

Queensland
Counter-Terrorism Strategy

2011-13

Message from the Premier



Since 2004, Queensland's counter-terrorism arrangements have grown from strength to strength. However we can not become complacent with our progress. The terrorism threat remains real and ever present.

Our capabilities and arrangements must remain agile and align with the contemporary risk environment in which we live and operate.

This, the third Queensland Counter-Terrorism Strategy ensures we maintain this approach.

In 2011-13 we will continue to work in partnership with local, state and federal governments and industry to safeguard the Queensland community.

We recognise that in the current climate we must strive to deliver this Strategy in a targeted and integrated way which fosters innovation and cost effective efficiency and we will do so.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Bligh". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anna Bligh MP
Premier of Queensland
and Minister for Reconstruction

Vision

To safeguard the Queensland community through adaptable, targeted, integrated and resilience focused counter-terrorism arrangements

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Current environment: threat, risk and emerging trends

Terrorism is the use of violence by groups or individuals pursuing political objectives.¹

“Terrorism is expected to be a destabilising global force for some time to come and presents a serious threat to Australians and Australian interests, not just overseas but at home”.²

This Strategy is developed from an assessment of risk that is based on the evaluation of the current terrorism threat context in Australia. This ensures counter-terrorism activities in Queensland continually align with the contemporary risk environment in which we live and operate.

Since 2001:

- More than 100 Australians have been killed in terrorist attacks overseas. Numerous other attacks have been thwarted in Australia.
- Thirty-six Australians have been charged with terrorism offences in Australia.
- Twenty-four people have pleaded guilty or been convicted of terrorism offences.
- More than 40 Australians have had their passports revoked or applications denied for reasons related to terrorism.

The main terrorist threat to Australia comes from extremists who are part of, or take inspiration from, the global violent jihad movement. Terrorists are resilient, adaptable, innovative, flexible and able to recover from setbacks and to change their behaviours to survive and operate. We must therefore be equally adaptive in our approach; and ensure we continually monitor emerging trends, threats and activities and develop innovative and mature response capabilities to counter any threat.

A terrorist attack passes through a number of phases. Countering terrorism requires a coordinated approach by all stakeholders focussed on disrupting all phases of the attack process. This includes prevention by regulation, engagement, security hardening and preparation through development of plans, training and enhancement of coordination arrangements.

The possibility that terrorist groups may conduct one or more of the phases of an operation (including attack) within Queensland must not be discounted. Based on international terrorist operations and attacks, it is clear that there are a wide range of areas in Queensland, which if attacked, would satisfy the goals of a terrorist group. In addition there are locations within Queensland which if used maliciously could provide the resources, finance, weapons and training required to construct a successful terrorist operation.³

¹ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.3.

² Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.3.

³ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.3 (with updates from latest statistics).

Purpose

The aim of this Strategy is to provide guidance to Queensland Government agencies and their stakeholders in the key areas of focus for counter-terrorism activities in 2011-13.

Our approach

The Queensland Government and its agencies will deliver this Strategy in a way which is:

- **Adaptive** - Remain agile and contemporary through continually monitoring emerging trends and learning lessons
- **Targeted** - Focus protective security strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen detection and deterrence mechanisms
- **Integrated** – Linking and connecting arrangements from a National to State level and ensuring state arrangements are interconnected and leverage off other related hazard frameworks
- **Resilience Focused** – Strengthen resilience through embedding plans within existing arrangements, promoting the need for business continuity and creating awareness of resilient characteristics.

Key strategic areas of focus

The following are the five key strategic areas of focus for 2011-2013:

- **Countering Violent Extremism**
- **Mass Gatherings**
- **Infrastructure Protection**
- **Public Information and Modern Media**
- **Interoperability**

These areas have been identified through a scanning process, which includes consideration of the current and emerging threat context and an assessment of current gaps and recent lessons learnt.

Administrative framework

The Queensland Government actively participates within the National Counter-Terrorism framework to develop interoperability and achieve consistency in outcomes across our arrangements. This is primarily through participation on the National Counter-Terrorism Committee, which coordinates national arrangements such as those outlined in the National Counter-Terrorism Plan. National arrangements are based on a comprehensive approach of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

The Queensland counter-terrorism framework is aligned to the National arrangements and is driven by this Strategy and the Queensland Counter-Terrorism Plan. The Strategy sets the strategic direction for the future while the Plan maintains current arrangements. These documents ensure that a coordinated, whole-of-government approach is adopted, that is appropriate and proportionate to the terrorism threat and risk context in Queensland.

Queensland's well-established counter-terrorism arrangements are supported by the Queensland Counter-Terrorism Committee (QCTC). The QCTC provides the forum for counter-terrorism coordination and information sharing amongst key Queensland agencies and provides coordination across the whole of government. Through the QCTC the maintenance and development of a stronger state-wide counter-terrorism capability is achieved.

The QCTC, through its member agencies, is responsible for the development, oversight and implementation of this Strategy. The QCTC is chaired by the Queensland Police Service and comprised of senior representation from the following Queensland Government agencies:

- **Queensland Police Service**
- **Department of the Premier and Cabinet**
- **Department of Community Safety**
- **Department of Transport and Main Roads**
- **Queensland Health**
- **Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation**
- **Department of Environment and Resource Management.**

Multicultural Affairs Queensland plays an important role as an observer and advisor to the Committee.

Responsibilities

The Queensland Government and its agencies have primary responsibility in dealing with a terrorist situation in Queensland; and have responsibility for establishing effective counter-terrorism prevention, response, investigation and consequence management arrangements.

Agencies of the QCTC have a responsibility to implement this Strategy through development of specific initiatives which address, and are in line with, the activities outlined under each key strategic area of focus (as relevant). Agencies are responsible for reporting to the QCTC on their progress of initiatives as part of their annual program of activity.

The QCTC is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and reporting on progress annually to the Queensland Government through Cabinet. The QCTC is also responsible for taking an active role in promoting the Strategy to non QCTC government agencies and encouraging their participation.

The Queensland Government recognises that countering terrorism can not be done in isolation and that business and the community play an important role within our arrangements to assist in strengthening our counter-terrorism efforts.

Agencies of the QCTC have established partnerships with the community and industry stakeholders to implement counter-terrorism arrangements, including those outlined in Queensland Government plans covering infrastructure protection and mass gatherings. It is the continued responsibility of agencies to engage with relevant stakeholders and the community as appropriate to implement initiatives.

Continuous improvement

This Strategy is Queensland's third Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The threat of terrorism is constantly evolving and Queensland continues to learn and tailor our approach to ensure we are balanced and proportionate to the threat and risk context.

In the 2008-10 Strategy Queensland focused on five strategic directions for the development and implementation of counter-terrorism initiatives. These were to:

- **Engage:** Promote the education and involvement of the broader community in preventing, preparing, responding and recovering from terrorism
- **Cooperate:** Strengthen arrangements by communicating, coordinating and collaborating with stakeholders
- **Protect:** Enhance detection and deterrence to ensure a safe environment
- **Exercise:** Practise and test counter-terrorism arrangements through exercises
- **Develop:** Refine our preparation, response and recovery arrangements.

This 2011-13 Strategy builds on the work commenced in 2008-10 and importantly ensures that, where appropriate and required, we have shifted our focus and priorities to align to the threat and risk environment.

The terrorism threat remains real and is ever present. This 2011-13 Strategy sets the direction for the development and implementation of counter-terrorism initiatives across government for 2011-13 and is in line with the current security context and relevant national priorities and strategies.

Lessons learnt from international, national and state levels, as well as those from activities conducted under the 2008-2010 Strategy, have also been incorporated to ensure we foster a continuous improvement philosophy to counter-terrorism efforts.

QCTC agencies will continually monitor and assess emerging trends and lessons, including best practice in arrangements and ensure these are incorporated where appropriate into initiatives under this Strategy.

Countering violent extremism

National Threat Context:

A “shift apparent since 2004 has been the increase in the terrorist threat from people born or raised in Australia, who have become influenced by the violent jihadist message. The bombings in London on 7 July 2005, which were carried out by British nationals, brought into stark relief the real threat of globally-inspired but locally generated attacks in Western democracies, including Australia.

A number of Australians are known to subscribe to this message, some of whom might be prepared to engage in violence. Many of these individuals were born in Australia and they come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.

The pool of those committed to violent extremism in Australia is not static – over time some move away from extremism while others become extreme”.⁴

Queensland Context:

The effective prevention of violent extremism involves combining an appropriate security response with broader strategies to enhance social cohesion and resilience and lessen the appeal of violent extremism.⁵

The Queensland Government: ‘Fair Communities’ ambition under the Government’s Toward Q2 Strategy acknowledges the need to address disadvantage and ensure people are connected within communities.

As a result of this context, Countering Violent Extremism will be a key strategic area of focus in our counter-terrorism arrangements for 2011-13. Over the next three years, the Queensland Government will focus on:

- **Reducing** the factors that contribute to individuals or communities being radicalised
- **Identifying and diverting** those at risk
- **Positively promoting** the benefits of community and non-government involvement in countering violent extremism.

To achieve these objectives, Queensland Government agencies will seek opportunities to:

- **Support** national and state projects that develop counter-narrative communications to challenge extremist messaging
- **Encourage** participation and community engagement amongst diverse groups to promote a sense of belonging
- **Promote** scanning activities which assist in early identification of at risk or extremist individuals or groups; and develop targeted treatment options to mitigate or appropriately address the identified risks
- **Create** awareness of information sharing processes to report persons or groups promoting the use of violent extremism.

⁴ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.ii.

⁵ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.65.

Mass gatherings

National Threat Context:

“Critical infrastructure and places of mass gathering feature prominently in terrorist attacks linked to al Qa’ida and its affiliates—characterised by their symbolic nature, concentration of people in enclosed spaces and economic and social importance”.⁶

“Periodic attacks or attempted attacks, including those inflicting mass casualties, can be expected for some time to come”.⁷

Queensland Context:

By concentrating large numbers of people at high density in accessible places, at regular or predictable times, mass gatherings present the opportunity for terrorists to inflict mass casualties, cause economic damage and instil public fear.⁸

Examples of mass gatherings in Queensland include shopping precincts and malls; theme parks; large scale concerts, sporting events and popular tourist locations.

As a result of this context Mass Gatherings will be a key strategic area of focus in our counter-terrorism arrangements for 2011-13. Over the next three years, the Queensland Government will focus on:

- **Avenues** which assist owners and operators of Queensland’s mass gatherings to protect their venues and locations
- **Engagement** arrangements with Queensland’s priority mass gathering sites
- **Robust** arrangements to effectively respond to mass casualty incidents.

To achieve these objectives, Queensland Government agencies will seek opportunities to:

- **Encourage** consideration of protective planning arrangements for special events
- **Liaise** with owners and operators of fixed mass gatherings to encourage protective security planning and information sharing
- **Facilitate** the provision of advice and material to assist owners and operators in their protective security planning
- **Ensure** Queensland is ready to respond effectively to incidents involving mass casualties, including ensuring an effective Health response that takes into consideration evidentiary requirements
- **Strengthen** Queensland’s response arrangements to mass casualty incidents through connection into national and state mechanisms to assist non-Australian residents and tourists.

⁶ National Counter-Terrorism Committee. *National Guidelines for Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Terrorism*, Attorney-General’s Department, Canberra, 2011, p.13.

⁷ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.11.

⁸ National Counter-Terrorism Committee. *National Guidelines for the Protection of Places of Mass Gathering from Terrorism*, Attorney-General’s Department, Canberra, 2011, p.3.

Infrastructure protection

National Threat Context:

“At the national level, critical infrastructure is defined as, those physical facilities, supply chains, information technologies and communication networks which, if destroyed, degraded or rendered unavailable for an extended period, would significantly impact on the social or economic well-being of the nation, or affect Australia’s ability to conduct national defence and ensure national security”.⁹

“We know from experience that mass transport systems, places where people gather in large numbers, and critical infrastructure have been the target of terrorist attack overseas, and it is likely that these will remain attractive targets”.¹⁰

“Information and communications technology permeates much of Australia’s critical infrastructure and underpins our economy. It is vulnerable to exploitation by state or non-state actors seeking to damage Australia’s economy and necessitates an effective and coordinated response”.¹¹

Queensland Context:

Under the Queensland Government *Toward Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland*, the Government has set a target to become Australia’s strongest economy, with infrastructure that anticipates growth.

As a result of this context, Infrastructure Protection is a key strategic area of focus in our counter-terrorism arrangements for 2011-13. Over the next three years, the Queensland Government will focus on:

- **Robust** and secure communication and information systems
- **Strengthening** the security of mass passenger surface transport operations
- **Contemporary** policies and arrangements that protect Queensland’s infrastructure and allow growth.

To achieve these objectives, Queensland Government agencies will seek opportunities to:

- **Contemporise** infrastructure policy arrangements and related plans and include consideration of integration with other risks arrangements
- **Encourage** an intelligence-led, risk informed approach to protective security for infrastructure, including identified critical infrastructure
- **Facilitate** engagement with infrastructure owners and operators and encourage information sharing
- **Enhance** the security of information and communication infrastructure
- **Strengthen** communication security, including ensuring continuity arrangements for communications systems
- **Implement** and maintain arrangements for the protection of national security information systems
- **Test** arrangements through exercise and evaluation.

⁹ National Counter-Terrorism Committee. *National Guidelines for Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Terrorism*, Attorney-General’s Department, Canberra, 2011, p.3.

¹⁰ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.43.

¹¹ Australian Government. *Counter-Terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia - Protecting Our Community*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2010, p.45.

Public information and modern media

National Threat Context:

Staying informed through public announcements during a terrorism threat or incident will ensure business and the community are connected into our arrangements and will assist in the management of the situation.

“As a consequence of rapid advances in technological capability, Australia must remain technologically and scientifically alert, agile and robust so as to anticipate and respond to new and emerging threats arising from the ongoing technology revolution”.¹²

Queensland Context:

The importance of coordinating public information has been a key finding of post-disaster reviews in Queensland. Should Queensland experience a terrorism related incident, it will be vital that the Queensland Government coordinates and distributes reliable and consistent information in order to maintain public safety and meet public needs; keep people informed and engaged; and support Queensland Government crisis management activities.

Queensland recognises the need to remain technologically alert and agile and does so through developing innovative ways to use modern media and communications technology to enhance our ability, not only to detect emerging threats, but also to manage terrorism related operations, investigations and incidents.

As a result of this context Public Information and Modern Media is a key strategic area of focus in our counter-terrorism arrangements for 2011-13. Over the next three years, the Queensland Government will focus on:

- **Comprehensive** public messaging tools
- **Contemporary** and innovative operational use of modern media
- **Arrangements** which provide and reinforce consistent advice delivered by agencies to strengthen messages and avoid public confusion.

To achieve these objectives, Queensland Government agencies will seek opportunities to:

- **Identify and utilise** social media for investigations, incident management and public messaging
- **Encourage** innovative use of modern communication technology to enhance capabilities such as investigations, intelligence, negotiations and surveillance
- **Focus** on coordinated arrangements for public messaging
- **Encourage** public awareness of the national security hotline number and encouragement of reporting suspicious activity
- **Promotes** understanding and awareness of the National Terrorism Public Alert System and its applicability
- **Identify** and understand how to communicate with all parts of the community, including what forms of language should be used and by what means.

¹² K Rudd, *The First National Security Statement to the Australian Parliament: Address by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Kevin Rudd MP*, 4 December 2008, p.24.

Interoperability

National Threat Context:

The future for national security crisis coordination, of which counter-terrorism is one component, will be characterised by a comprehensively integrated approach across Government agencies and connected to state and territory arrangements.

The Commonwealth Government has integrated crisis coordination arrangements and mechanisms applicable to counter-terrorism and natural disasters.

From a counter-terrorism perspective the core principles of the national counter terrorism arrangements rely on strong cooperative, coordinated and consultative relationships.

Queensland Context:

Although Queensland still maintains separate counter-terrorism and disaster frameworks, a shift has occurred in ensuring closer alignment and interoperability of arrangements in line with the national shift. Terrorist related incidents will require a multi-agency response and may include disaster management components as part of the response and recovery phases.

In order to develop our capacity and capability to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism, agencies and capabilities need the ability to interact effectively and exchange and share information.

As a result of this context, Interoperability is a key strategic area of focus in our counter-terrorism arrangements for 2011-13. Over the next three years, the Queensland Government will focus on:

- **Appropriate** integration of other hazard arrangements into terrorism response and recovery frameworks
- **Protection** arrangements for hazardous materials which could be exploited by terrorists
- **Enhanced** and secure information sharing arrangements
- **Mechanisms** which facilitate interoperability between agencies and capabilities.

To achieve these objectives, Queensland Government agencies will seek opportunities to:

- **Encourage** information sharing between agencies at all levels
- **Ensure** appropriate protection arrangements for the handling, sharing and storage of national security information
- **Integrate** appropriate components of Queensland's disaster management framework to ensure a holistic response to terrorism incidents
- **Focus** on an integrated and coordinated approach across responsible agencies for the protection of hazardous materials
- **Enhance** the ability of agencies to interact and communicate at the tactical, operational and strategic levels
- **Enhance** situational awareness, decision making and interoperability between capabilities and agencies
- **Develop** effective methods to identify, share and apply relevant knowledge and technologies as they emerge.

Implementation and reporting

The QCTC is committed to the implementation and delivery of the Strategy and will closely monitor its progress. QCTC member agencies will translate the Strategy into specific initiatives and performance measures, which will be outlined in their Agency Counter-Terrorism Strategic Plans. Agencies will report to the QCTC on their progress in delivering initiatives against the Strategy as part of their annual program of activity reports.

The QCTC will also undertake whole of government coordination to encourage non-QCTC agency participation under the Strategy. The QCTC will monitor the implementation of the Strategy across government and report on progress annually to the Queensland Government.

Evaluation

Each initiative developed under the Strategy should incorporate an evaluation mechanism within its project or implementation plan. A working group will be established and overseen by the Queensland Counter-Terrorism Committee to conduct an overall evaluation of the Strategy at its end period. The evaluation will be conducted in a timely manner to ensure any recommendations and lessons learnt are incorporated into the considerations for the 2014-16 Strategy.

Review

An annual review will be conducted in line with the reporting framework which ensures an annual report to Cabinet outlining the progress and achievements of the Strategy.

For further information about the **Queensland Counter-Terrorism Strategy**,

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