across diffuse networks, often online. (C)

6.   Individuals often construct an interpretation of XRW ideas alone, and there is no central group or figure that creates a coherent ideology. The XRW does not have the organisational structure and ideological authority of groups like Daesh (ISIS). (C)

7.   But there are organised groups. These include National Action, a UK-based group that was proscribed as a terrorist entity in 2016. Other groups, such as the US Atomwaffen Division and Australian Antipodean Resistance (AR), are based on the model of National Action. But because of these groups' nationalist elements, these groups differ from country to country. (C)

The role of the internet in the XRW

8.   The internet and social media enable the XRW. Swathes of XRW content are hosted online. Social media and, often anonymous, internet forums offer the XRW a place to communicate, organise, and incite violence. Online comments supporting abstract or future violence are common within the XRW but do not necessarily translate to real-world violence. (R)

XRW attacks and the prevalence of lone actors

9.   In recent years there has been an increase in numbers of international XRW attacks, both disrupted and successful. In Europe, Islamic extremism is responsible for more attacks, but in the US, attacks by the XRW have long outnumbered those carried out by Islamic extremists. (R)

10.   XRW attacks have been conducted by lone actors[1] or small, self-directed cells rather than groups. Lone actors often sit on the peripheries of movements, and can be frustrated at a perceived lack of progress by groups.

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[1] A lone actor is an individual lacking any formal ties to a terrorist or violent extremist group, who typically engages in violence in support of a group and/or ideology. (U)

11.	XRW attacks are typically planned in advance, but lone actors are difficult to detect and disrupt. Attacks have typically been targeted at specific groups. (C)

13.

14.

15.	In New Zealand XRW groups, like elsewhere, have been fragmented and disorganised. Traditional white nationalist groups such as the New Zealand National Front attract little support. But online XRW ideologies appear more popular, and there is some extremism in the fringes of a range of political, religious and issues-motivated groups, including the XRW. (R)

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AN 32/2018-19

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DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Wellington, New Zealand

AN 32A/2018-19
Assessment Note

26 March 2019

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- **Recent XRW attacks have been carried out by lone actors, who are difficult to detect and disrupt. (S)**

Against the backdrop of the "migration crisis", Islamic extremist attacks and a shift to the right in Europe and the US, we have seen more XRW attacks and individuals drawn towards the ideology. There is often a blurred line in beliefs between the "far-right" and "XRW" but the XRW is openly willing to use violence, including terrorism, to further its aims. (R)

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9.   In recent years there has been an increase in numbers of international XRW attacks, both disrupted and successful. In Europe, Islamic extremism is responsible for more attacks, but in the US, attacks by the XRW have long outnumbered those carried out by Islamic extremists. (R)

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15.   In New Zealand XRW groups, like elsewhere, have been fragmented and disorganised. Traditional white nationalist groups such as the New Zealand National Front attract little support. But online XRW ideologies appear more popular, and there is some extremism in the fringes of a range of political, religious and issues-motivated groups, including the XRW. (R)

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Document 04

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DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Wellington, New Zealand

AR 103/2018-19
Assessment Report

12 June 2019

THE EXTREME RIGHT WING IN THE WEST: TRENDS AND DRIVERS

This assessment considers the nature of extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism in the West, including drivers and contributing factors.

- **The extreme right-wing (XRW) encompasses a broad umbrella of beliefs and ideologies. Often central is a perception of threats to concepts of a traditional white or ethnic-European culture or identity. The XRW is willing to use, or encourage, violence and terrorism to further its beliefs. (R)**

- **Although increasingly transnational in nature, movements vary between countries. There is no accepted definition; most countries have considered it a domestic, not an international, issue. (R)**

- **Data on the XRW and XRW terrorism is patchy but we judge that this is a growing problem in the West. (R)**

- **There is no single factor that drives the XRW, but the idea that one's culture, identity and place in the world are threatened is key. This idea is exacerbated by economic and political changes. (R)**

- **The internet reinforces and accelerates hate, and facilitates the spread of XRW ideologies. It enables ideas to expand beyond geographic boundaries, and for individuals with XRW views to connect. (R)**

- **Despite the fact that New Zealand is less exposed to some global factors driving XRW ideologies, we are not immune. There are individuals in New Zealand who are supportive of XRW views. (S)**

What is extreme right wing terrorism?

The extreme right wing (XRW) encompasses a broad umbrella of beliefs and ideologies, including, but not limited to, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, authoritarianism and anti-democracy. In the West, a perception of threats to concepts of a traditional white or ethnic-European culture or identity is often central. Although sharing many of these beliefs, the extreme right differs from the far right in its willingness to use, or encourage, violence and terrorism to further its beliefs (see box 1). (R)

2.   The movement is fragmented and lacks a unifying narrative or leadership. Some organised groups exist (see box 2), but there is a wider pool of individuals with extremist views across diffuse networks, often online. (R)

3.   From country to country the XRW looks different. Local contexts and histories – like the legacies of slavery in the US and colonisation in Western Europe – shape XRW narratives. But although national in character, XRW movements have common themes and an increasingly transnational flavour; over a third of recent fatal XRW attacks were inspired by others globally. While this is changing, XRW terrorism is often treated as a domestic, not international, issue;

4.   No universal definition of the XRW exists and individual countries can have multiple definitions. The term "right wing" can also be politically sensitive, particularly in countries with right of centre, or far right, governments.

Box 1: What is terrorism? Legal definitions (U)

New Zealand: A terrorist act as defined in the New Zealand Terrorism Suppression Act 2002 has several elements:

- Motivation: ideological, religious or political;
- Serious action, which includes causing death;
- Intention to instil terror in a civilian population or to induce or compel the government to do or not do certain things.

USA: US federal definition states that a terrorist act is intended "(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping."

US federal definitions currently only enable "terrorism" action or charge against a person who is a member of a listed Foreign Terrorist Organisation. This excludes domestic actors (also known as Homegrown Violent Extremists) who do not support Foreign Terrorist Organisations.

Box 2: Examples of XRW groups (R)

Atomwaffen Division: a US-based neo-Nazi group founded in 2015. The group is based on the writings of the white supremacist James Mason and serial killer Charles Manson.

National Action: a UK-based neo-Nazi group that was established in 2013 and holds racist, anti-Semitic and homophobic views. The group's online propaganda material featured extremely violent imagery and language, and it promoted and encouraged acts of terrorism after the murder of MP Jo Cox in 2016. In December 2016, National Action became the first modern extreme right-wing group to be proscribed as a terrorist group.

Nordic Resistance Movement: a transnational, neo-Nazi organisation with a presence in Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. The organisation has carried out violence targeting gay people, ideological opponents and Muslim refugees.

The scale of XRW terrorism in the West

5.   Numbers on XRW terrorism are unclear and probably too conservative. Each country has a different legal framework. Distinctions between crime, hate crime and terrorist incident blur, particularly where there is no hate crime offence (such as in New Zealand). So tracking numbers and trends can be difficult. Studies have shown that there has been some bias against XRW reporting in right of centre governments or political climates. (R)

6.   It is difficult to quantify the scale of XRW terrorism but there is anecdotal evidence that, while not new, this is a growing problem in the West. We are aware of at least 113 XRW attacks worldwide from 2013-2017, of which 47 attacks were in 2017 alone. And there seems to be an increasing number of radicalised individuals who look to violence or accept the use of violence in support of their views. (R)

7.   Despite difficulties in comparing and tracking trends, in the US incidents by XRW attackers outnumber those by Islamic extremists. But in Europe Islamic extremist attacks still predominate. Large-scale attacks like in Oklahoma City, Norway and Christchurch are relatively rare. But XRW individuals also frequently undertake lower-level attacks (often characterised as hate crimes) which can have a serious and damaging impact on individuals, communities and social cohesion. (R)

Causes of XRW terrorism

8.   No single factor causes an individual or group to radicalise, regardless of the ideological, religious or national context in which radicalisation occurs. Causal links between contributing factors and terrorism are unclear; which is even more the case with the broad ideologies and different national contexts of the XRW. But a range of social, political and cultural factors create a sense of perceived grievance for certain groups and can contribute to XRW ideologies. There are also catalysts for the spread of XRW ideas and violence, particularly the internet.

9.   Identities do not themselves create extremism. But although common across various forms of extremism, issues of identity are at the core of the XRW. Individuals form identities through unifying characteristics, and those who do not share those characteristics can become "other". (R)

10.   If individuals feel that their identity is threatened, they can blame this threat on the "others" and develop hostility towards these other groups. Social, political and economic changes can further the idea that the "relative" position of an identity group is under threat, even if an individual is not personally affected by those changes. Ideologies can also provide an alternative identity if an individual loses their sense of belonging from an existing identity. (R)

11.   Beliefs such as anti-Semitism, anti-Islam, racism, sexism and homophobia are not causal factors of radicalisation in themselves. They provide a focus for perceived grievance, and reinforce and amplify XRW sentiment. (R)

Social, political and economic changes

12.   The idea that one's **culture, identity and place in the world are threatened** can contribute to XRW ideologies. This has been prompted by:

a.   Changing demographics: increased migration can be perceived as creating insecurity and threatening the cultural and economic status quo, particularly if a migrant group is noticeably different. Anti-immigration sentiment is reflected in mainstream discourse and some Western governments' policy. The growing visibility of non-white groups and culture, high profile terrorist incidents carried out by ethnic and religious minorities, and negative media coverage fuel conceptions that a minority group is threatening the wellbeing of the largely white members of XRW groups. (R)

b.   Liberalisation of society: as previously marginalised groups (such as immigrants, women, and LGBTQI individuals) gain increasing agency and power, this threatens the position and identity of the traditionally powerful (i.e. white males). This contributes to the grievance narrative for some XRW individuals and groups, who can feel that their ideas of fairness are not being respected, and that previously marginalised groups are "cutting in line".

c.   Political mistrust: fed by perceived shortcomings in the way that governments have dealt with the above "threats", there has been growing apathy and distrust in political systems and elites, and lack of faith in "the system", including mainstream media. People have therefore looked for alternative answers and leaders. (R)

13.   **Economic downturns** can add to the sense that an identity group is under pressure (through changes resulting from recession and employment insecurity) even if an individual is not. Downturns do not have to directly impact an individual to impact XRW ideologies, and many XRW adherents are not economically deprived. But scapegoats are sought, and "others" often blamed. Ideas that governments are inept or complicit in financial crises also contribute to political mistrust and the idea that the system is "rigged", and establishment parties have suffered electorally. Far right parties have also been shown to benefit from financial crises. (R)

14.   There has also been **changing discourse** in politics and media. Prevailing societal attitudes in the West have become more liberal, and this in turn has led to a backlash from the right. Because of this, the boundaries of what is considered as politically acceptable have shifted, which has created an increased permissive space for the XRW. And in recent years far right political parties have made gains across Europe. This shift to the right may also mean that there is more caution when

dealing with problematic ideas on the right, including censoring of the far right or XRW online. (R)

Catalysts of change

15.   A fundamental catalyst for the spread of XRW ideas and violence is the **internet**. The internet enables the reinforcement of hate regardless of ideology, and has been an accelerant and amplifier of XRW ideas. It enables better connections between individuals globally, access to and sharing of ideas (often anonymously), and contributes to polarisation and XRW recruitment. Algorithms also enable individuals to consume increasingly extreme content. Online white supremacist hate speech has increased in recent years. (R)

16.

What does this mean for New Zealand?

17.   As XRW terrorism is in many ways a national phenomenon, national context is important. New Zealand is a small, geographically isolated country, with a broadly pluralistic and inclusive society. And factors such as the Global Financial Crisis and populist politics have had a limited impact when compared to the US and Europe. (R)

18.   But New Zealand's distance from other countries is no longer the safeguard it was perceived to be in the past. The wide reach of the internet, international travel and trade, changing demographics and disconnected or vulnerable individuals susceptible to extremist ideology all mean that New Zealanders are linked into global trends and events. New Zealand is also influenced by the social, political and cultural factors that can create a sense of perceived grievance. (R)

19.   There are individuals and groups in New Zealand who are supportive of XRW views including anti-Islam, anti-Semitism and white supremacism. Their numbers are limited and mostly online, and there is little indication that they intend to conduct an act of violence in support of their beliefs. But, as the Christchurch mosque shootings demonstrated, individuals on the fringes of these networks could still undertake a terrorist act with little forewarning. (C)

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AR 103/2018-19

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DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Wellington, New Zealand

AR 103A/2018-19
Assessment Report

5 July 2019

THE EXTREME RIGHT WING IN THE WEST: TRENDS AND DRIVERS

This assessment considers the nature of extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism in the West, including drivers and contributing factors.

- **The extreme right-wing (XRW) encompasses a broad umbrella of beliefs and ideologies. Often central is a perception of threats to concepts of a traditional white or ethnic-European culture or identity. The XRW is willing to use, or encourage, violence and terrorism to further its beliefs.**

- **Although increasingly transnational in nature, movements vary between countries. There is no accepted definition; most countries have considered it a domestic, not an international, issue. (R)**

- **Data on the XRW and XRW terrorism is patchy but we judge that this is a growing problem in the West. (R)**

- **There is no single factor that drives the XRW, but the idea that one's culture, identity and place in the world are threatened is key. This idea is exacerbated by economic and political changes. (R)**

- **The internet reinforces and accelerates hate, and facilitates the spread of XRW ideologies. It enables ideas to expand beyond geographic boundaries, and for individuals with XRW views to connect. (R)**

- **Despite the fact that New Zealand is less exposed to some global factors driving XRW ideologies, we are not immune. The XRW has a significant presence online, and it is probable that there are individuals in New Zealand supportive of a violent XRW ideology.**

What is extreme right wing terrorism?

The extreme right wing (XRW) encompasses a broad umbrella of beliefs and ideologies, including, but not limited to, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, authoritarianism and anti-democracy. In the West, a perception of threats to concepts of a traditional white or ethnic-European culture or identity is often central. Although sharing many of these beliefs, the extreme right differs from the far right in its willingness to use, or encourage, violence and terrorism to further its beliefs (see box 1). (R)

2.   The movement is fragmented and lacks a unifying narrative or leadership. Some organised groups exist (see box 2), but there is a wider pool of individuals with extremist views across diffuse networks, often online.

3.   From country to country the XRW looks different. Local contexts and histories – like the legacies of slavery in the US and colonisation in Western Europe – shape XRW narratives. But although national in character, XRW movements have common themes and an increasingly transnational flavour; over a third of recent fatal XRW attacks were inspired by others globally. While this is changing, XRW terrorism is often treated as a domestic, not international, issue; there has been limited information sharing. (R)

4.   No universal definition of the XRW exists and individual countries can have multiple definitions. And the term "right wing" can be politically sensitive. (R)

The scale of XRW terrorism in the West

5.   Numbers on XRW terrorism are unclear and probably too conservative. Each country has a different legal framework.

Box 1: What is terrorism? Legal definitions (U)

New Zealand: A terrorist act as defined in the New Zealand Terrorism Suppression Act 2002 has several elements:
- Motivation: ideological, religious or political;
- Serious action, which includes causing death;
- Intention to instil terror in a civilian population or to induce or compel the government to do or not do certain things.

USA: US federal definition states that a terrorist act is intended "(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping."

US federal definitions currently only enable "terrorism" action or charge against a person who is a member of a listed Foreign Terrorist Organisation. This excludes domestic actors (also known as Homegrown Violent Extremists) who do not support Foreign Terrorist Organisations.

Box 2: Examples of XRW groups (R)

Atomwaffen Division: a US-based neo-Nazi group founded in 2015. The group is based on the writings of the white supremacist James Mason and serial killer Charles Manson.

National Action: a UK-based neo-Nazi group that was established in 2013 and holds racist, anti-Semitic and homophobic views. The group's online propaganda material featured extremely violent imagery and language, and it promoted and encouraged acts of terrorism after the murder of MP Jo Cox in 2016. In December 2016, National Action became the first modern extreme right-wing group to be proscribed as a terrorist group.

Nordic Resistance Movement: a transnational, neo-Nazi organisation with a presence in Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. The organisation has carried out violence targeting gay people, ideological opponents and Muslim refugees.

Distinctions between crime, hate crime and terrorist incident blur, particularly where there is no hate crime offence (such as in New Zealand). So tracking numbers and trends can be difficult. Studies have shown that there has been some bias against XRW reporting in right of centre governments or political climates. (R)

6.   It is difficult to quantify the scale of XRW terrorism but there is anecdotal evidence that, while not new, this is a growing problem in the West. We are aware of at least 113 XRW attacks worldwide from 2013-2017, of which 47 attacks were in 2017 alone. And there seems to be an increasing number of radicalised individuals who look to violence or accept the use of violence in support of their views. (R)

7.   Despite difficulties in comparing and tracking trends, in the US incidents by XRW attackers outnumber those by Islamic extremists. But in Europe Islamic extremist attacks still predominate. Large-scale attacks like in Oklahoma City, Norway and Christchurch are relatively rare. But XRW individuals also frequently undertake lower-level attacks (often characterised as hate crimes) which can have a serious and damaging impact on individuals, communities and social cohesion. (R)

Causes of XRW terrorism

8.   No single factor causes an individual or group to radicalise, regardless of the ideological, religious or national context in which radicalisation occurs. Causal links between contributing factors and terrorism are unclear; which is even more the case with the broad ideologies and different national contexts of the XRW. But a range of social, political and cultural factors create a sense of perceived grievance for certain groups and can contribute to XRW ideologies. There are also catalysts for the spread of XRW ideas and violence, particularly the internet. (R)

9.   Identities do not themselves create extremism. But although common across various forms of extremism, issues of identity are at the core of the XRW. Individuals form identities through unifying characteristics, and those who do not share those characteristics can become "other". (R)

10.   If individuals feel that their identity is threatened, they can blame this threat on the "others" and develop hostility towards these other groups. Social, political and economic changes can further the idea that the "relative" position of an identity group is under threat, even if an individual is not personally affected by those changes. Ideologies can also provide an alternative identity if an individual loses their sense of belonging from an existing identity. (R)

11.   Beliefs such as anti-Semitism, anti-Islam, racism, sexism and homophobia are not causal factors of radicalisation in themselves. They provide a focus for perceived grievance, and reinforce and amplify XRW sentiment. (R)

Social, political and economic changes

12.   The idea that one's **culture, identity and place in the world are threatened** can contribute to XRW ideologies. This has been prompted by:

a.   Changing demographics: increased migration can be perceived as creating insecurity and threatening the cultural and economic status quo, particularly if a migrant group is noticeably different. Anti-immigration sentiment is reflected in mainstream discourse and some Western governments' policy. The growing visibility of non-white groups and culture, high profile terrorist incidents carried out by ethnic and religious minorities, and negative media coverage fuel conceptions that a minority group is threatening the wellbeing of the largely white members of XRW groups. (R)

b.   Liberalisation of society: as previously marginalised groups (such as immigrants, women, and LGBTQI individuals) gain increasing agency and power, this threatens the position and identity of the traditionally powerful (i.e. white males). This contributes to the grievance narrative for some XRW individuals and groups, who can feel that their ideas of fairness are not being respected, and that previously marginalised groups are "cutting in line". (R)

c.   Political mistrust: fed by perceived shortcomings in the way that governments have dealt with the above "threats", there has been growing apathy and distrust in political systems and elites, and lack of faith in "the system", including mainstream media. People have therefore looked for alternative answers and leaders. (R)

13.   **Economic downturns** can add to the sense that an identity group is under pressure (through changes resulting from recession and employment insecurity) even if an individual is not. Downturns do not have to directly impact an individual to impact XRW ideologies, and many XRW adherents are not economically deprived. But scapegoats are sought, and "others" often blamed. Ideas that governments are inept or complicit in financial crises also contribute to political mistrust and the idea that the system is "rigged", and establishment parties have suffered electorally. Far right parties have also been shown to benefit from financial crises.

14.   There has also been **changing discourse** in politics and media. Prevailing societal attitudes in the West have become more liberal, and this in turn has led to a backlash from the right. Because of this, the boundaries of what is considered as politically acceptable have shifted, which has created an increased permissive space for the XRW. And in recent years far right political parties have made gains across Europe. This shift to the right may also mean that there is more caution when dealing with problematic ideas on the right, including censoring of the far right or XRW online. (R)

Catalysts of change

15.   A fundamental catalyst for the spread of XRW ideas and violence is the **internet**. The internet enables the reinforcement of hate regardless of ideology, and has been an accelerant and amplifier of XRW ideas. It enables better connections between individuals globally, access to and sharing of ideas (often anonymously), and contributes to polarisation and XRW recruitment. Algorithms also enable

individuals to consume increasingly extreme content. Online white supremacist hate speech has increased in recent years. (R)

16.

What does this mean for New Zealand?

17.   As XRW terrorism is in many ways a national phenomenon, national context is important. New Zealand is a small, geographically isolated country, with a broadly pluralistic and inclusive society. And factors such as the Global Financial Crisis and populist politics have had a limited impact when compared to the US and Europe. (R)

18.   But New Zealand's distance from other countries is no longer the safeguard it was perceived to be in the past. The wide reach of the internet, international travel and trade, changing demographics and disconnected or vulnerable individuals susceptible to extremist ideology all mean that New Zealanders are linked into global trends and events. New Zealand is also influenced by the social, political and cultural factors that can create a sense of perceived grievance.

19.   Traditional white nationalist groups like the National Front have received little support, but the XRW has a significant presence online. And it is probable that there are individuals in New Zealand supportive of a violent XRW ideology. As the Christchurch mosque shootings demonstrated, individuals supportive of the XRW could undertake an attack with little forewarning. (R)

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The following is summarised information from a National Assessments Bureau assessment. Where possible, excerpts of the original document have been used. Some details are withheld under sections 6(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 as release would prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand government.

Note: Below is a summary of the Right Wing Extremism material contained in the Assessment AR 079/2019-20

Summary: AR 079/2019-20 Assessment Report

Date Issued: 29 November 2019

This assessment gives an overview of global terrorism developments in 2019 and an outlook for 2020.

Key judgements

Extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism is increasing in frequency and severity.

The Christchurch mosque shootings demonstrated the global scale and nature of XRW terrorism. Since then, there have been five more XRW attacks partly inspired by the Christchurch attack.

The XRW presents counter-terrorism challenges as it is difficult to define and to identify as terrorism; each country has a different definition and legal framework and much of the activity sits on the fine line between legal and criminal behaviour.

Graphic Summary

A list of selected XRW terrorist attacks worldwide in 2019, including the location, date and recorded deaths.

Introduction

Extreme right-wing (XRW) terrorism is growing (each of the Five Eyes countries has now experienced an XRW plot or attack).

The rising spectre of extreme right wing terrorism

XRW terrorism is increasing in scale and transnational nature. XRW terrorist attacks became more frequent in 2019, causing at least 77 deaths to date. And a culture of mimicry and one-upmanship means that attacks could get more lethal, particularly if we see more innovation like that attempted by the attacker in Halle (Germany) in his use of 3D printed weaponry (see graphic for details of attacks). White supremacy, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-immigration and anti-government sentiments are likely to continue to be motivating factors in attacks.
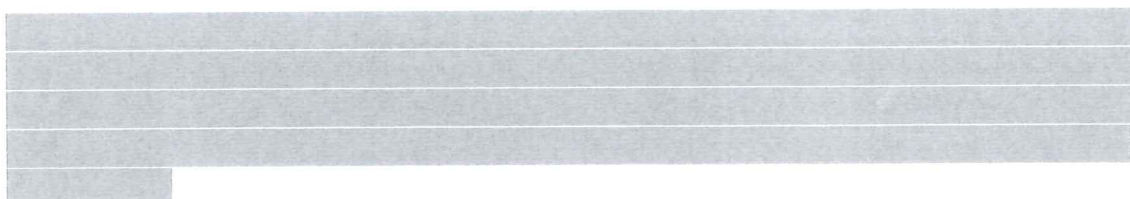
For Western governments, the XRW presents different challenges and so may require counter-terrorism (CT) measures that go beyond traditional approaches. Each country has a different definition and legal framework for XRW terrorism, and racist, homophobic and sexist violence is common. So it is not always clear what is a crime or hate crime, what is a terrorist attack, and whether a definite distinction can be made. And there are freedom of speech and association issues, as much of the activity sits on the fine line between legal and criminal behaviour.

There is a growing trend of terrorists posting their manifestos and ideologies online, and livestreaming their attacks. More is being done to clamp down on XRW content online, such as the work being done by the Christchurch Call. But banned users can switch to other platforms. And platforms are struggling, or refusing, to police content that sits between legitimate views and criminal content.

All XRW terrorist attacks since 2011 have been by lone actors or small, self-directed cells. These attacks are harder to detect and disrupt, as intelligence is often limited or non-existent. And it can be difficult to draw a clear causal link between a violent action and an extremist ideology. Future lone actor attackers are likely to continue to display more diverse, blurred motivations and may include individuals whose ideology is unclear.

Regional trends

In Europe there is increased attention on the XRW. Although XRW violence is an old problem, it is shifting from being treated as a domestic to a transnational issue. The Halle synagogue attack, with its similarities to the Christchurch attack and use of English in the perpetrator's livestream video, show the increasingly global aspirations of the XRW in Europe.

In the US XRW attacks outnumber other forms of terrorism and Canada is increasingly aware of XRW terrorism. The XRW remains politically sensitive for the US, but for first time since 9/11 the domestic CT framework gives equal weight to domestic and external threats, particularly the XRW. Both countries are aware of gender-based ideological violence, particularly from the incel (involuntary celibate) movement.

The impact of CT measures

But terrorist tactics adapt and evolve to get around CT measures, as evidenced by the current lone actor threats from XRW.

Local trends

The Christchurch mosque shootings shifted New Zealand's terrorism environment; the full consequences are still unclear, but there will likely be a long-term impact. The attack was the first major successful terrorist attack in New Zealand and it could act as precedent for the small number of radicalised individuals with XRW views domestically. Although there are no signs of current mobilisation to violence, as the Christchurch attack showed, an attack can happen with little or no warning.

Annex 1: Other terrorism trends

There are concerns that environmental issues may be co-opted by the XRW (as seen in references to eco-fascism in the Christchurch perpetrator's manifesto)

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TE RANGA TĀTARI TAKE
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assessment

This assessment describes the online incel subculture and some of the national security challenges it presents.

Incels: A Violent Misogynist Subculture

GRAPHIC CONTENT WARNING: this assessment contains highly offensive, sexist, racist, and derogatory content
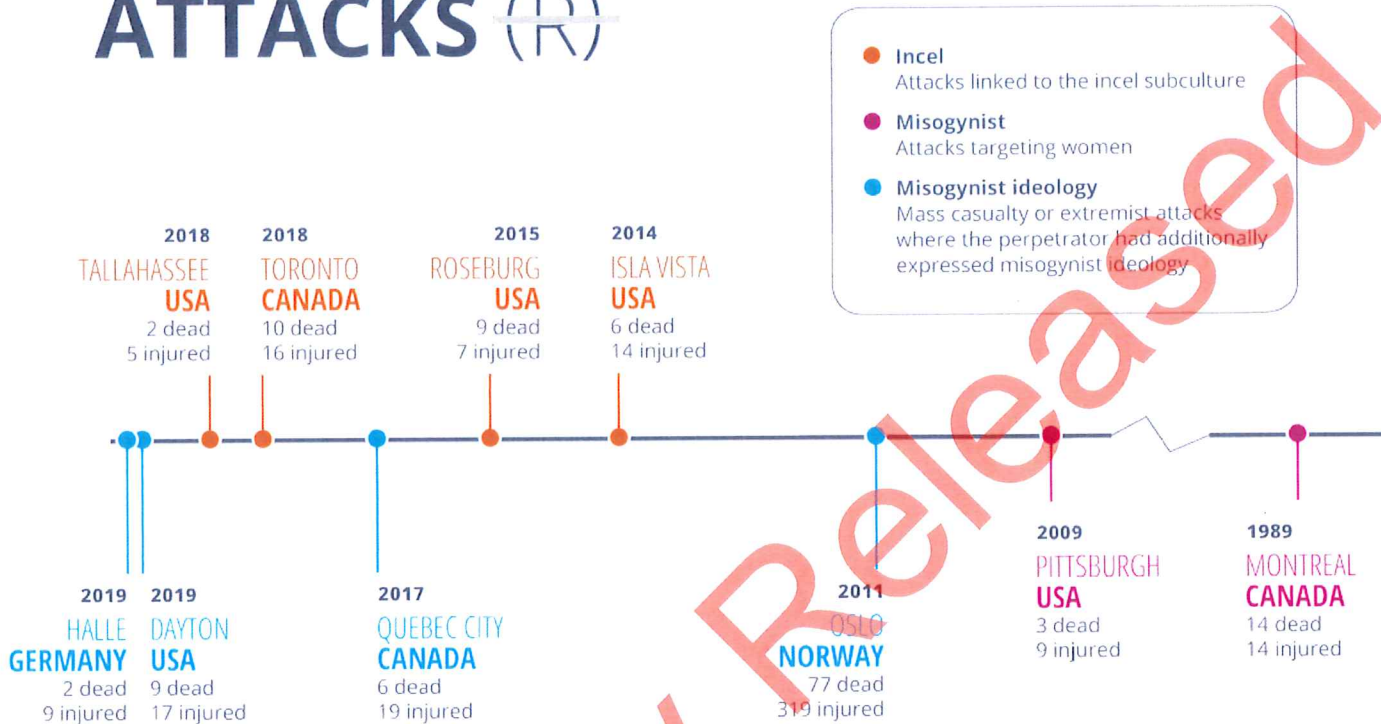
Incels are part of a largely online misogynist subculture that advocates suspicion and hatred of women because of perceived social and sexual rejection. Many in the community do not promote violence, but at their most extreme, a small number advocate for violence in response to perceived rejection. (R)

Since 2014, the subculture has been connected with at least five violent attacks that have resulted in around 27 deaths. Incel beliefs have also featured in the ideologies of several extreme right-wing (XRW) attackers, and there is often an overlap between XRW ideologies and incel beliefs. (R)
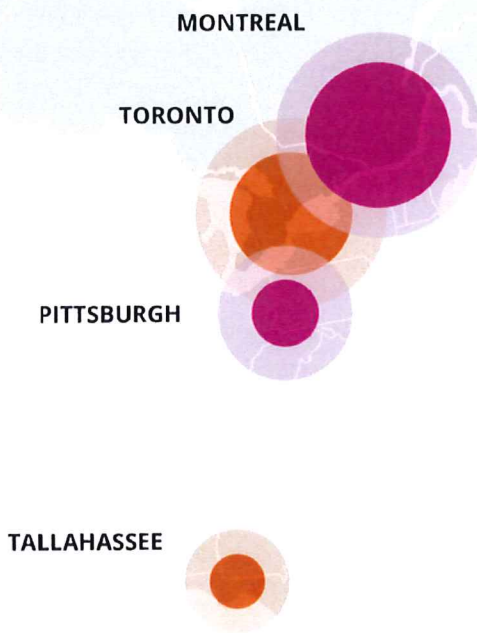
Whether incel violence is terrorism continues to be debated. The incel subculture highlights many of the challenges of ideologically driven violence; particularly the difficulties of policing a largely anonymous online movement that often exists on the blurred line between legal and criminal behaviour, and the way that violent actors learn from one another. (R)

The reach of the subculture in New Zealand is likely small, but as with other forms of internet-based hate, geography is no longer a physical barrier to these ideas. There are some indications that New Zealand-based individuals identify with this subculture. (R)

KEY VIOLENT MISOGYNIST ATTACKS (R)

● Incel
Attacks linked to the incel subculture

● Misogynist
Attacks targeting women

● Misogynist ideology
Mass casualty or extremist attacks where the perpetrator had additionally expressed misogynist ideology

2018
TALLAHASSEE
USA
2 dead
5 injured

2018
TORONTO
CANADA
10 dead
16 injured

2015
ROSEBURG
USA
9 dead
7 injured

2014
ISLA VISTA
USA
6 dead
14 injured

2019
HALLE
GERMANY
2 dead
9 injured

2019
DAYTON
USA
9 dead
17 injured

2017
QUEBEC CITY
CANADA
6 dead
19 injured

2011
OSLO
NORWAY
77 dead
319 injured

2009
PITTSBURGH
USA
3 dead
9 injured

1989
MONTREAL
CANADA
14 dead
14 injured

● Dead
● Injured

MONTREAL

TORONTO

ROSEBURG

PITTSBURGH

ISLA VISTA

TALLAHASSEE

1. In April 2018 Alek Minassian killed 10 people and wounded 16 in a van attack in Toronto (Canada) that he claimed was part of the "Incel Rebellion". Incels (involuntary celibates) are part of a predominantly online misogynist subculture often seen by society as worthy of pity or ridicule, if not as part of a normalised culture of hatred and violence towards women. Since 2014, the subculture has been connected to at least five violent attacks, killing around 27 and wounding around 42. All known incidents have taken place in North America, but globally some XRW attacks have included elements of incel beliefs. These include the anti-feminist rhetoric of the Halle (Germany) synagogue attack in October 2019. (R)

What is the incel subculture?

2. Emerging from the mid-2000s, the incel subculture is anti-feminist and misogynistic. Incels' beliefs centre on perceived social and sexual rejection; that feminism corrupts modern culture and women are more privileged than men and dominate society. They advocate for the redistribution of sex, curtailment of women's rights and return to traditional gender hierarchies. Incels use many of the same online platforms as the XRW, and similarly use online and meme culture to foster identity and belonging. There are thought to be tens of thousands of (mostly young, male) supporters online. (R)

3. Many in the community do not promote violence. Individuals often simply express unhappiness at their "incel" status or debate non-violent issues such as "ascending" or "looksmaxing" (see Annex). At their most extreme, a small number of incels advocate the legalisation of rape and other violence against women, openly praising attacks by incels and other mass casualty attackers. (R)

4. There is an overlap between incel beliefs and XRW ideology. Several violent incels have demonstrated both misogyny and racism in their rhetoric, the XRW often includes misogynist beliefs such as the need to control women's sexuality. Although the subculture was not fully formed in 2011, Anders Breivik's manifesto included many views shared by modern incels. Alexandre Bissonnette, perpetrator of the Quebec mosque attack in 2017, may have considered targeting feminist groups before choosing a mosque.

Is incel violence terrorism?

5. There is ongoing debate as to whether the incel subculture has enough of a worldview for its violence to be described as terrorism. Misassian, for example, has not been charged with terrorist offences. Some terrorism experts state that incel beliefs are too narrow to be an ideology, and rather make up part of other belief sets such as the XRW. Other assessments

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE – AS OLD AS TIME

UN Women estimates that 35% o women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

And ideological gender-based violence is not new. Anti-feminism or misogyny has also been linked to mass casualty attacks. In 1989 Marc Lepine shot and killed 14 women in Montreal. A suicide note from the perpetrator spoke of his anger and hatred of feminists, and listed 19 Quebec feminists. In 2009 George Sodini killed three women and injured nine others at a fitness centre in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The rhetoric of these two individuals includes narratives that have since become associated with the incel movement, and Sodini in particular is revered in parts of the incel community.

███████ suggest that there is a broader system view with a desire to bring about change through violence. (R)

6 Whether or not it is defined as terrorism, violence from the incel subculture highlights some challenges of less coherent forms of violent extremism, particularly XRW terrorism. These include:

- **The internet as a catalyst of ideas and violence:** there is a large amount of misogynist rhetoric online, of which the incel subculture is only part. It can be difficult to distinguish between rhetoric and intent, and to monitor this intent (particularly as rhetoric is often anonymous). Incel rhetoric is not treated in the same way as other forms of extremist propaganda, because it has not historically been considered a genuine threat. Some content is starting to be policed; in 2017 and 2019 Reddit banned two incel subreddits. ██

- **The fine line between legal and criminal behaviour:** most of the beliefs shared online by incels are legal, and are covered by principles of freedom of speech. And some (like a return to traditional gender hierarchies) are relatively mainstream. ██

- **Violence with increasingly blurred motivations:** there is often no clear causal link between ideology and violent action carried out by incels. There have also been incidents of violence where the individual displays misogynist motivations but no direct link to incels; or where an attack is not a direct outlet of any ideology, as in in the example of the killing of an unconscious man in Canada in 2016 where the incident was blamed by the attacker on "frustration from being involuntarily celibate". ██

- **The problem of reclassifying with hindsight:** gender-based violence is endemic, and as with racist or homophobic violence, establishing scale or extent when looking at past events can be complicated. It can be difficult to establish whether the threat is increasing or if authorities are now classifying attacks differently. Incel violence is currently only classified as such if the perpetrator directly links himself to the subculture. ██

- **Violent actors learning from other forms of terrorism:** tactics used are adopted from other forms of terrorism, such as vehicle attacks and mass shootings. Incels also look to the way other attackers present themselves, such as the growing use of manifestos and memes, the importance of the individual and the culture of glorification of attacks and one-upmanship. ██

The New Zealand context

7 While there are indications that some New Zealanders identify with this subculture, we do not currently know the extent of their engagement. Incel is a relatively new subculture in New Zealand and authorities' knowledge is continuing to grow. We judge that it is likely that any New Zealand national security risk posed by incels will currently fall under the XRW threat. Individuals have also selectively adopted aspects of the incel subculture, along with a range of other views, as part of their personal ideologies. ██████

Annex: selected incel language

This annex does not include extremely derogatory or offensive language.

Alpha/Beta: Alpha males are leaders, beta males are portrayed as weak and emasculated.

Ascending: The process of going from being an incel to a "normie" or a "Chad" (see below) in a perceived sexual caste system.

Blackpill: One step further than the redpill (see below). That no amount of self-improvement will help certain people obtain romantic or sexual partners, and those people cannot ascend (see above).

Chad: A derogatory term for attractive men who are "sexually successful" with women.

ER: Elliot Rodger, perpetrator of the Isla Vista attack and seen as a major source of inspiration in the subculture. "Going ER" or "pulling an ER" refers to an incel killing people.

Femoid/Female Humanoid Organism (FMO): Term to describe women as sub- or non-human.

Looksmaxing: The practice of trying to enhance one's appearance, through exercise or cosmetic appearance changes.

MGTOW: Men Going Their Own Way – a group of men who identify as wanting nothing to do with women

Redpill: Generally refers to a right-wing call to consciousness. In the incel community, it refers to the idea that women are predisposed to only be attracted to certain types of men.

Stacey: Used in a derogatory way to refer to an attractive woman who is only interested in attractive men.

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AR 85/2019-20

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