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# Texas Domestic Terrorism Threat Assessment



January 2020



**Texas**  
**Department of Public Safety**

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# **Texas Domestic Terrorism Threat Assessment**

A State Intelligence Estimate

Produced by the:  
Texas Fusion Center  
Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division  
Texas Department of Public Safety

In collaboration with federal, state, and local law enforcement and criminal justice agencies

January 2020

This report is the UNCLASSIFIED version of an original report containing Law Enforcement Sensitive information. All information and citations from the original report that are confidential by law or excepted from public disclosure requirements have been redacted from this unclassified version. In some cases, the original Law Enforcement Sensitive citations have been replaced with citations to public sources that serve as alternative references.

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## (U) Executive Summary

(U) The key analytic judgments of this assessment include:

- **(U) Domestic terrorism poses a persistent and varied threat to the State of Texas.** There are three overall types of domestic terrorism: racially motivated, anti-government, and single issue. Each type contains further subsets, creating a fair amount of variance within this threat. Texas has previous or current activity associated with each of these types of domestic terrorism. This includes the recent loss of 22 lives when a suspected domestic terrorist opened fire in an El Paso, Texas Walmart.
- **(U) Based on the prevalence of recently conducted attacks nationwide, White Racially Motivated (WRM) is currently the most violently active domestic terrorism type.** Since 2018, WRM actors were responsible for at least three major attacks in the United States (including one in Texas), and several thwarted incidents. This activity outnumbered the other domestic terrorism types. While other types of domestic terrorism have shown threatening and forceful behavior, the loss of life from recent WRM attacks elevates the nature of this specific threat.
- **(U) Although not a new movement, Involuntary Celibates (Incels) are an emerging domestic terrorism threat as current adherents demonstrate marked acts or threats of violence in furtherance of their social grievance.** Once viewed as a criminal threat by many law enforcement authorities, Incels are now seen as a growing domestic terrorism concern due to the ideological nature of recent Incel attacks internationally, nationwide, and in Texas. What begins as a personal grievance due to perceived rejection by women may morph into allegiance to, and attempts to further, an Incel Rebellion. The result has thrust the Incel movement into the realm of domestic terrorism. The violence demonstrated by Incels in the past decade, coupled with extremely violent online rhetoric, suggests this particular threat could soon match, or potentially eclipse, the level of lethality demonstrated by other domestic terrorism types.
- **(U) Shifts in domestic terrorism activity can occur quickly and frequently, depending on changes in political or social circumstances, requiring law enforcement to remain alert to all forms of potential domestic terrorism.** Because domestic terrorism requires a political or social motivation, the potential for changes in these areas to produce quick swings in activity remains high. Events such as elections, new legislation, and social justice-related incidents all have the potential to spark activity in previously dormant movements, or see the emergence of new domestic terrorism actors. Since all domestic terrorism types have a presence in Texas, it is necessary for Texas-based law enforcement to maintain situational awareness across this threat spectrum.
- **(U) Digital media both facilitates radicalization/recruitment, inspiration, and communication between domestic actors, and allows greater involvement by international elements in domestic terrorism.** Digital media platforms are powerful tools domestic terrorists use to spread their message to a wide audience. These platforms allow global opportunities to post manifestos, live stream attacks, and seek inspiration. They also provide opportunities for actors with similar beliefs to communicate internationally. A number of recent events highlight a trend of U.S. domestic terrorists seeking inspiration or training from foreign actors, and foreign-based individuals in turn finding inspiration in attacks occurring in the United States.

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- **(U) Many domestic terrorism actors intentionally attack soft target locations, threatening the public's sense of wellbeing and security.** A number of recent domestic terrorism attacks occurred at soft target locations, and several involved an attacker actively advocating for others to follow their example. Many domestic terrorism actors favor soft targets, including large, defenseless populations and symbolic representations of something that actor opposes. Additionally, successful attacks against soft targets can have a demoralizing effect on a targeted population, instilling fear of everyday tasks.
- **(U) The lack of a chargeable federal or state domestic terrorism statute makes it difficult for law enforcement to investigate, prosecute, and track overall domestic terrorism trends.** Presently there is no chargeable offense for domestic terrorism at the federal or state level in Texas. Although there is a federal statute defining domestic terrorism, it does not include any domestic terrorism offenses. Thus, for the purposes of investigation and prosecution, law enforcement must rely on a variety of other criminal offenses such as murder, arson, fraud, hate crime, or assault. This complicates the ability for law enforcement agencies to track domestic terrorism incidents, and therefore trends, within a given jurisdiction.
- **(U) Decentralized, leaderless domestic terrorism movements, coupled with the potential for blurred motivations or blended ideologies, challenge law enforcement to accurately identify domestic terrorism actors and prevent future attacks.** The individualistic nature of recent domestic terrorism attackers challenges law enforcement to identify these actors prior to an incident occurring. An individual may choose not to share potential plans with anyone, and issue only vague threats prior to launching their attack. Additionally, as witnessed in several recent attacks, the individual involved may ascribe to a blurred or blended ideology. This not only challenges the identification of that actor as a domestic terrorist, but it can complicate identifying potential targets before an attack occurs.

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## **(U) Acknowledgements**

(U) The Texas Fusion Center collaborated with law enforcement and criminal justice agencies across Texas and the United States in the production of this State Intelligence Estimate. Their contributions were invaluable to developing an accurate and complete assessment of the domestic terrorism threat in Texas. These contributions underscore the commitment among agencies across Texas and the United States to share information, intelligence, and capabilities to address public safety threats across all jurisdictions and disciplines at all levels. We are grateful to the numerous agencies that contributed to this assessment.



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## **(U) Preface**

(U) On August 14, 2019, in the aftermath of the domestic terrorism attack in El Paso, Texas, Governor Greg Abbott directed the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to work with local, state, and federal partners to produce a state intelligence assessment on the threat of domestic terrorism in Texas. DPS is submitting this report in response to that directive.

(U) There is no consensus on the definition of domestic terrorism. For the purposes of this report, domestic terrorism is the furtherance of political or social goals by U.S.-based individuals or groups, through acts or threats of force or violence, and in violation of criminal law. This definition closely aligns with those used by federal law enforcement agencies.

(U) The Texas Fusion Center produced this assessment in the form of a State Intelligence Estimate. It includes the contributions of a wide range of law enforcement, criminal justice, and government agencies in the state and throughout the United States.

(U) The statements, conclusions, and assessments included in this report were reached based on a review and analysis of information from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and local reports of varying degrees of sensitivity and reliability, and open-source reporting.

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## **(U) Introduction**

(U) On August 3, 2019, shortly after 10:30 a.m., a man opened fire at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas. His action would eventually take the lives of 22 individuals and injure another 26. Just prior to the attack, the suspected shooter, Patrick Crusius, allegedly posted a manifesto online. The document contained rhetoric filled with anger and hate, including extreme beliefs based on race and ethnicity. Only minutes after the manifesto appeared online, Crusius went from extreme belief to violent, forceful action.

(U) The tragedy in El Paso highlights the potential growth of a persistent threat: domestic terrorism. This document will examine the current domestic terrorism threat posed to Texas, providing an overview of the types of ideologies and motivations that exist in this threat realm. Because any analysis of domestic terrorism requires a discussion of ideology, the subject is understandably sensitive. Americans enjoy a profound freedom, codified in the First Amendment, which protects expression of belief, even when such expression may be repugnant to mainstream ideals. Therefore, discussion of belief, opinion, or ideology is only included in this document to provide context when the threat or application of criminal behavior, force, or violence in furtherance of a political or social goal exists.

### ***(U) Domestic Terrorism – Distinguishing the Threat***

(U) Defining domestic terrorism is challenging, owing in part to the lack of a distinct, chargeable offense distinguishing domestic terrorism from other criminal acts. However, the term typically involves three components: a U.S.-based individual/group; force or violence; and the presence of a political or social goal. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, domestic terrorism is “the furtherance of political or social goals by U.S.-based individuals or groups through acts or threats of force or violence, and in violation of criminal law.”

(U) Past and present ambiguity in defining and distinguishing domestic terrorism creates a number of challenges to the analysis of this threat. First, depending on the definition used, there is the potential for domestic terrorism to become confused with other significant, but distinct, threats to the homeland. For example, like domestic terrorists, Homegrown Violent Extremist (HVE) actors are U.S.-based individuals who may engage in violent activities to further a political or social goal. However, HVEs are distinct from domestic terrorists in that, typically, a designated foreign terrorist organization (FTO) inspires their actions.<sup>a</sup>

(U) A similar concern is the potential conflation of domestic terrorism with mass attack or serial attack events that contained no ideological component. Mass attack or serial attack events can terrorize a community, and often result in significant injury or loss of life. However, in cases where no ideological motivation is present, mass and serial attackers are distinct from domestic terrorists in that their actions are not seeking to further a political or social goal.<sup>1</sup> A notable recent example of this occurred in the form of the “Austin Bomber.” For most of March 2018, Mark Anthony Conditt terrorized the greater Austin, Texas area with a series of explosive devices placed in random locations over the course of several weeks.<sup>2</sup> The devices killed two and injured another five before Conditt eventually killed himself during a confrontation with law enforcement. Despite the horrific nature of Conditt’s actions, there remains no indication of a political or social motivation. Thus, while Conditt qualifies as a serial attacker, he may not fit the definition of a domestic terrorist.<sup>3</sup>

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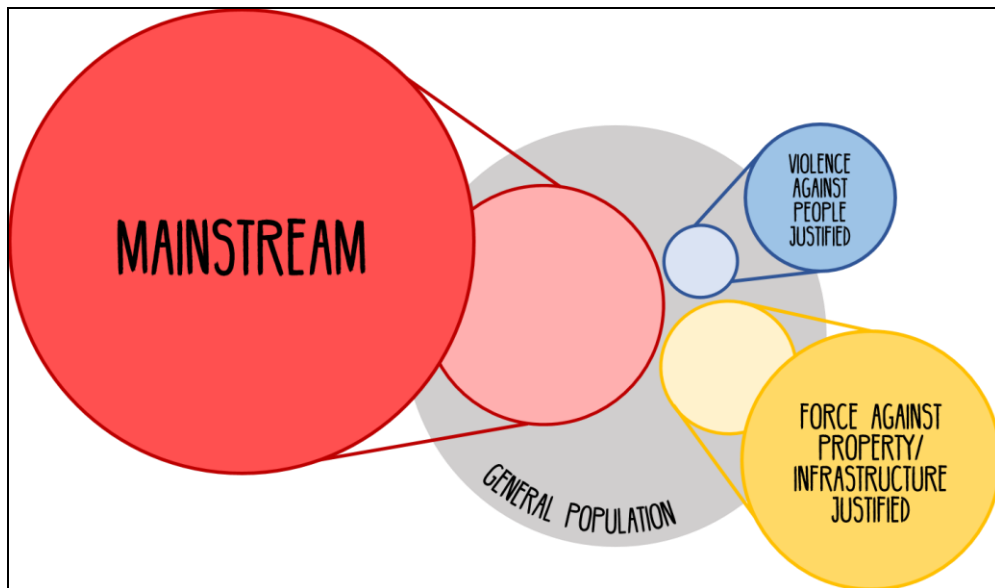
<sup>a</sup> (U) The FBI, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) define a HVE as a person of any citizenship who lives or operates primarily in the United States or its territories, and who advocates, engages in, or is preparing to engage in or support terrorist activities in furtherance of a foreign terrorist organization’s objectives, but who is acting independently of foreign terrorist direction.

(U) An additional challenge in analyzing the domestic terrorism threat is the inability to identify trends through quantitative data. There is no finite dataset that can clearly show an increase or decrease in acts of domestic terrorism, or the number of domestic terrorists. Any attempt to count the number of U.S.-based individuals harboring domestic terrorist beliefs presents significant civil liberties concerns. Unlike support for designated FTOs, the legality of which is clearly defined by 18 U.S. Code § 2339B, much of the activity or expression exhibited by domestic terrorists leading up to a potential event is protected by the First Amendment. Additionally, legal considerations often result in the prosecution of domestic terrorists under a variety of non-terrorism charges, such as hate crimes or weapons violations. Thus, it is virtually impossible to provide a number of individuals prosecuted as domestic terrorists.

**(U) Differentiating Between Extreme and Mainstream**

(U) Historically, governmental entities have sought to mitigate issues with defining domestic terrorism by inserting the word “extremism” in the place of “terrorism.”<sup>4</sup> The term extremism may allow for more flexibility in describing or even prosecuting criminal, but non-violent, behavior associated with domestic terrorist groups or ideologies. However, the mixing of these two terms can occasionally create definitional confusion. Therefore, for the purposes of this document, “extreme” applies to a description of an individual’s or group’s view towards force and violence.

(U) Rather than attempting to define domestic terrorism as an extreme application of a mainstream political belief, it is easier to distinguish domestic terrorists from mainstream individuals by the fact that they believe force or violence is an acceptable means to accomplish their goals. This may include those who justify force against property or infrastructure as a valid means to an end, those who justify the use of violence against people, or individuals who believe both are justified. While no actual percentage exists for domestic terrorists, an implicit assumption in the extreme nature of their beliefs is that they make up a small portion of the population.



(U) Graphic visualizing the different types of populations based on beliefs in use of force and violence.

### *(U) Grouping Types of Domestic Terrorism*

(U) While domestic terrorists share a willingness to use force or violence in furtherance of their goals, distinct differences exist in domestic terrorism motivations. These divisions help delineate domestic terrorism types into three main groups: racially motivated, anti-government, and single issue. Understanding the unique nature of these types allows for a more holistic awareness of the overall domestic terrorism threat.

(U) For the purposes of this report, the following definitions apply to the three domestic terrorism types:

- (U) Racially motivated: An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a bias against a single or multiple racial and/or ethnic populations;
- (U) Anti-government: An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a rejection of governmental authority, a perceived governmental injustice, or belief the government has failed in one or more of its duties;
- (U) Single issue: An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a single, typically social, goal or grievance.

(U) These domestic terrorism types provide a basic understanding when considering the threat posed by a particular actor or group. However, when considering any actor or group it is important to take into account the specific ideology involved. Many who adhere to ideologies encompassed within these types may add their own nuances or combine ideologies in their own unique way. Additionally, these domestic terrorism type definitions do not preclude an individual or group from carrying secondary motivations that may be of equal concern. For example, there are ideologies that exist touting both racially motivated and anti-government sentiments.

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## (U) Racially Motivated

(U) Racially motivated actors and groups are those who threaten or use force or violence based on a bias against one or more racial or ethnic populations. Often this manifests from a perceived superiority of a single race or ethnicity over others. This particular domestic terrorism type is further broken down into two overarching sub-groups: white racially motivated and black racially motivated. Both sub-groups trace their roots to the post-Civil War Era with a resurgence in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century.

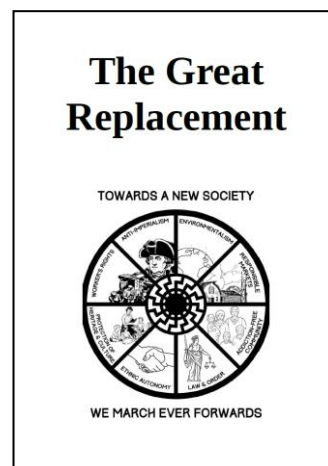
### (U) *White Racially Motivated Terrorism*

(U) WRM domestic terrorism (DT) movements, individuals, and organizations find their roots in two central tenets: belief in the superiority of the white race and dominance of non-whites through violence. Historically, motivations for these actors include religious and socially- or culturally-based beliefs.<sup>5</sup> While the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and neo-Nazis were the 20<sup>th</sup> Century face of WRM actors, the current face of the movement is finding a home in emergent anti-civil rights and anti-equality groups. Although there is considerable overlap in beliefs and motivations, WRM individuals generally fall into two main delineations: white supremacists or white nationalists. Colloquially, many use these two terms interchangeably. However, there is a distinct difference between the two best seen in their dictionary definitions:

- (U) White supremacist: a person who believes that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races.
- (U) White nationalist: one of a group of militant whites who espouse white supremacy and advocate enforced racial segregation.

(U) A current trend among white supremacists and nationalists is the discussion of, or adherence to, specific beliefs recently espoused by WRM actors who committed mass killings. These include the Great Replacement theory, eco-fascism, and accelerationism.

- (U) The Great Replacement: Prior to killing 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, WRM actor Brenton Tarrant posted a manifesto online titled “The Great Replacement.” The manifesto has become an inspirational document for several WRM actors, who embrace the author’s belief in the gradual eradication of whites by ethnic and racial minorities.<sup>6</sup> In 2019, the Great Replacement manifesto inspired mass attacks in Poway, California and El Paso, Texas. In each case, the attacker modified Tarrant’s beliefs to target a different minority group.<sup>7 8</sup>
- (U) Eco-Fascism: In “The Great Replacement,” Tarrant referred to himself as an “eco-fascist.” He went on to link his calls for killing minorities to a means of saving the environment from overpopulation.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Patrick Crusius’ alleged manifesto included references to environmental concerns, linking those concerns to his anti-immigration and anti-corporation sentiments.<sup>10</sup> The merger of extreme environmentalist beliefs with WRM ideologies highlights how the individualistic nature of some domestic terrorist actors creates new and blended ideologies.



(U) Cover of Brenton Tarrant Manifesto “The Great Replacement.”



- (U) Accelerationism: Both Tarrant’s and Crusius’ manifestos advocated for immediate and radical action as a means of advancing their cause and creating new societies, rejecting the perceived inaction to date. Accelerationism essentially involves conducting attacks and participating in radical actions to destabilize and change a perceived unsustainable system.<sup>11 12</sup> The greatest inherent threat in accelerationism lies in the call for, and inspiration of, violence for likeminded individuals.

### (U) Examples of White Racially Motivated Conducted and Thwarted Attacks<sup>b c</sup>

(U) In recent years, there have been a number of WRM-involved acts, or thwarted acts, of force or violence in Texas, the United States, and across the globe. Although not a comprehensive list, the following examples highlight some notable recent WRM conducted and thwarted attacks:

- (U) On August 10, 2019, parishioners overpowered and subdued Philip Manshaus’s attempts to attack a Norway mosque, thwarting his effort. Manshaus was wearing a helmet and body armor and carrying two shotguns and a pistol. Before the attack, Manshaus posted a message on a digital media platform praising El Paso shooter Patrick Crusius and Christchurch, New Zealand shooter Brenton Tarrant. He claimed to be “chosen” by Tarrant and encouraged readers to take action and initiate a race war. The subject is awaiting trial for the murder of his stepsister whom he killed just prior to the mosque attack.<sup>13 14 15</sup>
- (U) On August 8, 2019, Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) officials arrested Las Vegas-area security guard Conor Climo, charging him with possession of bomb-making materials. Climo had engaged in online communications with other WRM actors and regularly used racial, anti-Semitic, and homosexual slurs. According to the complaint, Climo discussed attacking a synagogue and surveilling a bar frequented by minorities. He also attempted to recruit a homeless individual for pre-attack surveillance against other targets. While executing a search warrant on Climo’s residence, federal authorities seized a notebook containing sketches for a potential attack.<sup>16</sup>
- (U) On August 3, 2019, Patrick Wood Crusius allegedly opened fire in an El Paso, Texas Walmart, killing 22 people and injuring 26 others.<sup>17</sup> Prior to the shooting Crusius posted a manifesto on a digital media platform in which he justified his actions as a response to the perceived ethnic replacement of whites by Hispanics and voiced support for the Christchurch, New Zealand shooter and his manifesto.<sup>18</sup> Crusius is awaiting trial on state charges, including capital murder.<sup>19</sup>



(U) Patrick Crusius

<sup>b</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>c</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report’s production, and is subject to change.

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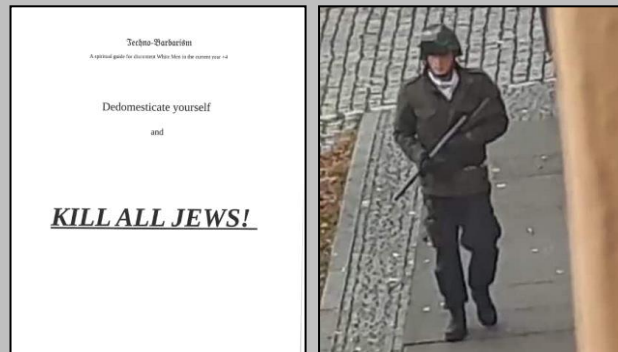
- (U) On April 27, 2019, John Timothy Earnest attacked congregants at a synagogue in Poway, California, killing one person and injuring three others. Prior to the attack, he uploaded a manifesto online. Earnest claimed the New Zealand attack was a catalyst for his attack and stated his actions were “because the Jewish people are destroying the white race.”<sup>20</sup> He also confessed to an arson incident at the Dar-ul-Arqam Mosque and Islamic Center in Escondido, California, on March 24, 2019. Earnest is currently awaiting trial on numerous federal and state charges, including federal hate crime charges.<sup>21</sup>
- (U) On March 15, 2019, Brenton Tarrant conducted a shooting attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, ultimately killing 51 people and injuring dozens of others.<sup>22</sup> Tarrant livestreamed video of the attacks and disseminated a manifesto on a digital media platform detailing his anti-immigration and anti-Muslim views. Police discovered improvised explosive devices in Tarrant’s vehicle used in the attacks.<sup>23</sup>
- (U) On February 15, 2019, federal law enforcement officers arrested US Coast Guard Lieutenant Christopher Paul Hasson for stockpiling weapons and prescription drugs. Hasson compiled a list of politicians, activists, and journalists as possible targets for attack. He apparently viewed Oslo, Norway shooter Anders Breivik as a source of inspiration and used Breivik’s methods to develop a list of potential targets.<sup>24</sup> According to the indictment, Hasson was a drug addict in possession of 15 firearms and at least two unregistered silencers. Hasson entered a guilty plea to federal drug and weapons-related charges and awaits sentencing.<sup>25</sup>
- (U) On October 27, 2018, Robert D. Bowers shot and killed 11 congregants at a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania synagogue. According to the indictment, Bowers wounded four responding law enforcement officers and allegedly made statements to officers on scene indicating a desire to “kill Jews.” He is currently awaiting trial on hate crimes and other federal charges.<sup>26</sup>

**(U) White Racially Motivated Actors – International Links**

(U) An important attribute distinguishing domestic terrorists from HVEs is the lack of inspiration from an FTO. However, recent domestic terrorism attacks, predominately by WRM actors, demonstrate an international link between domestic and foreign actors with similar motivations. Because WRM attackers frequently operate alone, they are also typically self-radicalized, many through information obtained on digital media platforms. The globalized nature of digital media allows many of these actors to access, and become inspired by, the ideals and actions of foreign actors. Similarly, the actions of U.S.-based individuals can inspire similar events in foreign countries. A recent trend of WRM actors across the globe posting manifestos online prior to conducting an attack also allows the messaging of these individuals to spread transnationally.<sup>27</sup>

(U) Transnational linkages between U.S. and international WRM actors fall primarily into two categories: inspiration and training. A number of recent domestic attackers, including John Earnest (Poway, California attack) and Patrick Crusius (El Paso, Texas attack), have drawn inspiration from, or identified with, Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant and Anders Breivik, who conducted a 2011 WRM mass attack in Norway that killed 77 individuals.<sup>28 29</sup> Tarrant in turn, while also idolizing Breivik, drew inspiration from U.S. attacker Dylann Roof.<sup>30</sup> Since Patrick Crusius conducted a WRM attack in El Paso, Texas on August 3, 2019, there have been at least two international attacks explicitly inspired by his actions or demonstrating similar tactics.

- (U) On October 9, 2019, 27 year old German citizen Stephan Balliet attempted a mass attack at a synagogue holding Yom Kippur services in Halle, Germany. After failing to gain entry to the synagogue, Balliet shot and killed a woman nearby. Balliet then drove to a kebab shop, where he shot and killed another individual before his eventual arrest. Balliet livestreamed the attack online. Prior to the attack, he also uploaded a manifesto on social media, in which he described his objectives as proving the viability of improvised weapons, increasing the morale of “oppressed” whites, and killing as many non-white people – preferably Jews – as possible.<sup>31 32</sup>
- (U) Prior to attacking a mosque in Baerum, Norway, Philip Manshaus made online posts praising Patrick Crusius for “fighting to reclaim his country.” Manshaus’ posts urged readers to conduct mass attacks to initiate a race war.<sup>33</sup>



(U) Cover of Stephan Balliet’s manifesto and image of him during attack.

(U) U.S.-based WRM actors have also traveled to foreign countries seeking networking opportunities and paramilitary training from WRM groups. In 2017, members of a WRM group in California went to Ukraine to discuss tactics and train with the Azov Battalion, a volunteer militia with neo-Nazi ties.<sup>34</sup> More recently another WRM individual, a U.S. Army soldier stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, was arrested in late September 2019 after distributing bomb-making instructions online and discussing his aspirations to train and fight with the Azov Battalion.<sup>35</sup>

***(U) Black Racially Motivated Terrorism***

(U) Similar to WRM actors, black racially motivated (BRM) movements, individuals, and organizations, are often either religiously or politically motivated. This domestic terrorism type contains a noted amount of overlap with anti-government ideals. The typically anti-white bias that marks most BRM actors or groups also usually accompanies a rejection of a governmental authority viewed as prejudiced and oppressive. Thus, an actor or group may classify as either BRM or a sovereign citizen depending on where they place the most emphasis in their actions and rhetoric. ([See Sovereign Citizen Section](#))

(U) BRM DT movements have been active in the United States since the abolition of slavery. Their primary goal is the establishment of an autonomous black nation through force or violence and adherents claim racial superiority, tend to be anti-Semitic, and oppose integration and interracial marriage.<sup>36</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, some BRM groups radicalized, adopting militant ideologies and advocating the use of violence to achieve an independent black nation. Although most of these groups fell apart and the movement diminished after several members died or received lengthy prison sentences for their crimes, current BRM DT actors continue to celebrate and respect many of the individuals from this era.<sup>37</sup> Tactics of contemporary BRM DT groups and movements include: use of violent, hate-based rhetoric and harassment toward law enforcement, whites, and Jews; engaging in opportunistic criminal activities to support their beliefs including narcotics and financial crimes; and violent retaliation in reaction to perceived incidents of police brutality.<sup>38</sup>

**(U) Examples of Black Racially Motivated Conducted and Thwarted Attacks<sup>d e</sup>**

(U) In recent years, there have been several BRM acts of force or violence in Texas and the United States. Although not a comprehensive list, the following examples highlight some notable BRM conducted and thwarted attacks of the past decade:

- (U) On December 28, 2019, Grafton Thomas entered the home of a Hasidic Jewish rabbi in Monsey, New York, and proceeded to attack the occupants inside with a machete, seriously wounding five individuals, before fleeing. Dozens of parishioners from a nearby synagogue were attending a Hanukkah celebration at the rabbi's home. Authorities arrested Thomas hours later after stopping his vehicle in New York City, New York. Subsequent investigation of the suspect's residence revealed a number of handwritten journals containing anti-Semitic sentiments and possible support for the Black Hebrew Israelites movement. A search of Thomas' phone also revealed recent internet searches suggesting potential targeting of Jewish facilities, such as "Why did Hitler hate the Jews," "German Jewish Temples near me," and "Prominent companies founded by Jews in America." Federal authorities have charged Thomas with five counts of Obstruction of Free Exercise of Religious Beliefs Involving an Attempt to Kill and Use of Dangerous Weapon, and Resulting in Bodily Injury.<sup>39</sup>
- (U) On December 10, 2019, David Anderson and Francine Graham attacked a law enforcement officer in a cemetery before opening fire on a kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey. The attacks killed four individuals in total: the officer at the cemetery, and three citizens in the market. Both subjects died after engaging law enforcement in a long gun battle, while barricaded in the market. Although the investigation is ongoing, authorities believe the subjects had some

<sup>d</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>e</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report's production, and is subject to change.

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connection to the Black Hebrew Israelites, but are working to determine if that connection went beyond an “expressed interest.” However, regardless of group affiliation, the attack motivation appears to stem from anti-Semitism and anti-law enforcement beliefs.<sup>40 41</sup>

- (U) On October 4 and 13, 2016, Damoine Wilcoxson<sup>42</sup> fired shots at two separate police stations in Indianapolis, Indiana. A note left at the scene of one shooting contained violent anti-white sentiments. Wilcoxson received a 37-year sentence for the shooting, in addition to a 65-year sentence for the unrelated murder of an 82-year old white man in September 2016.<sup>43 44</sup>
- (U) On July 7, 2016, Micah Johnson opened fire on a group of police officers in Dallas, Texas, killing five officers and wounding others, including two civilians.<sup>45</sup> After the initial shooting ended, Johnson engaged in a standoff with police in a parking garage. During the standoff, Johnson stated he wanted to kill white people, especially white officers.<sup>46</sup> Subsequent investigation revealed Johnson had liked several social media sites for BRM groups.<sup>47</sup>
- (U) In November 2014, officers arrested Brandon Baldwin and Olajuwon Davis, both members of a known BRM group, who plotted to blow up public buildings and murder the Ferguson, Missouri Police Department Chief and a St. Louis County prosecutor. Baldwin and Davis attempted to purchase explosive devices and intended to target several public locations and the two law enforcement officials during protests in Ferguson over the fatal shooting of Michael Brown.<sup>48</sup> Baldwin and Davis pled guilty to four explosives and gun charges, and both received seven year sentences.<sup>49</sup>
- (U) On October 23, 2014, two New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers sustained injuries when Zale H. Thompson attacked four white officers with a hatchet. Thompson, who was shot and killed in the attack, previously expressed BRM sentiments online and had tattoos indicating affiliation with BRM groups.<sup>50</sup>

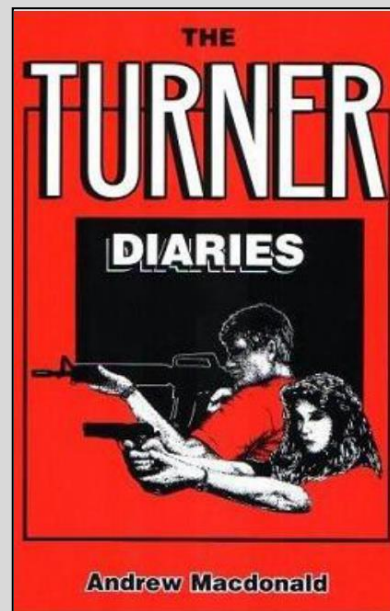


(U) Micah Johnson

**(U) From The Turner Diaries to The Great Replacement: Inspiring Hate and Violence**

(U) Brenton Tarrant’s “The Great Replacement” manifesto is the latest in a line of independent documents and theories inspiring acts of domestic terrorism. In fact, prior to Tarrant’s manifesto, French author Renaud Camus released his 2012 book “Le Grand Remplacement,” arguing that immigrants are replacing European whites.<sup>51</sup> Although written or espoused by separate individuals, some in different decades, a number of these theories or documents share a common theme of blending anti-government sentiments with racial bias to create dystopian images designed to inspire fear. Due to the often broad scope of themes encompassed in these documents and theories, they can inspire violent acts from several domestic terrorism types.

(U) Perhaps the most well known example of these documents is “The Turner Diaries.” Originally published in 1978, “The Turner Diaries” tells the story of a dystopian United States marred by terroristic, guerrilla warfare perpetuated by a group of WRM actors seeking to overthrow the government. “The Turner Diaries” begins by describing a world in which Jewish figures run the U.S. Government, and use minorities to disarm and arrest gun owners after banning private gun ownership. This, and other acts, sparks a race war with white individuals forming guerrilla groups and eventually overthrowing “The System” (a title used to describe the government and any institution seen as oppressive towards whites).<sup>52</sup>



(U) Cover of “The Turner Diaries”

(U) Since publication, “The Turner Diaries” has inspired numerous violent acts, including the April 19, 1995 bombing attack in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The Oklahoma City bomber, Timothy McVeigh, drew heavily from “The Turner Diaries,” including replicating an attack detailed in the book in which protagonist Earl Turner destroys a FBI building with a bomb. Three years later, one of the attackers who murdered a black man in Jasper, Texas on June 7, 1998, also cited “The Turner Diaries” as inspiration.<sup>53</sup>

(U) Another theory persistent in its continued inspiration of acts of violence is the concept of a secret group conspiring to create a “new world order.” This theory has taken numerous forms over the decades, from more anti-government beliefs about secret government conspiracies to race-based beliefs suggesting Jewish or minority-based cabals seeking to oppress, control, or replace the white race. Like “The Turner Diaries,” this belief has, and likely continues, to inspire acts of violence. For example, Eric Rudolph allegedly sent letters to media outlets in Atlanta, Georgia, stating “DEATH TO THE NEW WORLD ORDER,” shortly after bombing an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama on January 29, 1998.<sup>54</sup> Rudolph, also responsible for a bombing attack at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta Georgia, may have drawn inspiration from the teachings of Nord Davis, whose propaganda railed against a Jewish New World Order and advocated killing many of the same minorities targeted by Rudolph in other attacks.<sup>55</sup>

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## **(U) Anti-Government**

(U) Actors and groups who fall within anti-government domestic terrorism designations either reject governmental authority outright, reject the authority of the government due to perceived injustices or special status, or oppose government due to a belief that the current authority is incompetent or failing in its responsibilities. Although many of the tactics employed by anti-government actors are non-violent in nature, some also justify the use of violence or force to advance their goals, particularly against governmental targets. This domestic terrorism type is further broken down into three overarching sub-groups: militias, sovereign citizens, and anarchists.

### **(U) Militias**

(U) Militia DT actors typically believe that the government is corrupt or failing to fulfill its responsibilities, rather than outright rejecting governmental authority. They tend to view themselves as the keepers of the U.S. Constitution and justify force or violence as necessary to maintain American rights and protect against government overreach.<sup>56 57</sup> Militia activity reached a peak in the 1990s, emboldened or inspired by three major events that continue to motivate militia actors today. These events include federal raids in Ruby Ridge, Idaho (1992) and Waco, Texas (1993), and the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Militia activity experienced a revival in recent years, spurred by concerns of government overreach, particularly regarding Second Amendment, immigration, and land use issues. This resurgence occurred primarily along the southern U.S. land border and in the western United States. As such, modern militia DT activities primarily involve conflicts with federal entities over land use and anti-immigration operations. As paramilitary styled organizations, they frequently conduct field training and firearms exercises.<sup>58</sup> In addition to traditional governmental targets, militia DT actors are increasingly targeting entities and ethnicities deemed a threat to the United States, specifically immigrants and Muslims.<sup>59</sup>

### **(U) Examples of Militia Conducted and Thwarted Attacks<sup>f g</sup>**

(U) Although not a comprehensive list, the following examples highlight some notable militia-involved acts of force or violence in the past decade:

- (U) On April 20, 2019, authorities arrested militia group leader Larry Mitchell Hopkins on felony charges related to possession of firearms and ammunition after Hopkins detained migrants at gunpoint in Sunland Park, New Mexico. According to the DOJ, Hopkins had three prior felony convictions, including impersonating an Oregon peace officer.<sup>60</sup> Two months later, authorities arrested another member of the same militia group on federal charges of falsely impersonating an officer or employee of the United States.<sup>61</sup>
- (U) In September 2018, members of a Texas-based militia group clashed with counter-protesters during a demonstration at the Islamic Society of North America Conference in Houston, Texas resulting in at least one injury. Before the demonstration, members of the militia group openly discussed online their plans to attack counter-protesters.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>f</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>g</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report's production, and is subject to change.



- (U) On January 28, 2017, Marq Perez burglarized and burned a Victoria, Texas mosque to send a message to the Muslim community.<sup>63</sup> Perez had prior suspected involvement with an online militia group.<sup>64</sup> He received a 24-year prison term on federal hate crime charges.<sup>65</sup>
- (U) In 2016, authorities arrested three members of a Kansas-based militia group for plotting to bomb an apartment complex in Garden City, Kansas that housed several Somali immigrants and a mosque. The group leader referred to Muslim immigrants as “cockroaches” that needed to be exterminated. All three members received 25-30 years in federal prison.<sup>66 67</sup>



(U) Marq Perez

### ***(U) Sovereign Citizens***

(U) Sovereign citizen DT movements share a number of ideological and historical connections with militia DT actors. However, while militias view the government as corrupt, sovereign citizens reject outright the idea of U.S. government authority over them for various reasons. Therefore, sovereigns typically claim to reside under a different, unrecognized, governmental entity. Sovereigns often engage in document and financial fraud. Creation and use of fake driver licenses or identification cards, license plates, passports, and badges have become routine among sovereigns. Although much of the behavior typically associated with sovereign citizen DT actors involves acts of fraud, some espouse a belief in justified violence that renders them a potential domestic terrorism threat. Sovereigns may commit acts of typically spontaneous violence in reaction to perceived government abuses or to address personal grievances. Harassment and intimidation of law enforcement and other public officials are also common tactics of sovereign citizen DT actors.<sup>68 69 70</sup>

### **(U) Examples of Sovereign Citizen Conducted and Thwarted Attacks<sup>h i</sup>**

(U) Although not a comprehensive list, the following examples highlight some notable sovereign citizen-involved acts of force or violence in the past decade:

- (U) On February 9, 2018, Tierre Guthrie shot three law enforcement officers in Locust Grove, Georgia, killing one, while being served an arrest warrant for failure to appear in court. Guthrie, who died in the shootout, had espoused anti-government ideology to his friends and family and on social media prior to the shooting.<sup>71 72</sup>
- (U) On April 12, 2017, authorities arrested Austin, Texas resident Steven Thomas Boehle on weapons charges after indicating he was planning to conduct a mass shooting on his birthday. According to the criminal complaint and a hand-written manifesto posted on his door, Boehle exhibited indicators of sovereign citizen ideology and had acquired multiple firearms despite a 1993 felony domestic violence conviction out of Connecticut. His manifesto stated in part, “The great miracle will take place at 8:30 a.m. on Holy Thursday...” and included other anti-

<sup>h</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>i</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report’s production, and is subject to change.

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government statements. Law enforcement seized 13 firearms and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition during the investigation.<sup>73 74</sup>

- (U) On July 17, 2016, Gavin Eugene Long ambushed and shot six law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, killing three. Law enforcement engaged and killed Long. Prior to the shooting, Long engaged in numerous sovereign citizen behaviors. These behaviors include submitting paperwork to officials in Kansas City, Missouri in April 2015, from the United Washitaw de Dugdahmoundyah Mu'ur Nation in an effort to “correct” his name to Cosmo Ausar Setepenra.<sup>75</sup>
- (U) On September 17, 2010, Victor Dewayne White engaged in a 22 hour armed standoff and gun battle with police after shooting two Ector County, Texas deputies and an additional individual for “trespassing” on his property. White, a suspected Republic of Texas member or sympathizer, had a history of anti-government behavior, including refusing to pay property taxes. White received a life sentence on charges of attempted capital murder, attempted murder, and aggravated assault.<sup>76 77</sup>
- (U) On May 20, 2010, father and son sovereign citizens, Jerry and Joseph Kane, shot and killed two West Memphis, Arkansas police officers during a traffic stop. After Joseph Kane fired an assault rifle, killing the two officers, he and his father fled the scene. Law enforcement later sighted the vehicle in a nearby parking lot. The Kanes died in the ensuing shootout, wounding two more officers in the process.<sup>78 79</sup>



(U) Victor Dewayne White

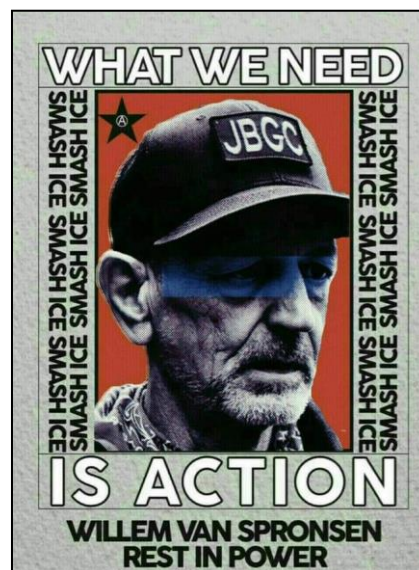
### ***(U) Anarchists***

(U) Anarchist DT movements use or threaten force or violence in an effort to act against government and capitalist institutions they believe are unnecessary and unjust. Fundamentally opposed to centralized government, anarchists may focus their anti-government opposition on a variety of issues such as gentrification and private ownership of capital. Regardless of which issue serves as their focal point, they share a common belief that the best way to achieve the ideal society is by abolishing all existing social and political hierarchies in favor of a new system.<sup>80 81</sup> The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were a particularly active period in American anarchist history. Notable anarchist attacks during this period include the 1886 Haymarket Square Riot and the 1901 assassination of U.S. President William McKinley.<sup>82</sup> After an extended period of relative dormancy, American anarchist DT actors and groups witnessed a resurgence in the later 1990s, coinciding with the expansion of globalization. Tactically, anarchist DT actors often exploit legal, constitutionally protected protest activities to engage in illegal activity.<sup>83 84</sup> At these protest or rally events, anarchist DT actors may utilize “Black Bloc” tactics to engage in criminal actions while avoiding detection from law enforcement officials.<sup>85</sup> “Black Bloc” tactics involve the use of all-black clothing and some form of face covering or masks in order to maintain anonymity while participating in illegal activities.<sup>86</sup> Anarchist DT actors also may use improvised weapons, including improvised incendiary devices.<sup>87</sup>

**(U) Examples of Anarchist Conducted and Thwarted Attacks<sup>j k</sup>**

(U) Although not a comprehensive list, the following examples highlight some notable anarchist-involved acts of force or violence in the past decade:

- (U) On July 13, 2019, Tacoma, Washington police officers shot and killed Willem Van Spronsen after he attacked an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center. Van Spronsen, armed with an AR-15 style rifle, threw incendiary objects at the facility, and attempted to ignite a 500-gallon propane tank. Van Spronsen was a self-described anarchist, with a criminal history associated with protesting at ICE detention centers. Prior to the attack, Van Spronsen sent his friends a manifesto, expressing his opposition to detention centers and his regret that he “will miss the rest of the revolution.”<sup>88 89</sup>
- (U) Multiple events at the University of California in Berkeley, California in February, March, and April of 2017 resulted in violence after anarchist-associated actors took advantage of peaceful protests to engage in confrontations with police and damage property. They used a variety of weapons, including improvised incendiary devices and rocks. Many of the violent activists involved used Black Bloc tactics, including masks and face coverings, to conceal their identities.<sup>90 91</sup>
- (U) On November 13, 2016, the Texas Department of Public Safety arrested six anarchist actors during a demonstration in Austin, Texas, after the individuals assaulted bystanders and law enforcement at the rally.<sup>92</sup> Two years later, during an unrelated arrest, authorities located a number of weapons, ammunition, and tactical gear at the residence of one of the anarchist actors involved in the 2016 incident.<sup>93</sup>
- (U) In September 2014, authorities in Kansas City, Missouri, arrested self-described anarchist Eric G. King, who allegedly threw a hammer and two Molotov cocktails through the office window of a Congressional representative. Law enforcement officers also believe that the suspect conducted previous anti-government acts of vandalism prior to the attack on the Congressional representative’s office. The subject also made prior anti-government posts online, including statements such as “these cops aren’t going to kill themselves, get to the streets.”<sup>94</sup>



(U) Example of propaganda using Van Spronsen as a martyr, shared online after his attack.

<sup>j</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>k</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report’s production, and is subject to change.

## (U) Single Issue

(U) Single issue is a broad type of domestic terrorism, encompassing a variety of motivations. Individuals or groups who fall within this type hold a single goal or grievance-based motivation, usually social in nature, which they believe justifies the use of force or violence. Unlike racially motivated or anti-government domestic terrorism, single issue movements are a newer phenomenon, emerging in their current form only within the last few decades. Intensity within these movements can experience sudden spikes and decreases based on social policies and events of the time. For example, new legislation or industrial development can trigger a surge in force or violence from a movement that was mostly dormant or peaceful in nature. Many single issue movements also stand apart in their target selection. With some notable exceptions, single issue actors tend to threaten and attack property rather than people. One exception comes in the form of the single issue movement gaining traction in recent years, involuntary celibates, otherwise known as “Incels.”

### *(U) Types of Single Issue Actors<sup>l m</sup>*

(U) At least three issues have historical links to inspiring acts of force or violence in the United States: abortion, environmental concerns, and animal rights. Support for terrorist acts related to these issues has ebbed and flowed over the past few decades, but continues to exist in various shapes and forms today. Additionally, recent mass attacks by individuals associated with the Incel movement have thrust this issue from a relatively obscure online movement driven by predominately personal grievances, to a fourth type of single issue domestic terrorism.

### **(U) Abortion**

(U) Abortion-motivated DT actors believe that force or violence is justified in pursuing or acting in defense of their beliefs regarding abortion. Historically, common tactics from these actors include murder, bombings, assault, vandalism, kidnapping, and arson. Additionally, threats relayed through hate mail and suspicious packages are a continuing issue. Abortion-motivated DT actors frequently target reproductive health care facilities and the personnel employed at these institutions.<sup>95</sup>

### *(U) Examples of Abortion-Motivated Conducted and Thwarted Attacks*

(U) Although acts of single issue terrorism motivated by abortion waned over the past decade, several recent examples of activity highlight the continued danger this domestic terrorism type can pose if a resurgence occurs.

- (U) In August 2019, authorities arrested 18-year old Justin Olsen in Boardman, Ohio, on charges of threatening to assault a federal law enforcement officer. Olsen allegedly made threatening online posts in February 2019 under the user name “ArmyOfChrist.” These posts included support for mass attacks and the targeting of a reproductive health care facility. In these posts, Olsen encouraged online users to “shoot every federal agent on sight.” When the FBI searched Olsen’s residence, they found numerous weapons and over 10,000 rounds of ammunition.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>l</sup> (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

<sup>m</sup> (U) This report provides numerous examples of domestic terrorism related incidents, including casualty counts. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report’s production, and is subject to change.

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- (U) In February 2019, law enforcement authorities arrested a 17-year-old male in Waxahachie, Texas on a charge of making a terroristic threat. Earlier in the month, the subject allegedly posted a photograph on social media of a person wearing a face covering and holding a handgun; the photograph contained the caption, “I’m going to commit jihad on an abortion clinic.”<sup>97</sup>
- (U) On November 27, 2015, Robert Lewis Dear, Jr. allegedly killed three people and injured nine others at a reproductive health care facility in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He surrendered to law enforcement authorities on scene after a five-hour standoff.<sup>98</sup> Dear reportedly later claimed that he was “a warrior for the babies.”<sup>99</sup>
- (U) In March 2015, police charged Melanie Toney with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon after she allegedly threw a Molotov cocktail from her vehicle at a group of anti-abortion protesters standing outside of a reproductive health care facility in Austin, Texas. Although the bottle had an ignited wick in it, the flame extinguished before an explosion occurred. Authorities apprehended Toney several miles away from the incident location.<sup>100 101</sup>

### **(U) Environmentalists**

(U) Environmentalist DT actors hold that threats to the environment are so imminent and severe that the use of force or violence is justified to prevent continued damage. Generally, these actors tend to focus more on damaging property than injuring people. Common tactics include property damage, vandalism, threats, cyber attacks, arson, and bombings. Environmentalist DT actors often direct their efforts toward those they perceive as harming the environment, such as the fossil fuel industry.<sup>102 103</sup>

### ***(U) Examples of Environmentalism-Motivated Conducted and Thwarted Attacks***

(U) Although acts of single issue terrorism motivated by environmentalism waned over the past decade, several recent examples of activity highlight the continued danger this domestic terrorism type can pose if a resurgence occurs.

- (U) On February 4, 2019, four environmental activists attempted to shut down an oil pipeline near Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The individuals broke into a fenced area surrounding shutoff valves for the pipeline and then called the company to warn them of their plans to turn the valves. The company reportedly shut the pipeline down itself in reaction to the threat. The activists claimed that their actions were in response to the environmental threat posed by the oil industry. The targeted company reportedly stated that though the arrested individuals may believe that their actions were harmless, they were, in fact, dangerous, placing “themselves, first responders, neighboring communities, and landowners at risk.”<sup>104</sup>
- (U) In September 2014, suspected environmental actors attempted to overturn a power-line tower in Snohomish County, Washington. Unidentified persons used a stolen bulldozer to drive into the tower, damaging it but not overturning it. Graffiti discovered at the scene indicated possible anti-capitalist or radical environmentalist involvement.<sup>105</sup>
- (U) On June 18, 2012, Anson Chi attached an improvised explosive device to a natural gas pipeline in Plano, Texas. Chi made the device with the intent of disrupting the flow of natural gas.<sup>106</sup> The device exploded before intended, inflicting minor damage to the pipeline, but injuring Chi in the process.<sup>107</sup>

## **(U) Animal Rights**

(U) Animal rights DT actors believe that all animals have equal rights to life and freedom from injury and that the use of force or violence in defense of animals is acceptable. Like environmentalists, animal rights DT actors focus much of their efforts on harming property rather than persons, seeking to inflict economic damage to their targets. They generally attack businesses they associate with the abuse of animals, such as fur companies and research institutions.<sup>108 109</sup>

### ***(U) Examples of Animal Rights-Motivated Actors Conducted and Thwarted Attacks***

(U) Although acts of single issue terrorism motivated by animal rights waned over the past decade, several recent examples of activity highlight the dangers this domestic terrorism type can pose if a resurgence occurs.

- (U) On March 9, 2015, an unknown individual threw a rock into the drive-through window of a restaurant in Reno, Nevada. The subject(s) then hurled a glass bottle containing gasoline inside the building. The resulting damage was minimal. A spray-painted sign outside the building indicated possible involvement by a radical animal rights group.<sup>110</sup>
- (U) On February 6, 2015, unidentified arsonist(s) set fire to a horse carriage facility in Chicago, Illinois, causing thousands of dollars in damages to more than a half dozen horse carriages. Graffiti present at the scene included the words “freedom” and “save the horses,” indicating possible involvement of a radical animal rights actor or group.<sup>111</sup>

## **(U) Involuntary Celibates**

(U) Involuntary celibate (Incel) DT actors blame women and society for their failure to develop intimate relationships. Many advocate the use of violence against persons, both women and men, they perceive to be successfully engaging in such relationships.<sup>112</sup> Following a mass shooting attack by Elliott Rodger in 2014, many Incels praise him as the “Supreme Gentleman” and support the idea of similar attacks, sometimes called an “Incel Rebellion.”<sup>113</sup> Incels utilize symbology in their communications, particularly in language. They refer to attractive women as “Staceys” and unattractive women as “Beckys.” “Chads” (alpha males) are men perceived as desirable to attractive women.<sup>114</sup>

### ***(U) Examples of Incel Actors Acts of Terrorism Conducted and Thwarted Attacks***

(U) Unlike the other types of single issue domestic terrorism, the Incel movement has seen a high period of activity in the last decade, not limited to the United States. Examples of conducted and thwarted attacks by Incels include:

- (U) On June 17, 2019, Brian Isaack Clyde attacked the Earle Cabell Federal Building in Dallas, Texas. Heavily armed and dressed in body armor, Clyde approached the building and opened fire on the front door. Law enforcement quickly engaged Clyde, who died in the ensuing exchange of gunfire. Prior to the shooting Clyde posted Incel-related items online.<sup>115 116</sup>
- (U) On November 2, 2018, Scott Paul Beierle opened fire at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida, killing two and injuring at least another four. Prior to the attack, Beierle posted prolifically online, including a series of self-produced songs espousing misogyny and violence towards women. Beierle identified as an Incel, and expressed support for Elliot Rodger.<sup>117</sup>

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- (U) On April 23, 2018, Alek Minassian, intentionally hit pedestrians with a van in Toronto, Canada, killing 10 and injuring 16 predominately female individuals. Prior to the attack, Minassian made several Incel-related posts online, including expressing allegiance to the “Incel Rebellion.” Following his arrest, Minassian claimed he previously communicated with both Elliot Rodger and Chris Harper-Mercer on Incel-related message boards.<sup>118</sup>
- (U) On October 1, 2015, Christopher Harper-Mercer conducted a mass attack at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon, killing nine people and wounding seven others before committing suicide. Harper-Mercer authored a manifesto complaining about not having a girlfriend and praising mass killers such as Elliot Rodger. Harper-Mercer’s manifesto espoused ideology consistent with the Incel community.<sup>119</sup>
- (U) On May 23, 2014, Elliot Rodger killed six people and wounded 14 at the University of California, Santa Barbara.<sup>120</sup> He engaged in a firefight with law enforcement officers before wrecking his vehicle and committing suicide.<sup>121</sup> Rodger wrote a 137-page manifesto titled “My Twisted World,” in which he expressed that his inability to establish romantic relationships with women was a reason for the attack. Rodger also posted a video online before his attack.<sup>122</sup>



(U) Elliott Rodger

## (U) Symbology and Organization

### (U) Symbology

(U) Domestic terrorists typically use imagery and symbols to convey ideology, signify group affiliation, provoke opposition groups, or intimidate targeted populations.<sup>123</sup> While many of these historical and traditional symbols are commonly associated with certain groups and movements, some U.S. actors create customized symbols by merging long-established images with foreign or even contradictory images. In some cases, this co-opts less overt or benign images not traditionally associated with extremism or terrorism. This blending of symbols can signify a merging of terrorist ideologies or belief systems, suggest a common cause between groups, or personalize a standard image. The use of blended symbology, although not new, was on prominent display during and after violent clashes between WRM actors and counter protesters, specifically anarchist-affinity actors, attending the August 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Blended symbology occurs in online messaging and propaganda, as well as at demonstrations and rallies.

(U) WRM groups frequently use Nazi-related symbols such as the swastika or “SS” lightning bolts to connote identification with the Third Reich and its aspirations. At Charlottesville and subsequent rallies, however, images displayed by WRM actors noticeably included medieval and pagan religious iconography, as well as customized emblems featuring racist symbols and patriotic or military symbols.<sup>124</sup> <sup>125</sup> Similar to the German Nazi Party and military, and subsequently European WRM actors, WRM individuals in the United States have appropriated certain medieval Christian and pagan religious icons as perceived symbols of pure European or white heritage.<sup>126</sup> <sup>127</sup> Nordic runes, for example, have replaced more overt Nazi or WRM symbols at rallies and on social media. In Texas, WRM groups appropriate patriotic colors, slogans, and emblems of liberty such as bald eagles, elements of the U.S. flag, and seeming pro-America messaging in its propaganda and recruitment materials.

(U) Unconventional examples of blended symbology occur in propaganda associated with a WRM group that suggests an unlikely collaboration or commonality between neo-Nazis and Marxist revolutionaries/anarchists and advocates an alliance against the system. The commonality ostensibly being that the opposing factions should unite in their mutual pursuit of government overthrow via guerrilla warfare.



(U) Images obtained from online sources affiliated with white racially motivated group.



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(U) Instances of blended or incorporated symbology used among anarchists and their affinity groups show mostly typical rather than contradictory symbols. As with other domestic actors, anarchists use images to convey solidarity with a group or cause, to signal ideology, and to target perceived opposition groups.

- (U) Fliers spotted in May 2018 on a Texas university campus depicted the anarchy circle-A symbol interlinked with the communist Hammer and Sickle, suggesting an alliance or cooperation between local anarchist and communist actors.<sup>128</sup>
- (U) To signal solidarity or affinity with foreign leftist extremist groups, some U.S.-based anarchist and anarcho-communist actors are using international leftist symbols alongside traditional anarchist and communist imagery. An August 2017 video by a Texas-based anarcho-communist group shows members holding an International Freedom Battalion Flag, together with a banner representing the Communist Party of Turkey-Maoist, and Leninist Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey.<sup>129</sup> Graffiti on the wall in the background shows a People's Protection Units (YPG) militia symbol (YPG Red Star) next to communist and anarchist flags.<sup>130</sup> YPG is an affiliate of the Kurdistan Workers Party, which is a U.S. State Department-designated terrorist organization.<sup>131</sup>



(U) Image observed on a university campus in Texas.



(U) Still images obtained from online video source affiliated with anti-government anarchist group.

**(U) Organization**

(U) Domestic terrorists who carry out or plan attacks typically act alone or as part of loosely affiliated cells or networks rather than organized groups. Sometimes lone actors have quit or been expelled from groups for being too extreme or violent and attracting unwanted government or law enforcement attention. For example, prior to killing two Las Vegas, Nevada Police officers and a civilian in 2014, anti-government spouses Amanda and Jerad Miller were among the armed Bundy supporters at the Bunkerville ranch standoff until asked to leave because of their concerning behavior and beliefs.<sup>132</sup> Others have sampled and/or fused different ideologies that seem to cloud rather than confirm or explain their motivations. Devon Arthurs supposedly left white supremacist group Atomwaffen Division and converted to Islam before murdering two of his roommates and fellow group members in Florida.<sup>133</sup> In such cases, group rejection and resulting isolation may accelerate the radicalization and mobilization processes; or, prompt an already radicalized individual to take action with little to no warning.

(U) In an effort to avoid detection and infiltration, movements and groups within the domestic realm are increasingly adopting the leaderless resistance model and operating in smaller independent groups or cells with no leadership hierarchy.<sup>134</sup> Originally advocated by white nationalist Louis Beam,<sup>135</sup> numerous domestic terrorism actors and groups now espouse this strategy as a countermeasure to covert law enforcement operations. A number of current domestic terrorism actors liken any law enforcement action to the infiltration and disruption of movements by federal law enforcement during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, known as COINTELPRO.<sup>136</sup> Domestic terrorism movements continue to use this term today, as something to guard against by employing leaderless resistance.

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## (U) Challenges to Law Enforcement

(U) While domestic terrorism poses a real and persistent threat to the nation and the State of Texas, it also presents unique challenges for law enforcement seeking to counter this threat. As previously mentioned, the lack of a holistic domestic terrorism law with chargeable offenses complicates investigative efforts and tracking. Additionally, attributes of domestic terrorism actors, such as blurred motivational lines, lone actor attacks, and a preference for soft targets, can challenge law enforcement's ability to identify and prevent possible domestic terrorism events. Finally, modern advances in the world of technology affect recruitment, inspiration, and pre-attack indicators associated with domestic terrorism actors or groups. As a result, law enforcement must be up to date on the latest advances in technology, while simultaneously developing or acquiring the capability to remain aware of any threats discussed within the digital realm.

### (U) *Legal Considerations*

(U) Codifying the crime of domestic terrorism is legally complicated. Federally, 18 U.S.C. 2331(5) legally defines domestic terrorism as:

- (5) the term "domestic terrorism" means activities that—
  - (A) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State;
  - (B) appear to be 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; and
  - (C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.<sup>137</sup>

However, the statute does not criminalize domestic terrorism, rendering it definitional only. Several U.S. States have, or are attempting to develop, state-level terrorism statutes, some of which may define and criminalize domestic terrorism behavior.<sup>138 139</sup> Although the development of a national domestic terrorism law has been the subject of much public debate over the past decades, attempts to develop a law typically falter largely due to constitutional concerns.

(U) From a law enforcement perspective, the lack of a chargeable domestic terrorism offense presents the greatest impact to preventative investigative efforts and threat trend monitoring. Once a domestic terrorism attack occurs, there are typically numerous statutes, at all governmental levels, to address the act (if not the underlying motivation). For example, murder, arson, attempted murder, and property destruction carry some form of criminal penalties. However, preventing a possible domestic terrorism attack within the confines of current legal authorities is challenging.

(U) To open a domestic terrorism related investigation, law enforcement agencies must meet a minimum criminal predicate threshold. According to the FBI, it opens domestic terrorism investigations based on information concerning the actual occurrence or threat of violent criminal actions by subjects in furtherance of an ideology.<sup>140</sup> Thus, simple adherence to an ideology that might itself be rooted in force or violence may not be enough to open an investigation on a particular individual. The actual use or threat of violence at the individual-level must accompany the ideological adherence.

(U) The limits on domestic terrorism investigations stand in stark contrast to international terrorism or HVE investigations. For example, 18 U.S.C. 113B outlines a number of offenses that provide more latitude for international terrorism and HVE investigations, including prohibitions against material support and financing of designated terrorist organizations.<sup>141</sup> However, because no corollary domestic terrorism statute exists, prosecutors are forced to rely on other charges, such as murder or hate crime laws,

not explicitly linked to terrorism.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, the ability to develop a list of designated foreign terrorist organizations allows investigators and prosecutors of international terrorism and HVE cases to more directly align an individual's actions to the direction or inspiration of a specific group. Conversely, the decentralized nature of domestic terrorism actors makes it difficult to ascribe group affiliation to their actions.

(U) There is also no standard requirement for law enforcement agencies to report domestic terrorism related arrests, prosecutions, or incidents, again complicating the capability to conduct trend analysis. Texas does require law enforcement agencies to report hate crimes.<sup>143</sup> However, while hate crime charges could, by definition, rise to the level of domestic terrorism, they may represent only a portion of possible domestic terrorist actors.

(U) Because the statutes currently used to prosecute domestic terrorism actors vary widely, tracking trends in arrests and prosecutions is virtually impossible. Not every fraud, assault, arson, or weapons violation carries ideological motivations.

### ***(U) Challenges Related to Attributes of Domestic Terrorists***

(U) The widely varied nature of possible domestic terrorism motivations negates the possibility of creating a domestic terrorist profile. However, there are a number of commonalities across several domestic terrorism types that help identify some domestic terrorist attributes. These attributes include, blurred or multiple motivations, decentralized movements with lone actor attacks, and a preference for soft targets. Each of these attributes present challenges for law enforcement agencies.

### **(U) Challenges Discerning Motivations**

(U) Effectively responding to a threat of force or violence often requires investigators to determine whether the motivation behind that threat is ideological, personal, criminal, or mental health related. Investigators conduct a similar assessment following a violent incident to determine what precipitated the attack. Understanding the primary motivation behind an individual's actions or threat may be paramount for prosecution and can assist law enforcement in identifying ways to prevent future attacks. However, in responding to, or attempting to prevent, an attack rarely is there a single, obvious motivation involved. For example, an individual may adhere to a terroristic ideology, attack a location with personal connections, and have a history of mental health concerns. The question then becomes, which was the primary motivation behind the attack? There may never be an obvious answer to this question.

(U) Further challenges in discerning motivation arise when the attacker dies during or just after an attack. Law enforcement agencies no longer have the opportunity to interview the individual to ascertain motivation. In some instances, the attacker may leave a written explanation or manifesto, but that is not always the case. A subject's death also limits the ability for law enforcement to access password protected items such as phones or computers. According to press reporting, technology companies have demonstrated reluctance to assist law enforcement with accessing these locked devices in the past.<sup>144</sup> Without access to potential motivation indicators locked within these devices, law enforcement may not be able to determine motivation following an attacker's death.

(U) Even when ideology is present, a determination of motivation is not always immediately clear. Increasingly known domestic terrorism actors are espousing views that blur motivational lines, or have a history of support for seemingly disparate extreme beliefs.

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- (U) On July 28, 2019, Santino William Legan killed three and wounded 12 others at the Gilroy Garlic Festival in Gilroy, California, before committing suicide at the scene. Investigators believe that Legan was exploring a number of violent ideologies, and found both WRM and Islamic extremist materials during a search of his residence. Legan reportedly posted photos to Instagram referencing a book from the late 1800s typically associated with WRM beliefs.<sup>145</sup> According to the FBI, Legan possessed a list of possible mass attack targets across the United States, including federal buildings, courthouses, political organizations, religious institutions, and food festivals.<sup>146</sup>
- (U) The eco-fascism espoused by Tarrant and Crusius in their manifestos represents a blending of two different domestic terrorism types, single issue – environmental concerns and white racially motivated. Those that espouse eco-fascism, employ environmental concerns as a tactic to advance WRM extreme ideals, for example proposing saving the planet by murdering minorities.
- (U) On April 13, 2017, Kori Ali Muhammad killed a security guard in Fresno, California. Five days later, he began shooting people at random, eventually killing another three and wounding at least three additional individuals. At the time of his arrest, Muhammad allegedly shouted “Allahu Akbar!” However, subsequent investigation revealed Muhammad created, and adhered to, his own brand of domestic terrorism ideology. The ideology borrowed from several existing beliefs including BRM movements, sovereign citizen movements, and a variety of religions. Muhammad had previous criminal encounters with law enforcement, and a reported diagnosis of psychosis and paranoia.<sup>147 148 149</sup>
- (U) A number of recent violent attacks or planned attacks involved individuals who ascribed to some form of domestic terrorism ideology and violent jihadist ideology at some point in their radicalization process. Examples include:
  - (U) Zale Thompson, who attacked four NYPD officers in 2014 based on BRM motivations, also frequently visited websites for foreign terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qa’ida.<sup>150 151</sup>
  - (U) Washington State resident Joseph Jeffrey Brice plead guilty in 2012 to providing material support to terrorists after trying to build an explosive device in 2011 to retaliate for the death of Osama bin Laden. Prior to radicalizing and supporting foreign terrorist organizations, Brice adhered to anti-government beliefs and idolized Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh.<sup>152</sup>
  - (U) In May 2017, former WRM group leader, Devon Arthurs, killed his two roommates before going to a store and taking hostages in Tampa, Florida. He stated his reasoning behind these attacks was for “insulting his religion” [Salafi Islam] and a response to American engagements in the Middle East.<sup>153 154</sup>

### **(U) Decentralized Movements and Lone Attackers**

(U) The persistent trend of domestic terror attacks carried out or inspired by decentralized or leaderless movements and individuals presents an additional challenge to law enforcement, making detection and prevention that much more difficult. Emulating international terrorist organizations, domestic actors are radicalizing and communicating online and forming smaller networks or cells, thereby limiting their digital footprint and visibility. In some cases, the decentralization is merely a function of moving from public forums and mainstream social media to closed, offline forums shielding activities, interactions, and plans from public view. However, many domestic groups and lone actors use these alternative forums and decentralized structures for operational security purposes to obstruct law enforcement.<sup>155</sup>

(U) As with ISIS and al-Qaeda sympathizers and supporters, it is next to impossible to predict or discern which domestic lone actors may have the propensity to act on inspiration from a larger movement and engage in force or violence. Personal stressors or grievances (such as loss of employment, failed relationships, and legal or financial troubles) unrelated to any particular ideology or political motivation, may influence a lone actor to carry out an attack the actor nevertheless perceives as rational or justified.

### **(U) Preferences for Soft Targets**

(U) Recent domestic terror attacks and international terror attacks inspiring domestic actors occurred against soft targets or at large public gathering spaces with unarmed crowds. Houses of worship, shopping centers, and recreational areas have been the targets of high profile attacks in recent years. Mirroring international terrorists, some domestic terrorists have decided to forgo attacking prominent hardened targets, like police, military, or government entities, in hopes of achieving higher numbers of fatalities and provoking a general fear of public spaces and restrictions on personal freedoms. While targeting houses of worship may seem logical for someone motivated by anti-Semitic or anti-Islamic beliefs, other domestic actors with anti-immigration motivations may perceive crowded shopping centers, movie theaters, schools, or recreational areas as suitable targets, particularly locations known to attract certain racial or ethnic groups.<sup>156</sup>

(U) Soft targets present issues for many reasons, but most obviously, because attackers know or believe they will meet little to no armed resistance. Areas with large, uncontrolled crowds also provide cover for attackers who may be able to blend in and escape, carry out a secondary attack, or confuse law enforcement regarding the number and identity of attackers.

### ***(U) Digital Media Collection Challenges***

(U) The ability of law enforcement to identify potential domestic terrorism attack threats and pre-operational indicators relies on the ability to collect and exploit information from a variety of sources. These sources can include members of the public, federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, and private sector partners. The collection and exploitation of this information presents multiple challenges, particularly regarding the real-time, open source information collection and analysis.<sup>157</sup>

(U) Law enforcement's ability to detect, identify, and investigate threats in an ever expanding and globalized digital world remains a constant challenge. Open source collection in particular presents unique challenges to law enforcement tasked with helping to prevent mass violence. The volume of information on these platforms, coupled with the potential for threat indicators to be too vague for law enforcement action, renders attempts to remain completely aware of all possible threats virtually impossible.<sup>158</sup>

## **(U) Outlook**

(U) Although domestic terrorism remains difficult to track and trend, and therefore predict, we expect this threat to Texas to remain persistent in the future. The historical longevity of this threat, in various forms, suggests that although the specific type of domestic terrorism activity may change over time, the overall threat will remain. However, predicting the nature of domestic terrorism activity in Texas beyond the short-term future is virtually impossible. Currently unknown variables, such as response to law enforcement actions against specific domestic terrorism actors, outcomes of ongoing or upcoming political items, and the emergence of new social justice related incidents, limits the ability to identify with certainty the groups or movements of the future.

(U) As global internet traffic and social media use expands, it is likely to cause a similar growth in threats made across these platforms and other sources of publicly available information. Based on perceived past successes, domestic terrorism actors will likely continue to exploit digital media to spread their message. This includes continuing to post manifestos and attempting to live stream attacks in the hope of inspiring similar actions by others. As a result, a corresponding increase in international connections and inspiration of domestic terrorism actors in Texas and nationwide remains a concern. The ability for domestic terrorism actors to inspire such an audience on such wide-reaching platforms is also likely to continue perpetuating the lone actor phenomenon. Finally, soft targets will remain attractive options for many domestic terrorism actors, particularly those that seek to inflict maximum loss of life with minimum effort.

(U) The ability for people with a variety of individualized motivations to quickly and widely spread their ideas and encourage others to acts of violence online, also suggests the possible emergence of new ideologies in the future. This could include ideas previously limited to a single individual, or predominantly criminal in nature, morphing into a domestic terrorism concern. Thus, the possibility for evolving domestic terrorism classifications in the future remains.



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## **(U) Appendix A: State Intelligence Estimates**

(U) In order to enhance the state's ability to detect, assess, and prioritize threats to the safety and security of its citizens, the Texas Department of Public Safety implemented a State Intelligence Estimate process after consultation with the National Intelligence Council, based in part on the model of the National Intelligence Estimate.

(U) State Intelligence Estimates are multi-agency assessments on issues relating to homeland security and public safety in Texas. They serve as the most authoritative and comprehensive analysis of these issues, and they are designed to provide law enforcement and government officials with the most accurate evaluation of current information on a given topic. The intent of a State Intelligence Estimate is to provide an assessment on the status of an issue, but it may also include estimative conclusions that make forecasts about future developments and identify the implications for Texas.

(U) Unlike reports and assessments produced by an individual agency or center, State Intelligence Estimates draw on the information and expertise of multiple law enforcement and homeland security agencies across Texas. Such an approach is essential to developing a comprehensive assessment of issues that affect the state as a whole. By incorporating perspectives and information from multiple agencies, the Texas Department of Public Safety is better able to produce assessments that support the development of proactive strategies and policies needed to address current and evolving threats to the state.

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