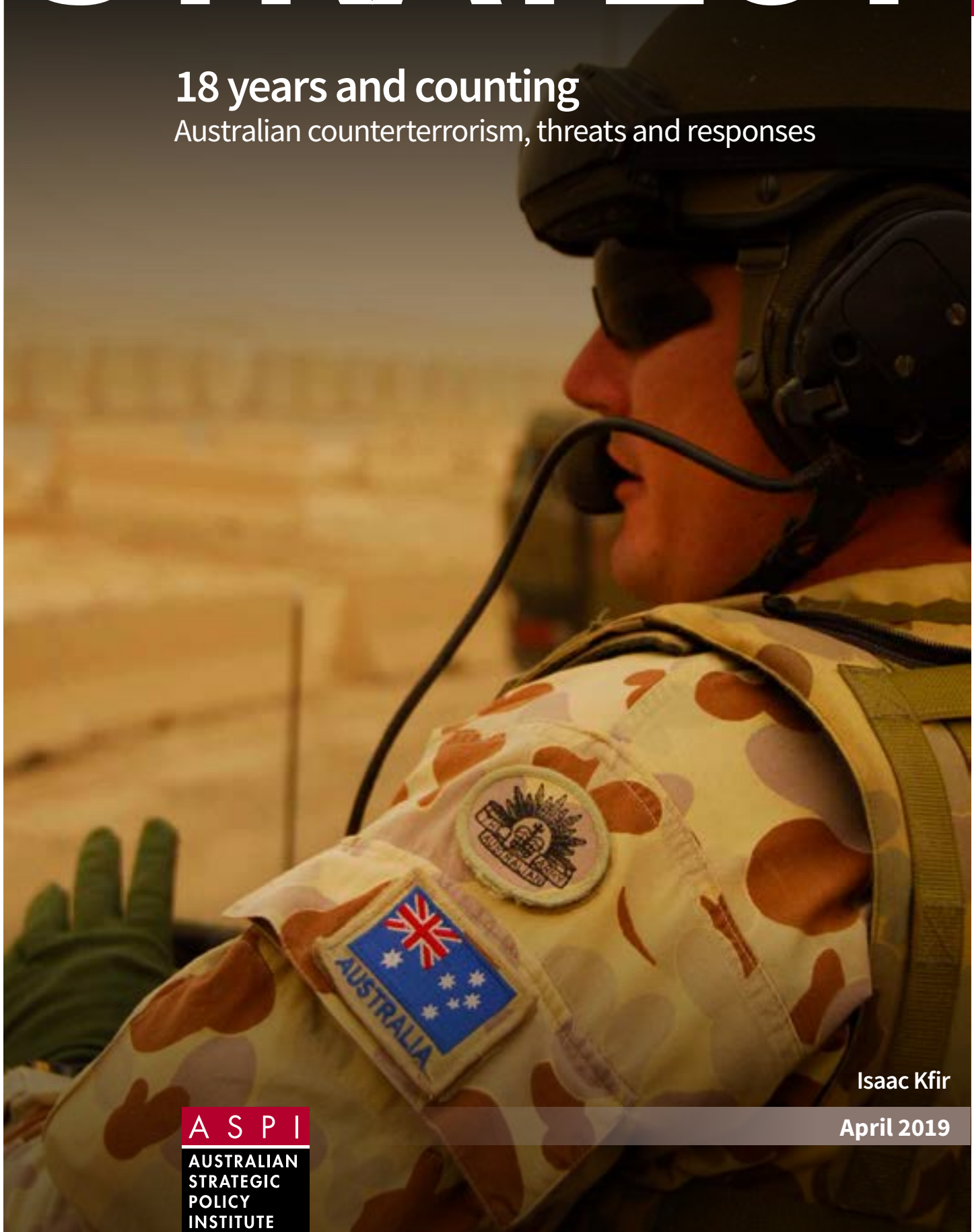


STRATEGY

A S P I

18 years and counting

Australian counterterrorism, threats and responses



Isaac Kfir

April 2019

A S P I

AUSTRALIAN
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INSTITUTE



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Cover image: SECDDET XIV Troop Sergeant James Lloyd watches over the convoy of ASLAVS moving along Route Irish to Biap, Iraq. [Image](#) courtesy Australian Department of Defence.

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides a general overview of what successive Australian governments have done since 9/11 to counter the threat posed by Salafi-jihadi to the maintenance of international peace and security, to regional security and to domestic security.

Since 2014, the threat level in Australia has been assessed as 'Probable', which means that credible intelligence exists to indicate that individuals or groups continue to possess the intent and capability to conduct a terrorist attack in Australia. Both Melbourne and Sydney have featured in jihadist videos and publications.

It's notable that this campaign against violent extremism¹ has lasted longer than last century's two world wars and doesn't seem anywhere close to ending. The international community and states such as Australia are engaged in a war of attrition that both sides neither can nor will give up. From the perspective of the *Salafi-jihadis*, they envision a world governed by their view of Islam, in which dissent is crushed forcefully and brutally, as is evident from what took place under the rule of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

The report is written for accessibility rather than comprehensiveness. Australia's counterterrorism architecture is extremely complex, and one clear challenge has been to determine where it begins and ends. It encapsulates both hard-power (military) tools and soft-power initiatives such as countering violent extremism (CVE) programs. A second challenge has been to ascertain the scope of expenditure on counterterrorism, which covers an array of programs and initiatives, some of which are classified (such as the scope of support given to the Philippines Army during the siege of Marawi). A third issue is the enormous body of policy papers, submissions to hearings and statements by governments and parliamentarians on the issue of countering terrorism.

This report doesn't seek to appraise Australia's approach to counterterrorism but to describe what's been done, as I'm conscious of Rufus E Miles's famed exegesis that where you stand on an issue depends on where you sit.² I also recognise and acknowledge that it's much easier to critique a policy after the fact, especially when access to internal discussions that might give a different perspective or understanding is limited. And yet, there's also the assumption that maybe by looking at what's been done we can explore what should be done, and assess whether we should continue with some of our policies.³

When reviewing Australia's approach to countering terrorism since 9/11, two things are immediately noticeable. First, to date there hasn't been a successful *Salafi-jihadi* mass-casualty terrorist attack on Australian soil. In part, this is because of effective detection and early intervention (both of which rely on the allocation of resources and legislative reforms), international partnership and luck, the last two of which seem to have been factors in foiling the Sydney Airport plot.⁴

Second, sensationalist media coverage, coupled with populist rhetoric about the danger posed by the 'other', helps explain why the 2018 Lowy Institute Poll found that two-thirds of Australians are anxious that 'terrorists could kill innocent Australian citizens in our cities.'⁵ There is an assumption, based on intelligence, that extremist groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIL have a clear, continuing intent and capability to conduct terrorist acts in Australia and in places frequented by Australians, which is also obviously a factor in the public's threat perception.

Australia has experienced numerous terror plots—between 2013 and 2019, for example, public reporting shows that at least 15 plots have been thwarted in Australia. They have included an attempt at random beheadings, vehicle-based attacks and an attack on crowds at an Anzac Day parade, and led to more than 55 convictions for terrorism-related offences.⁶

There have been efforts by policymakers to emphasise that it is not Islam, Muslims, or both that are the cause of terrorism, but individuals who have embraced the al-Qaeda ideology of violent extremism.⁷ The commitment to reach out to communities has paid some dividends, as it's recognised that violent extremism harms all. And yet, one must also recognise that more can be done to address stereotyping and rising Islamophobia.⁸

This report incorporates some suggestions on how to move forward as we seek to address the evolving threat posed by *Salafi-jihadis* in the post-'caliphate' period. It's worth recalling that the counterterrorism campaign has cost the US around US\$2.8 trillion, much of it for military and other security-focused measures, and yet by all indications the number of *Salafi-jihadis* has only increased since 9/11.⁹ This report should also not be read in isolation but rather with an appreciation of two other reports, one looking at the issue of glocalism and the second on the ideology of al-Qaeda.¹⁰ By looking at all three reports, readers can gain a better appreciation of the threat that *Salafi-jihadism* poses to the maintenance of international peace and security.

As we look to the future, it is worth citing the words of Russell Travers, the acting head of the US National Counterterrorism Center, who noted that:

If you look across the globe, the cohesive nature of the enterprise for ISIS has been maintained ... There's not been any breaking up, at least not as yet ... The message continues to resonate with way too many people.¹¹

UNDERSTANDING THE THREAT ENVIRONMENT: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGE

It's widely acknowledged that the terrorist threat has evolved and metamorphosed. In 2001, the threat was mainly from al-Qaeda and a few other *Salafi-jihadi* organisations, whereas in 2019 there are many more transnational, regional, national groups and individuals that subscribe to the ideology of al-Qaeda and ISIL.

The first modern generation of *jihadis* fought in Afghanistan, Algeria or Chechnya in the 1990s and early 2000s. Some of them returned to their homelands and fomented violence there. This was seen clearly in Indonesia, where many of the leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah were veterans of the conflict in Afghanistan. Within a decade of their return, the group carried out a bombing attack against tourist locations in Bali, in which 202 people died, including 88 Australians.

The more recent crop of *jihadis* are rather different from the first generation. Not only are they veterans of the Second Iraq War or the civil war in Syria, but, unlike many of the Afghan Arabs of the 1980s, they're also battle tested (many of the Afghan Arabs didn't see any combat). That experience gives these *jihadis* a better ability to contest for senior leadership roles beyond the Levant, and it also highlights their continued commitment to global jihad, as they are looking for new spheres of action.¹² Another significant observation that's been made about many of the contemporary *jihadis* is that many of their leaders have backgrounds in higher education and training, often in STEMM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine).¹³ This runs counter to the myth that tended to be propagated in the immediate post-9/11 period that many of those who join *Salafi-jihadi* groups are uneducated, irrational actors (by 2019, it's well established that terrorists are rational actors—something that was debated in the 1990s and 2000s).¹⁴ At the same time, we must also recognise that there's tremendous inexperience, naivety and stupidity among the current crop of *jihadis*, many of whom were seduced or manipulated into the *Salafi-jihadi* milieu through effective propaganda and recruitment processes. It's been rather interesting to see the latest cohort of jihadists using al-Qaeda and ISIL ideas, manuscripts and statements without really recognising the differences between the two groups.

It's evident that Salafi-jihadists' approach to attaining their goal of resurrecting the caliphate and sowing divisions is both tactical and strategic: they know what they want, and they know how they want to get it.¹⁵ This raises questions about whether they could be rehabilitated, given that they're very committed to their cause and understand that if they're captured they'll be imprisoned for a very long time.¹⁶

Put simply, there's a common assumption that when someone becomes a terrorist they'll remain a terrorist (we need more empirical studies to assess this assumption). That assessment may be truer for religion-based terrorism than for ideologically driven or ethnonationalist terrorism, the adherents of which haven't usually engaged in suicide attacks. For example, 19th-century anarchists are known to have cancelled operations due to concern over civilians being harmed. Religion-inspired terrorism is more challenging because, in the alleged words of the leader of the 7 July 2005 London bombings, 'We love death as much as you love life.'¹⁷ As Australian Federal Police (AFP) Commissioner Andrew Colvin has pointed out:

If we look at instances like Operation Pendennis and Neath in the past, we were very confident that, in taking the action we did, that we had removed the threat that had been posed by that group ... The operation we're doing now is removing immediate threats. It's obviously taking action against people that are committing criminal offences, but we don't believe it's having the same effect as what we've done in the past. The threat is different.¹⁸

Clearly, terrorism threats evolve; terrorists adjust to new and effective domestic, regional and international counterterrorism policies, which underlines the need for government to take an adaptive and flexible approach to counterterrorism and international cooperation. A key challenge for policymakers is to be proactive rather than reactive, which means that they must know and understand what has been done while thinking of what could be done.

Initially after 9/11, states' responses to the threat of transnational terrorism primarily used military force (hard power). The focus at the time seemed to be on 'defeating' terrorism, without any wider understanding of the range of societal, social, political and other lines of operation needed to prevent radicalisation and the creation of new terrorists, at least partly as a reaction to military action.¹⁹ It was only in the later part of the 2000s that there was a discernible change in the language of many military leaders, who increasingly recognised that terrorism can't be defeated by purely military force but requires a more nuanced approach.²⁰

After the 2004 Madrid train bombing, the 7 July 2005 London bombing, the discovery of the Hofstad Network and the Piranha group (both in Holland) and the Sauerland group in Germany, coupled with such police operations as Pendennis in Australia and the uncovering of the Sydney Airport plot in 2017 (Operation Silves), governments increasingly recognised that within their own national jurisdictions are citizens or residents who have accepted al-Qaedaism.²¹ That realisation meant that governments, including Australia's, have had to adapt and explore wider, non-military approaches to the problem of transnational terrorism.²² The Australian Government has invested in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), as it has recognised that we have to be more proactive in assessing the reasons why particular individuals gravitate towards al-Qaedaism. The approach ranges from the early detection of individuals on the path towards radicalisation to intervention aimed at stopping individuals becoming 'radical'.²³ To that end, Australia has invested in programs that involve youth mentoring, interfaith sporting activities, police-led intervention initiatives and deradicalisation projects in prisons, as well as outreach and partnering with affected communities.

A key event in shaping Australia's approach to the threat posed by *Salafi-jihadism* and by extension to counterterrorism was the 2002 Bali bombings. The bombings claimed the lives of 202 people, 88 of whom were Australians (a second bombing in October 2005 killed 20, four of whom were Australians). Those and other attacks showed that the threat that *Salafi-jihadi* ideology poses to the international liberal, democratic, rules-based order is also a threat to Australian values, citizens and national interests.²⁴

Consequently, Australia was one of the first countries to support Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan—a commitment that it maintained over most of the period since 9/11 (Australia's active military presence in Iraq and Syria has been cyclical). Overseas engagement has been shaped both as a contribution to global security and as 'forward defence'—a sentiment captured by then Prime Minister Turnbull while on a visit to Iraq, where he told Australian and New Zealand military personnel that 'what you are doing is having a global impact, it's making the world safe, it's making our homes in Australia and New Zealand safer.'²⁵

In Australia, 9/11, the Bali bombings and Operation Pendennis²⁶ led to a marked change in domestic counterterrorism and CVE policy. Successive federal governments have taken on a legislative program aimed at proscribing terrorist acts and activities that may facilitate terrorism and terrorist activities.²⁷ They have also provided extra funding for the domestic police and intelligence services and established new institutions, such as the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the Centre for Counter-Terrorism Coordination (formerly the Office for Counter-Terrorism Coordination), which oversees all efforts to prevent and counter the threat of terrorism in Australia. After 9/11, it was recognised that there was a need to ensure that national security policy was better coordinated and that there was a dire need to avoid a siloed approach, which is why under Prime Minister John

Howard the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet became the place where national security policy could be coordinated, with Angus Campbell running the department's Office of National Security. In 2008, Kevin Rudd appointed Duncan Lewis to serve as the first National Security Adviser. Lewis set up 'new cabinet committees and bodies to coordinate intelligence-gathering and emergency and counterterrorism response', although, as conceived by Rudd, the National Security Adviser was tasked with providing 'improved strategic direction within the national security community; to support whole-of-government national security policy development and crisis response; and to promote a cohesive national security culture.'²⁸

In 2017, the Turnbull government created the Department of Home Affairs, arguing that the nation faced a growing number of security challenges that called for a more comprehensive, whole-of-government approach, as opposed to a siloed one. This is why a key element of the department is 'coordination and cooperation across departments, agencies and strong central policy support',²⁹ which also explains why it hosts the Centre for Counter-Terrorism Coordination and the CVE Centre.

Despite the demise of Islamic State as a territory-owning entity, the threat from *Salafi-jihadis* hasn't dissipated. In 2018, there were at least 66 *Salafi-jihadi* groups—the same number as in 2016 and three times as many as there were in 2001. The Center for Strategic and International Studies asserted that in 2018 there were at least 218,000 *Salafi-jihadis* and allied fighters around the world.³⁰ It's estimated that US forces have been responsible for killing around 60,000 ISIL fighters, but US Government sources also note that in 2017 ISIL had as many members—around 15,000—as it did in 2014 (although some other sources suggest that it has between 21,000 to 30,000 fighters).³¹ This has therefore meant that policymakers have had to adjust their thinking not only about terrorism and the threat it poses but also about what terrorists have been doing. Consequently, there's a desperate need to also imagine what terrorists will do next, which makes the challenge of countering terrorism more complex.³²

The 2015 National Counter-Terrorism Strategy sums up the way Australia has sought to approach the *Salafi-jihadi* threat and the threat from specific terrorist groups, such as ISIL, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Shabaab, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, Jemaah Islamiyah and others that subscribe to al-Qaedaism. The need to distinguish between the ideology and the group arises because groups can change their names or composition but the ideology continues.

The 2015 strategy sets out Australia's approach to countering terrorism by identifying five interconnected themes:

- Challenging violent extremist ideologies
- Stopping people from becoming terrorists
- Shaping the global environment to counter terrorism
- Disrupting terrorist activity within Australia
- Having effective responses and recovery should an attack occur.³³

With the demise of Islamic State's caliphate, the trend towards low-tech attacks, high-impact attacks (often by lone actors) and the persistent challenge of the growing pool of 'subjects of interest' will put more pressure on the police and security services. They must not only deal with established threats but also monitor *Salafi-jihadi* online activity in the hope of preventing further radicalisation and terrorist attacks.³⁴ Part of this challenge is the increased likelihood that *Salafi-jihadis* will continue to employ virtual recruiters and virtual planners. These individuals, many of whom are battle tested, are likely to seek out impressionable young men and women with the aim of inspiring and directing them to commit acts of violence. That jihadist groups will rely more on the internet is therefore expected, and they're likely to focus on lone actors whom they can persuade to take rapid action that makes it hard for law enforcement agencies to spot and disrupt.

Academic studies and the 2015 counterterrorism strategy have noted that identifying lone-actor terrorists before they strike is exceptionally challenging. Studies indicate that there are two pathways to lone-actor terrorist activity: 'volatile' and 'autonomous'.³⁵ The 'volatile' pathway involves people who have struggled to successfully or fully integrate into radical milieus. They form affiliative ties that aren't solid, mainly because they have erratic and unpredictable behavioural patterns, leading co-conspirators to mistrust them. 'Autonomous' lone actors tend to become part of radical groups or milieus, but either decide to operate independently or are forced to do so by circumstances.

The challenge faced by the security services is that they must contend with both, but the latter type provides more of a challenge, as demonstrated by Hassan Khalif Shire Ali, the Bourke Street attacker. Reports indicate that Ali had become increasingly 'deluded' and paranoid.³⁶ Cases such as Ali highlight some of the challenges that lone actors pose to the security services, which range from identifying the predictors and indicators that could alert family, friends or the authorities that a person is considering committing an act of political violence.

The issue of lone-actor activity has become more complex in the aftermath of the March 2019 Christchurch massacre because far-right white supremacists do tend to operate as lone actors. They thrive and communicate in the darkest part of the web and use very secure encrypted platforms such as 8chan, 4chan, Reddit and Telegram.³⁷

Both al-Qaeda and ISIL have looked to the Indo-Pacific, seeking to exploit local grievances in their recruitment drive. They have emphasised the lack of religious observance in Muslim-majority societies; they have pointed to the abuses suffered by Muslims in India and Myanmar; they have embraced the disillusion that many people feel about globalisation.³⁸

In Australia, we haven't been immune to *Salafi-jihadi terrorism*. Between 2001 and January 2019, 58 Australians were convicted and sentenced for federal terrorism offences in Australia, and over 80% of those convictions were in the past three years. In November 2018, a few weeks after the Bourke Street incident, Victoria Police arrested three individuals whose passports had been cancelled earlier in the year, alleging that they were planning a mass-casualty attack. At the time of writing, the three don't seem to have a direct link to ISIL.³⁹ A large percentage of those convicted were under the age of 21 when they committed their offences.⁴⁰

AUSTRALIA'S ROLE IN THE 'GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR': HARD POWER

Australia has played a significant role in countering the ongoing threat of transnational terrorism. One of the key drivers behind Canberra's continued commitment to an expansive counterterrorism-based foreign policy was that after 9/11 several countries experienced terrorist attacks, showing that the threat was transnational. This led to a common perception that terrorism needed to be confronted, including with military and intelligence capabilities.

Prime Minister John Howard was in Washington DC on the day of the 9/11 attacks. He immediately committed Australia to supporting the US's declaration of the 'war on terror' because of his belief that 'civilised countries' must come together to defeat terrorism.⁴¹ He opted to invoke Article 4 of the ANZUS Treaty as he authorised the deployment of Australian military assets that included a destroyer for Gulf duty, four FA-18s and a squadron of the Special Air Service (SAS).⁴² Thus, with Howard's invocation of the ANZUS Treaty and his reference to a campaign to defend civilisation, it's understandable that in the early years of the 'war on terror' the focus was on hard power. ADF personnel operated in some of the most challenging combat zones, such as Helmand Province in Afghanistan, alongside American, British and Canadian forces, as well as in Fallujah in Iraq.⁴³

In 2007, the Rudd government decided to reduce Australia's military involvement in Iraq, leading in 2008 to the withdrawal of combat troops, which was completed in 2011.

In October 2014, it was announced that Australia had sent 200 special forces personnel (commandos, SAS troopers and combat engineers) to Iraq, half of whom would carry out combat operations.⁴⁴ The Abbott government also authorised the deployment of the Air Task Group, dispatching around 400 personnel, six F/A-18F Super Hornets, a KC-30A multi-role tanker transport aircraft and an E7-A Wedgetail airborne early warning and control aircraft, which were in addition to the RAAF's C-130J Hercules and C-17A Globemasters that were already in Iraq providing humanitarian and logistic support.⁴⁵ What was driving the decision was the need to deal with the threat posed by Islamic State and to support Iraqi security and our allies.

The ADF has also played a key role in supporting the alliance's campaign against Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, primarily in a training capacity (Australian and New Zealand troops have trained more than 30,000 Iraqi soldiers, paramilitary personnel and police). In March 2018, there were around 300 soldiers operating at the Taji base, providing training. There are around 50 in the coalition forces' headquarters, 80 counterterrorism advisers and 150 in the Air Task Group, focusing on support for refueller and surveillance aircraft.⁴⁶ The commitment to training is a marked difference from the early years of the global 'war on terror', when the Australian military was involved in many combat engagements in both Iraq and Afghanistan (it's estimated that, between 2001 and 2017, Australia's civil and military commitments in Afghanistan amounted to more than \$8.3 billion on the part of the Defence organisation alone).⁴⁷

Successive Defence and Foreign Policy White Papers emphasised Australia's commitment to counterterrorism and the need to address the roots of violent extremism. A review of the papers highlights an evolution in thinking as governments recognised that they must look at macro-level ('push') factors, meso-level and micro-level ('pull') factors.

Because it recognises that the drivers behind radicalisation are so complex, the Australian Government has committed \$18 million over the past three years to a UN Development Programme initiative aimed at the rebuilding of Iraq. The pledge was made at an international conference held in Kuwait in February 2018, where it was announced that the rebuilding project likely to cost around US\$88.2 billion (A\$113.5 billion). The biggest cost will be for housing (it's estimated that in Mosul alone there's a need for 40,000 new homes).⁴⁸ Another example of the government seeking to prevent violent extremism was its decision following the 2017 siege of Marawi to provide social services assistance, reproductive health kits, anti-gender-based violence support and women-friendly spaces. There has also been food assistance.⁴⁹ The intention is to support those displaced by conflict, but the government also recognises that violent extremists exploit the conditions in post-conflict environments for recruitment purposes. In other words, there's a recognition that unless we address conditions on the ground, especially in countries and areas transitioning out of conflict, terrorists will move into those spaces.

The *2016 Defence White Paper* emphasised that Australian policymakers saw a link between global terrorism, instability and domestic security, thus connecting Australia's commitment to countering *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism primarily in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific to domestic security.⁵⁰ The *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* followed in similar fashion, as it too underlined that Australia's commitment to countering terrorism and the threat it poses requires a pragmatic, realist approach to foreign policy, which also includes recognising the new, complex and uncertain international agenda.⁵¹

In sum, immediately after 9/11, Australia—which at the time wasn't really affected by *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism—opted to stand with the US and the international community. The 2002 Bali bombings were a game-changer in furthering the perception that Australia wasn't immune from the threat of transnational terrorism (a view that has solidified since with the discovery of several plots and terrorist networks domestically), most of which had some kind of international linkage, whether through propaganda or active cultivation of and support to plotters.

The ADF has played an instrumental role in supporting the international coalition to confront al-Qaeda and later ISIL. The view among many Australians, which Julie Bishop in her capacity as Foreign Minister captured, was that the rise of transnational terrorism is 'the most significant threat to the global rules-based order to emerge in the past 70 years—and included in my considerations is the rise of communism and the Cold War.' She added that not only is the threat 'more dangerous, more complex, more global than we have witnessed before' but that if left unchecked 'it would threaten the very existence of nation states.'⁵²

As Defence Minister, Marise Payne used a different formulation: 'The spread of Daesh-inspired terrorism is a direct threat to Australia and its interests and we are committed to working with our partners and allies to ensuring [*sic*] Daesh cannot establish a geographic foothold in the region.'⁵³

In other words, a key assumption is that to protect the domestic environment we must look beyond it and recognise that threats and plots are hatched beyond our borders. The Sydney Airport plot is a case in point. Khaled Khayat was contacted by one of his brothers, Tarek Khayat, who was fighting in Syria for ISIL. Tarek connected Khaled to a senior ISIL officer. Khaled and the man were in contact for several months, during which time they planned to carry out a terrorist attack. Khaled was to include his younger brother Mahmoud in the plot. The three men hatched a plot to construct an explosive device inside a meat grinder using explosive materials being mailed from Turkey to Sydney through international air cargo.⁵⁴

In such an interconnected world, one can easily understand why Australian policymakers have felt obliged to commit Australian hard power as part of the effort to confront, disrupt, weaken and defeat transnational *Salafi-jihadi terrorism*.

AUSTRALIA'S REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN COUNTERING SALAFIST-JIHADISM: HARD AND SOFT POWER

Australia's approach to regional counterterrorism is best seen as being a combination of hard and soft power lines. Successive Australian governments have kept a close eye on Southeast Asia, and particularly on Indonesia and the Philippines, as both are key strategic allies and both are homes to dangerous *Salafi-jihadi* groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Working with the partner governments in these states has benefited both their security and Australia's.

Australian policymakers have sought to emphasise the need for regional cooperation, building on Australia's special relationship with ASEAN and its member countries. For example, Australia was able to host the 2018 ASEAN–Australia Special Summit, which included a Counter-terrorism Conference.⁵⁵ The conference built on the 2016 ASEAN–Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism and aimed at 'enhancing regional connectivity and cooperation to combat terrorism and violent extremism' and on the Sub-Regional Meeting on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Cross Border Terrorism.⁵⁶ The overall focus of the summits was on the value of ASEAN as a force for 'stability', 'prosperity' and 'security' in our region and on the need to develop coordinating responses to the threats that returning foreign terrorist fighters pose to the region.⁵⁷

Australian policymakers have a continuing concern about groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah, which since 2007 has focused its attention on recruitment and *dawah* (proselytising), as opposed to carrying out terrorist attacks.⁵⁸ Of more recent concern is Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (Partisans of the [Islamic] State Group), a militant group of Islamic State supporters in Indonesia, as its members committed the 2018 Surabaya church attacks—an example of the rise of new extremist groups that can be difficult to spot and disrupt in Indonesia's diverse communities. Two of its members (Syawaluddin Pakpahan and Ardial Ramadhana) stabbed a police officer to death in Medan, and it has launched a series of attacks on police officers in Depok, West Java.⁵⁹

The Bali bombings underlined to Canberra and Jakarta that terrorist groups in Southeast Asia threaten the security and prosperity of both countries. Australian policymakers recognised that Bali didn't happen suddenly but rather was a product of a process that began in the 1980s and 1990s, when hundreds of Indonesians travelled to South Asia to train and fight with the Afghan *mujahidin*. Many of them returned to the region, mainly to Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. This created the nucleus for a *Salafi-jihadi* core that two clerics, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Bashir, largely led. The men exploited Suharto's demise to promote communal conflicts, mainly in the Maluku Islands and Sulawesi.⁶⁰

The *Salafi-jihadi* movement coalesced primarily through Jemaah Islamiyah. Initially, the group, which drew inspiration and ideas from Darul Islam, focused on seeking to implement sharia (Islamic law) in Indonesia and eschewed violence, but, as it shifted towards al-Qaeda, it came to accept violence as justified. Jemaah Islamiyah activists sought out relations with other *Salafi-jihadi* groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines.⁶¹

The 2002 Bali bombings were a wake-up call for Indonesian counterterrorism, encouraging the security forces to pursue a whole-of-government approach to addressing the threat of terrorism. This is also why the specialist counterterrorism unit, Detachment 88 (or Densus 88), through a program run by the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs known as an 'early warning system', works closely with local councils of religious and community leaders to identify potential threats and to carry out early intervention.⁶²

Following the 2002 Bali bombings, Australia and Indonesia strengthened their relations in countering terrorism and violent extremism. The AFP and the US State Department's Diplomatic Security Service and Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program have played an important role in supporting and training Densus 88. Importantly, Densus 88 can operate as a tactical response team and, because it also has technical experts such as specialists in explosives and post-blast forensics as well as people trained in digital forensics, it can take a more comprehensive approach to CVE and responding to terrorist threats and attacks. In the words of one senior counterterrorism officer, Densus 88 was built 'to learn from the enemy', which may also explain why it employs people with 'doctorates [in] psychology and social behaviour'.⁶³ Nevertheless, despite these valiant efforts, General Gatot Nurmantyo, at that time Indonesia's military chief, declared in 2017 that there were many Islamic State sleeper cells in the country and that the military was concerned that insurgents from Marawi would cross to Indonesia, leading Indonesia to establish more military bases along the border with the Philippines. It's also claimed that between 2012 and 2018 Indonesian law enforcement agencies disrupted more than 500 terror plots.⁶⁴

In the Philippines, the ongoing insurgency in the south has been a worry for Australia primarily because the region has tended to lack law and order as a result, enabling criminal and terrorist groups to establish bases there.⁶⁵ There were legitimate concerns that, should Islamic State establish a permanent foothold in the area, it could provide training and also serve as a base for terrorism activities, as was the case in the 1990s, when many *Salafi-jihadis* headed to the area to develop their skill sets.

When the battle of Marawi took place in 2017, Australia provided technical expertise to the Philippines Army through what came to be known as Operation Augury—Philippines. The ADF could provide such training because Australian special forces have been battling these types of terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan (Australia sent around 80 military trainers skilled in urban warfare to the Philippines). Australia also contributed two AP-3C Orion surveillance planes to provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance to help the Philippines ground commanders attain situational awareness. The basis of the cooperation was not only Australia's determination to support its friends, but also because Marawi was seen by Australian policymakers as 'a threat to the region [that] we all need to work together to defeat'.⁶⁶ After the battle, the relationship between the two countries expanded to include the ADF providing urban warfare counterterrorism training in the Philippines. Marise Payne in her capacity as Defence Minister stated that 'The practical training the ADF will provide will ensure the Philippines defence force is better able to counter the brutal tactics being employed by terrorists'.⁶⁷

Australia has also taken a soft-power approach for much of the past 18 years, focusing on building institutions and cooperation. Much of that focus has been on providing technical support to Australia's ASEAN partners in counterterrorism, disrupting terrorist financing, enacting counterterrorism legislation and running capacity-building initiatives to detect and disrupt terrorist activity. One example is Australia's support for the establishment of a specialist centre for counterterrorism—the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation—which began with Australian and other regional support in 2004. The centre was a product of a bilateral agreement between the AFP and the Indonesian National Police (Polri). As of 2018, the centre had trained more than 20,000 officials from more than 70 countries.⁶⁸

There are more examples of Australia increasingly reaching out and working with regional partners to counter the threat of terrorism through non-kinetic means. One is Australia's support for the formation of the South East Asia Counter-Terrorism Financing Working Group, which is aimed at blocking terrorism finance. The chairs of the working group are Australia and the Philippines.⁶⁹ The group emerged out of the Asia-Pacific Counter-Terrorism Financing Summit that took place in Sydney in 2015 and was followed up a year later at a meeting in Bali. In 2017, AUSTRAC (the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre), Bank Negara Malaysia and Indonesia's *Pusat Pelaporan dan Analisis Transaksi Keuangan* sponsored the 3rd Counter-Terrorism Financing (CTF) Summit, which was held in Kuala Lumpur. The 4th summit was held in Bangkok in November 2018.

AUSTRALIA'S DOMESTIC POLICIES TO COUNTER SALAFIST-JIHADISM

Australia's concern about domestically based *Salafi-jihadis* has evolved since 9/11, mainly because the threat has changed since then. So has the response to the threat, as the federal and state and territory governments recognised the extent of the threat and their lack of skill sets to meet it. One example that highlights the drastic change is the impact that 9/11 and the bombings in Bali, Madrid, London and so on have had on the intelligence community. Reportedly, between 2001 and 2010, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) saw a trebling of its staff numbers and a sixfold increase in its budget.⁷⁰

Since 9/11, successive Australian governments have sought to use legislation to prevent terrorist attacks. Those measures have included the designation of groups as terrorist organisations, new CTF measures, restrictions on travel (cancellations and suspensions of passports), preventive detention orders, questioning warrants, post-sentencing detention and control orders. There have also been measures to reform the intelligence and security community to ensure that it can better cope with the terrorist threat.⁷¹

Additionally, there's evidence to show that the Australian Government and the states and territories have devoted tremendous resources to understanding why people are attracted to *Salafi-jihadism* (this has included funding for academic research, organising symposiums, providing grants to NGOs and running roundtables). Moreover, there have also been efforts to develop programs to discourage and arguably 'treat' those who seem on the path towards adopting a *Salafi-jihadi* agenda that could involve either travelling to proscribed areas (the legislation uses the term 'declared area'), seeking to join proscribed groups or committing an act of violence.

AUSTRAC has also been very active in stemming the flow of terrorism finance, primarily due to changes to the Criminal Code. The *Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2002* (Cwlth) makes it an offence to get funds to, from or for a terrorist organisation intentionally or recklessly. There are also offences relating to collecting funds for financing terrorism and terrorist groups. Simon Norton, an ASPI analyst working on CTF, has noted that over the past few years it has become harder to get sufficient evidence to prosecute individuals for terrorist financing because of the need to prove 'that an individual *knew* the funds would be used by a terrorist organisation or to commit a terrorist act'. Nevertheless, Norton also notes that 10 people have been convicted of terrorism-financing offences, and there are several cases pending.⁷²

A key goal of the counterterrorism legislation, beyond deterring and punishing those who engage in terrorism or terrorism-related activities, is to reassure Australians that the government is taking necessary measures to ensure their security. Thus, soon after 9/11, the Howard government planned for the introduction of air security officers, the expansion of the SAS, improvements to the ADF's capabilities to respond to chemical or biological attack (which, some suggested, had been degraded following the Sydney Olympics), and increased powers for ASIO.⁷³

More recently, in June 2018, the government amended the *Defence Act 1903* to lower the threshold for the ADF to provide more comprehensive support to state and territory police responding to terrorist incidents. The measures ensure that state and territory police are the first responders to terrorist incidents, but under the revised legislation the states and territories may turn to the ADF when they believe that the military has the specific assets, skills and personnel needed to better deal with a violent terrorist attack.⁷⁴

Shandon Harris-Hogan and Kate Barrelle have identified three waves of terrorist activity in Australia. Each wave had or has a specific set of characteristics based on *modus operandi*, age, gender and influence.⁷⁵

In the first wave (2000 to 2004), seven individuals were arrested in Australia for terrorism-related offences. They were male, with an average age of 31.4 years, and many were linked to Jemaah Islamiyah, which is inspired by al-Qaedaism.

In the second wave (2005 to June 2014), 37 men were arrested, many of whom had little connection to transnational terrorist networks. Their average age was 27.5 years.

In the third wave (July 2014 to June 2018), Australia's threat assessment was changed to 'Probable' as Islamic State declared the establishment of its caliphate. This wave has included the Lindt Café siege, the shooting of police accountant Curtis Cheng and the attempted beheading of a Victorian police officer (the Anzac Day plot), and has underlined the threat posed by young people who have been radicalised. It arguably began in 2014, when 18-year-old Abdul Numan Haider was shot dead while trying to behead two police officers. A few months later, Man Haron Monis took 18 people hostage at the Lindt Café in Sydney. The siege ended with the deaths of Monis and two of the hostages. In October 2015, 15-year-old Farhad Jabar Khalil Mohammad was shot and killed outside Parramatta Police Station after he had shot and killed Curtis Cheng.⁷⁶ The third wave has also included teenagers and women emerging as *jihadi* subgroups. During this period, 72 people have been arrested for terror-related offences, moving the arrest rate from one per year to one per month.⁷⁷ The trend seems to indicate that 'at-risk' teenage *jihadis* pose a great threat to Australia's domestic security.⁷⁸

Relevant legislation

Australia's domestic experience with *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism has been small scale. However, as many politicians have made clear, just because the country, beyond the 2002 Bali bombings, hasn't experienced an event like 9/11 in the US or 7/7 in the UK doesn't mean that Australia is immune from such an attack.⁷⁹ Because of those concerns, the government promoted the Anti-Terrorism Bill (No. 2) 2005, which was introduced to parliament in November 2005 and passed on 7 December 2005. The Act included an update to sedition offences and the use of preventive detention orders and control orders.⁸⁰ Several terrorism Bills and amendments have substantially revised the Criminal Code, although some of the revisions have prompted questions about core Australian values, such as how the code ensures that freedom of speech isn't undermined. Professor George Williams, Dean of the Law Faculty at the University of NSW, has argued that under section 102.1(1A) of the Criminal Code Act an organisation may be listed as a terrorist organisation because it 'advocate[s] the doing of a terrorist act', including by 'prais[ing]' a terrorist act in a way that might lead a person (regardless of any mental impairment they might suffer) to engage in one.⁸¹ Notably, the legislation has a review and oversight mechanism that, for example, allows the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS) to review the listing. The PJCIS can call on parliament to disallow the listing because it deems that there are insufficient grounds to justify the listing. Moreover, the public may also make submissions to the PJCIS about a particular listing. Two other additional avenues are open to those who wish to contest a listing: judicial review and oversight by the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security.

In the myriad pieces of counterterrorism legislation⁸² developed since 9/11, several features are noticeable:

- **Terrorist act offences.** These measures define terrorist acts as acts, or threats to act, with the intention of coercing, intimidating or influencing the public or government to advance an ideological, religious or political goal. That includes planning, preparing, financing, providing or receiving training, and possessing a 'thing' connected with a terrorist act, such as a document. To meet the threshold, it must be shown that the act would cause or has caused death, serious harm or danger to a person, serious damage to property or a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or was a serious interference with, disruption to, or destruction of critical infrastructure, such as a telecommunications or electricity network.⁸³

- *Legislation relating to terrorist organisations.* The government can designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation if the Home Affairs Minister is satisfied that the group is engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting or fostering the doing of a terrorist act or if the group advocates the doing of a terrorist act.
- *Preventing the financing of terrorism.* A person finances terrorism when they intentionally collect or provide money for the commission of an act of terrorism or they're reckless about whether the money will be used to enable the commission of a terrorist act. It isn't a defence to claim that the money was provided or collected on behalf of a third party, if the terrorist act didn't take place, or if the money wasn't used for a specific terrorist act.⁸⁴
- *Inciting violence and advocating the commission of a terrorist offence.* In the national security context, a person commits an urging-violence offence if they intentionally urge another person or group to use force or violence to overthrow the Constitution, the government or a lawful authority. They may also be deemed to be urging violence and advocating terrorism if they urge violence against a group, or members of a group, that's distinguished by race, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin or political opinion.⁸⁵
- *Foreign incursions and recruitment offences.* On 1 December 2014, foreign incursions and recruitment offences were relocated to the new Part 5.5 of the Criminal Code to make it an offence to enter or to prepare to enter a foreign country with an intention to engage in a hostile activity. The revised legislation also makes it a criminal offence to recruit others to join an organisation involved in hostile activities, or to serve in or with an armed force in a foreign country.⁸⁶

Since 2001, there have been more than 50 convictions for terrorism-related offences (mainly for preparing to commit a terrorist offence), and in 2018 there were around 240 people whom the authorities were investigating for terrorism-related activities. Specifically, between 2014, which is when the threat level changed, and 2018, Australia has faced six attacks (not including Momena Shoma's knife attack or Hassan Khalif Shire Ali's vehicle/knife attack in Bourke Street). During that period, there have been at least 14 major counterterrorism disruption operations. Australian authorities have charged 85 people with terrorism-related offences; of those, eight were between 10 and 17 years old when they committed the offence, and 23 were between the ages of 18 and 21 years. In looking at the prosecutions, it's evident that teenagers seem to pose a key threat. That makes sense, as that group is probably most susceptible to online radicalisation efforts.⁸⁷

Generally, the sentencing and treatment of those convicted of terrorist offences has varied from state to state, as the courts have usually focused on the severity of the offence, the target, the damage and the 'proximity between the preparatory acts and the commission of a terrorist act'.⁸⁸ The courts have taken the view that deterrence and punishment, rather than rehabilitation, should guide sentencing. In part, this is because in *Lodhi v The Queen* (2007) the NSW Court of Criminal Appeal accepted as correct the statement of Chief Justice Lord Bingham in *R v Martin* (1999) that rehabilitation 'is likely to play a minor (if any) part' in sentencing, as the focus must be on the need to 'deter and incapacitate'.⁸⁹

As Australia is a federation, the states have also adopted their own legislation to deal with the threat posed by terrorists, leading to varying sentencing and treatment of those convicted of terrorist offences from state to state.⁹⁰ Thus, for example, the NSW Correctional Service applies the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment—version 2 (VERA 2) in assessing how to deal with those convicted of terrorism.⁹¹ Victoria has taken a different approach, as it integrates those convicted of terrorism offences into its existing prisoner classification process. Under the system, those convicted of terrorism offences are generally designated as 'high security', which is the highest security rating, but such classification may also be meted to those convicted of other offences. The guidelines in the *National Custodial Management Guidelines for the Management of Inmates/Prisoners Deemed to Present a Special Risk to National Security* have aided in the management of those convicted and imprisoned for terrorism-related offences, although each state or territory administers them. *The Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia* makes no specific reference to how states and territories manage people convicted of terrorism-related offences. In 2015, NSW introduced a new prisoner designation—a 'national security interest inmate'—the aim being to identify and separate prisoners seen as at risk of inciting or organising terrorist attacks.⁹²

The growing recognition of the role of social media and messaging platforms in recruitment and in the dissemination of violent extremist content has encouraged policymakers across the world to demand that the tech sector take a more forceful stance on preventing its products from being used for such nefarious purposes.⁹³ In the US, for example, there have been legislative proposals that have sought to demand that social media companies notify federal authorities of communications relating to ‘terrorist activities’, which refers to ‘explosives, destructive devices, and weapons of mass destruction’, on their networks.⁹⁴ Conversely, there have also been attempts to sue such companies as Twitter for allegedly giving material support to a terrorist group (the argument being that the company knowingly allows entities such as Islamic State to use its platform and is therefore complicit in whatever crimes the group commits).⁹⁵

Foreign fighters

It's estimated that between 2011 and 2018 around 230 Australians travelled to Iraq and Syria with the intention of joining Islamic State, and that's led to the designation of many as foreign terrorist fighters. Around half are estimated to have died due to their involvement in the conflict. These individuals have caused enormous concern to Australian policymakers who fear that, should they return here, they would either carry out terrorist operations in Australia or incite others to do so. This has polarised opinions about how they should be treated.⁹⁶

In 2014, the Abbott government unveiled legislation aimed at preventing people from travelling to Syria and Iraq by revoking or cancelling their passports.⁹⁷ Abbott defended the legislation by referring to the citizenship pledge, arguing that those who embrace the ideas of the Islamic State fundamentally reject Australian values.⁹⁸ The legislation was also designed to enable the government to prosecute those who had travelled to declared areas. Under Australian law, citizens have a general statutory right to be issued with an Australian passport. The *Australian Passports Act 2005* permits the government to cancel a person's passport in specified circumstances if a ‘competent authority’ suspects on reasonable grounds that they might undertake a hostile act that may prejudice the security of Australia or a foreign country. Importantly, Australia wasn't the only country to adopt such measures. In the UK, the Home Secretary has the power to revoke a British national's passport. By 2017, the UK had revoked the British citizenship of 100 dual citizens. In 2019, the Dutch stripped Marouane B, a convicted *Salafi-jihadi*, of his Dutch nationality, six years after he had left to join ISIL in Syria.

Under the *Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Act 2015*, it's possible for a person with dual citizenship to lose their Australian citizenship if they engage in proscribed activities offshore, such as activities aimed at coercing or influencing a government by intimidation (as long as those activities occur outside of Australia) or by attempting to travel to a ‘declared area’ without a legitimate reason to do so.⁹⁹

A third avenue for the revocation of a passport for a dual-nationality Australian is through ministerial discretion if they've been convicted of an offence that carries a maximum penalty of six years or more and that demonstrates that they have repudiated their allegiance to Australia, and if the Home Affairs minister is satisfied that the revocation would be in the public interest.

The key to many of these measures was the decision to make it a criminal offence to travel to designated conflict areas where terrorist activity was occurring.¹⁰⁰ The need for the measures stemmed from the realisation that there are Australian nationals who were travelling, had travelled or were planning to travel to join Islamic State. Of the estimated 230 Australians who travelled to Iraq and Syria, only 12 have had their passports cancelled.

Preventing and countering violent extremism

An important tool in Australian domestic security is a plethora of policies and programs aimed at P/CVE. There have been some major successes but also gaps in this approach.

Following a 2005 Council of Australian Governments meeting, Australia adopted the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security, which is a non-coercive plan aimed at promoting social cohesion to prevent people becoming radicalised.¹⁰¹ To promote its Action Plan, the government also reached out to the Muslim community, which led to the establishment of the Muslim Community Reference Group, which is composed of Muslim community leaders and Muslim youths. The group was tasked with advising the government on issues such as terrorism and social cohesion.¹⁰² Its report emphasised three key issues in the prevention of domestic terrorism: youth issues, education (including Islamic education for imams), and interfaith and intercultural relations.¹⁰³

In response to the recommendations of the group, the government allocated funds to efforts such as the Diversity and Social Cohesion Program, which was run by what was then the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The government also allocated \$4.3 million over four years to the Australian Human Rights Commission to develop a program aimed at building resilience in vulnerable communities and addressing social exclusion.¹⁰⁴ In its attempt to promote resilience, the government authorised the Building Community Resilience scheme, which had a budget of several million dollars and provided grants of \$5,000 to \$100,000 to people working on P/CVE. A key focus of this scheme, which is no longer in operation, was youth education and leadership training.¹⁰⁵ These are examples of early attempts to help support and promote social cohesion that stemmed from a recognition that there were people within Australia who felt disconnected and disenfranchised.

Building on the 2005 National Action Plan and the work of the Muslim Community Reference Group, the Attorney-General's Department formed the Countering Violent Extremism Taskforce, which led to the publication of a report titled *Countering violent extremism literature review*. The report called for more research on the push and pull factors that lead to violent extremism, emphasising that the government recognised that it lacked expertise in this space and that it therefore needed to not only look to the UK and other jurisdictions but also to engage with academics working on issues such as social cohesion and P/CVE.

Over the past decade, there was a recognition that to prevent the next homegrown violent extremist from being radicalised, the government, whether state or federal level, needed to empower communities on the front lines and build trusting partnerships with and within local communities.¹⁰⁶

One such initiative is the Australian Intervention Support Hub. Under that program, which is structured as a multidisciplinary and multiagency initiative, criminologists, counsellors and community activists work together to engage in early intervention with youths deemed at risk of being radicalised. The underlying assumption is that to prevent and counter radicalisation we must 'understand the needs and social dynamics of a community and then ... provide specific "grassroots", co-designed solutions'.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the aim is to establish a platform across government and key stakeholders, be they police or community activists,¹⁰⁸ because, as Assistant Commissioner Ross Guenther noted, the young Muslim man who is 'isolated, unemployed, locks himself away in his room to use computer games, loses his social skills, loses direct contact with friends, turns to social media for company and can be radicalised quickly'.¹⁰⁹

The hub focuses on 'secondary intervention', which means identifying potential extremists and providing them with mechanisms for community engagement and family support. The hub's project is based on certain key assumptions:¹¹⁰

- There's no 'typical profile' of radicalised youth.
- There are multiple ways and reasons why someone chooses to engage in violent extremism.
- Radicalisation begins with and is encouraged by social networks and relationships, both of which are organic and are constantly changing (the implication being that early intervention can stop someone who has been radicalised from turning to violent extremism).

- There are signs that could warn that someone is on the path towards radicalisation and violent extremism.
- Effective P/CVE means integrating individuals and groups that have become radicalised.

Interestingly, commentators such as Harris-Hogan et al. have pointed out that Australia's emphasis on P/CVE through education and policies aimed at addressing the conditions that may facilitate or encourage radicalisation has 'created serious problems' because it wasn't evidence based. They noted that the approach was and to some extent remains based on preconceived notions that effectively stigmatise minority communities.¹¹¹ Others have noted that the Building Community Resilience grants program was too broad in its scope to produce quantifiable results, as the goal was attaining social cohesion without a proper description of what such an outcome would look like.¹¹² A problem facing policymakers here has been a lack of evidence and research to inform successful intervention programs, along with a need to pursue some policy measures, given continuing examples of radicalisation.

In the early 2010s, the government introduced a plethora of programs and initiatives aimed at addressing at-risk Muslim youths and promoting social cohesion through resilience and P/CVE. At the centre was the government's *Counter-terrorism White Paper: Securing Australia—protecting our community*, which focused on building a strong and resilient Australian community 'to resist the development of any form of violent extremism and terrorism on the home front'.¹¹³

A year later, the Attorney-General's Department formed the Countering Violent Extremism Unit to establish programs to reduce violent extremism.¹¹⁴ In 2011, the unit formulated Australia's national P/CVE program; the program wasn't publicised, but a fact sheet about P/CVE was made available.¹¹⁵ Notably, Shahram Akbarzadeh has noted the value of education as an important tool in countering violent extremism, but he has also emphasised the need to recognise political and socio-economic factors, especially marginalisation, which he argues makes young Muslims susceptible to extremist ideas.¹¹⁶ In other words, there's a need to revamp the system to address structural inequalities, as opposed to taking a siloed approach. Again, however, there's a lack of evidence that such broad social and development measures do prevent radicalisation.

In 2015, the Attorney-General defined violent extremism as occurring if a group or a person has decided that 'fear, terror and violence are justified to achieve ideological, political or social change, and then acts accordingly, this is violent extremism'. This is distinguished from radicalisation, which occurs when 'a person's beliefs move from being relatively conventional to being radical, and they want a drastic change in society ... This is not necessarily a bad thing and does not mean these people will become violent.'¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, after 18 years, it seems that social cohesion, P/CVE, deradicalisation and disengagement have become intermingled, causing some confusion.¹¹⁸

In sum, after 18 years, the most effective way to understand the Australian Government's approach to P/CVE is to see it as a continuum that begins with a campaign to promote social cohesion. This occurs on the federal level but also within the states and territories through tailored programs that focus on P/CVE (such as in the Victorian Government's 'Victorian. And proud of it' campaign), and then uses the law to punish violent extremists and remove them from public life.

Put simply, on the domestic front, our approach to P/CVE has generally recognised that there are precipitating factors (specific events that occur before an act of terrorism) and preconditions that relate to events, situations and conditions (all of which are structural) that directly inspire terrorist activities. While the diversity of paths to radicalisation is a clear complication, it's still useful to try to identify preconditions that provide an opportunity for terrorism to occur.¹¹⁹

A key aspect in Australia's approach to P/CVE has been the interaction between security practitioners, policymakers and academics (initially, the interaction was limited, but relations among the three groups have grown over time). The need for this nexus stemmed from a recognition that security and law enforcement agencies are unlikely to have insights into all of the structural factors that turn people into extremists, but academics have provided a set of psychometric tools to assess that risk and have indicated a need to recognise that foreign policy and public discourse have become more inflammatory and serve as a recruitment mechanism for *Salafi-jihadis*.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Australia's commitment to the international campaign to defeat *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism has been multifaceted and has involved hard and soft power. We're engaged in a multigenerational campaign, so it would be useful to rethink some of the things that we've been doing in P/CVE.

Identifying the enemy: the ideology and its appeal

Since 9/11, much of the focus has been on individuals and groups, rather than on the push and pull factors that have fed al-Qaedaism. Our attempts to engage in the war of ideas with the extremists have been limited (at least in the early years) mainly because we—the international community—lacked an understanding of their ideology. We've failed to properly define extremism, radicalisation and terrorism and identify when people who hold extremist ideas pose a real threat to society.¹²⁰ We've tended to see things in a more binary way, without a real appreciation of how radicalisation occurs and what steps we could take to discourage people from pursuing such destructive paths. Consequently, much attention and effort have been given to preventing terrorist attacks, when it might be effective to also devote increased attention to countering those who disseminate al-Qaedaism or elements of it. Thus, there's a need to focus more on the message and ideology than on individuals because it's only through an effective counter-narrative that we can prevent people being seduced by al-Qaedaism and other extremist ideologies.

Counterterrorism policies must recognise that al-Qaedaism, especially in the context of Australia and our neighbourhood, appeals to angry, disenchanted young people as well as to some who have every advantage and a seemingly bright future. They're looking for a belief system that helps them make sense of the world or gives them a purpose greater than the life they see ahead. Particular individuals may seek an explanation for why they aren't benefiting from the promise of globalisation, why they experience discrimination, even why they don't have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Put simply, al-Qaedaism seduces people with a promise of salvation, heroism, romanticism and the portrayal of the recruit as a victim of an unjust, unfair social order.¹²¹

The ability of terrorists to adapt and transfer their ideology, tactics and skills to exploit their environment makes countering them more challenging, especially as state agencies, structured along clear bureaucratic lines, aren't amenable to quick changes. Nevertheless, one place where change can occur is in the language that's being used by the *Salafi-jihadis* but also by security agencies.¹²² It's important to move away from the castigation of *Salafi-jihadism* as a *radical* ideology and focus on it as an *extremist* ideology that wants to overthrow the established order through non-democratic means—violence. The need for the distinction stems from the basic fact that 'radicalism' is a relative concept and that, historically, being a radical wasn't necessarily a bad thing, as many early radicals fought for positive social, political and economic change. Alex Schmid, for example, points out that in the 19th century the term 'radical' referred 'primarily to liberal, anti-clerical, pro-democratic, progressive political positions'.¹²³

Addressing the online presence of al-Qaedaism

Governments, in partnership with some social media and technology companies, have developed several initiatives aimed at countering the dissemination of violent extremist content. Those initiatives can be categorised as CVE, flagging and taking down terrorist content, and suspending social media accounts. In 2017, Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube established the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism. Instagram, LinkedIn and SnapChat have since joined. Unsurprisingly, the initiative relies on technologies to detect terrorist content. A database of terrorist video hashes is shared among the partners to ensure that extremist content is flagged and removed quickly.¹²⁴

One reason for the allure of social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube is that they provide a service that's free and user-friendly and that allows, permits and at times even encourages anonymity and the use of pseudonyms. Moreover, when it comes to content, social media platforms permit the replication of visual material that can appear to be reliable. For example, distinguishing between the work of a veteran journalist or scientist and that of a conspiracy theorist isn't always easy, especially when there are no gatekeepers (some social media platforms reject the very idea of gatekeepers). Accordingly, a key challenge that emerged with ISIL is that the organisation recognised the value of social media and devoted vast resources to developing a social media presence that permitted it to upload countless hours of videos to promote its cause.

And yet, several things seem to be missing from the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism and from the overall approach to dealing with online radicalisation.

First, each of the forum partners has its own definition of 'extremist content', which means that each member gets to decide whether to remove content that it finds matches a shared hash. Facebook has claimed that it removes 99% of ISIL- and al-Qaeda-related videos or photos before users report the presence of extremist content. It claims that it does so through a combination of photo- and video-matching software and human monitors. Google asserts that its artificial intelligence software has allowed it to remove 98% of extremist videos on YouTube.¹²⁵

Second, technology has drastically changed the nature of the conflict. *Salafi-jihadis*, especially ISIL, have shown that they understand the technology and social media space. Joshua Cooper Ramo has captured this reality, pointing out that plugging any object into a network permanently changes the object. For example, if one plugs a chair into the internet, one can find out how many people have sat on it, who they are, even what they do, when, and why, in addition to many more pieces of data. This has led Ramo to argue that 'As a result of technology, ... the distinction between the frontline and a combat-free zone has gone away.'¹²⁶

ISIL's propaganda system has been unique in modern history, as it was the key in motivating around 40,000 individuals to leave their home countries and migrate to the caliphate in Iraq and Syria. Its messaging had two forms. There was gruesome content highlighting extreme acts of violence, such as the burning to death of Muath Safi Yousef al-Kasasbeh, a Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot. These vicious videos are linked to the claim that the group is engaged in a defensive jihad against infidels and apostates who harm and abuse Muslims. The second type of content, which builds on ISIL's slogan of *Baqiya wa Tatamaddad* (Remaining and Expanding) is about its successes in creating an Islamic nirvana. This content tells the story of public works projects, economic development, military triumphs and so on.¹²⁷

Third, there's a problem with the quantity of information that's being uploaded, which is simply too great and too complicated to be effectively countered. For example, it's estimated that between 300 to 400 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube every minute. There's evidence that extremist videos, many of which are inexpensive to make, are uploaded onto YouTube without being listed, which means that they can't always be searched for and removed by an algorithm.¹²⁸ Reportedly, members and supporters of ISIL uploaded 1,348 YouTube videos, which attracted 163,391 views, between March and June 2018. Twenty-four per cent of those videos remained on YouTube for at least two hours. The length of time is important, as it means that individuals had enough time to copy the videos before YouTube removed them. The videos could then be uploaded to other social media platforms.¹²⁹ Consequently, we

must recognise that the removal of content doesn't make the problem go away. The UK's Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit, established in 2010, has been responsible for the removal of more than 300,000 pieces of terrorist propaganda from the internet, but it can't remove ideas, interests and activities inspired by real events. One commentator has noted that, within a week of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017, more than 20,000 searches related to joining violent far-right groups were recorded in the US—an increase of 400% compared to averages in previous weeks.¹³⁰

If we want to deal with online radicalisation and the dissemination of violent extremist propaganda, there must be more of a focus on addressing the underlying reasons why people search for such content. This calls for more active engagement through social media with extremist content, not only to provide counter-narratives (which shouldn't be done by government agencies, as there's plenty of evidence that they tend to miss the mark) but to actively engage with the extremist narrative and use narratives from those who have gone down the path of violent extremism, only to eventually recognise its destructiveness.

One of the notable consequences of online extremism is that it has raised the issue of Islamophobia. There's a fundamental misunderstanding of what Islamophobia is, and a belief that by simply reaching out to the Muslim community we can address marginalisation. Many Australians might not remember the 2005 Cronulla riots, but they do live on in the minds of many young Muslims, who note that 5,000 people came to demand that Arabs or Muslims be removed from the beach. Rhonda Itaoui and Kevin Dunn have shown the need to develop more inclusive cities and the importance of recognising Muslims' feelings of fear or marginalisation, which are often dismissed.¹³¹

Investing in communities: winning hearts and minds

A core goal of any terrorist group is to bring attention to what it views as grievances about the mistreatment of the community that it claims to represent, which is why terrorism is a communal, communicatory act. The audience may be thousands of kilometres away, as it was for the 1998 embassy bombings in East Africa: the attacks claimed many African lives, but the target audience was the American public. The same could be said of the 2002 Bali bombings; in that case, the audience was both domestic (Indonesian) and international.

The global *Salafi-jihadi* movement is a social movement made up of individuals who promote a world vision that adheres to the notion of 'us' versus 'them'. The binary choice is between siding with the good (and therefore the oppressed) or siding with those who are corrupting and doing bad things.¹³² This narrative resonates with many who feel victimised and discriminated against or who are in search of purpose. This makes CVE efforts important, as counterterrorism policies alone can intensify the sense of alienation and generate claims by Muslims that legislation, policies and initiatives unfairly target their communities, labelling them as 'problem communities'.¹³³

At one level, winning hearts and minds means providing material or other support to relieve a community's grievances, and that relies on an expansive domestic program and an effective foreign aid policy. Specifically, marginalised communities emphasise abuses, discriminatory practices, underinvestment and, in extreme cases, extrajudicial killings and disappearances. This litany of complaints feeds the anti-statist agenda of al-Qaedaism, allowing *Salafi-jihadis* to portray the state as an oppressive, disconnected entity (and the same narrative is directed at politicians¹³⁴). They seek to create the belief that Western governments not only fail to recognise the harm that Muslims suffer around the world, but also that those governments ignore the discrimination that many Muslim communities experience in local jurisdictions.¹³⁵ It's important for the state to reverse perceptions by marginalised communities that the state is hostile to them and sees them as a problem. In this context, we should note the role of the media, which at times magnify certain perceptions or disseminate incorrect information, leading to a siege mentality among minority communities. Often, when an act of *jihadi* terrorism takes place, there's an immediate expectation that all Muslims must vigorously condemn the attack or be deemed to be collaborators.¹³⁶ Thus, by improving communities' standards of living and security and undermining the perception that the state and its agents are engaged in nefarious activities, we can challenge the al-Qaedaist narrative. For example, under Objective 2 of the 'EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five steps towards a more secure Europe', which refers

to the prevention of terrorism, the EU focused on empowering communities, which led to the establishment of the Radicalization Awareness Network. The network provides incentives to local authorities, civil society groups and affected communities to cooperate in preventing radicalisation. The emphasis when designing the system is on credibility (Do the actors involved have it? Does the program help promote their credibility? Do they deliver on promises?); using local actors (Is there a real understanding of the individuals and communities at whom the policies are directed?); and on identifying and mitigating risks associated with the policies.¹³⁷

There are also widespread misperceptions about the Middle East and its people, especially when it comes to Islam. Many Western policymakers have had a secularist mindset, encouraging an adherence to the ‘secularisation thesis’—the now largely discounted belief that modernisation and rationalisation have made religion lose its appeal and authority in all aspects of social life and governance.¹³⁸ Policymakers (and the media) can show limitations in understanding religion and how it influences and affects people’s lives in non-Western societies. Thus, it may be useful to explore the value of something akin to an Ambassador or a Coordinator at Large for International Religious Freedom, whose goal would be to serve as an intermediary between policymakers and marginalised communities, many of which feel that they’re portrayed as problem communities.¹³⁹ The ambassador would not look at foreign issues only as they pertain to religious intolerance but would also work with local communities who are in tune with what is taking place among their brethren. Through the office, it would be made clear that the government is aware of and is seeking to address religious intolerance, which is often a key push factor for many young men who wish to help their co-religionists.

Countering low-tech attacks, lone actors and ‘subjects of interest’: the role of disengagement policies

There’s a desperate need to assess our approach to P/CVE to make sure that P/CVE initiatives are up to date and are responding to current and emerging threats.¹⁴⁰ Many existing deradicalisation programs focus on cognitive changes, aiming to get the individual to forsake their world view, their ideas and the belief that only through violence can their goal be achieved. In the 1980s, policies sought to get ‘radicals’ to disengage from their commitment to violence by focusing more on behaviour, which also meant that radicals could disengage from their groups but keep the ideas of the group, minus a willingness to commit acts of violence.¹⁴¹ Such an approach is likely to bear fruit today because it may allow people to maintain ideas and views that are seen as unorthodox, but reject the use of violence. We need to recognise that ‘radicalisation’ isn’t a dirty word but merely a noun; it is the association that we’ve come to attribute to it that’s the problem. After all, many of the great minds of history were described as radicals when they argued against prevailing views.

The threshold for success in disengagement is also lower, as it doesn’t call on the person to reject their entire belief system; rather, they begin with the need to disengage from their desire to use violence to bring about political, social, economic, religious or cultural change.¹⁴² There’s risk here, but counterterrorism is a risk-based enterprise.

Disengagement policies seem to fit more with terrorism prevention, which emphasises the importance of a legislative approach that seeks to criminalise acts of terrorism and preparations for such acts.

Policymakers should review and assess initiatives such as the UK’s Desistance and Disengagement Programme, which aims to help individuals who engage in some terrorist activity to disengage and reintegrate back into society, instead of keeping them in prison.¹⁴³ In Britain, there’s a discussion about whether the program should be extended from those convicted of terrorism offences to people who have returned from Syria and Iraq.¹⁴⁴ Such a move should be considered in Australia, where the government has used control orders,¹⁴⁵ preventive detention orders¹⁴⁶ and the AFP’s and ASIO’s detention-for-questioning powers over people who have been convicted of terrorism offences or terrorism-related offences.¹⁴⁷ According to the Attorney-General’s Department’s annual report on the control order system for 2016–17, one control order was reaffirmed and another was varied; there were no preventive detention orders.¹⁴⁸

There's 'a scarcity of publicly-available information on current efforts to rehabilitate terrorist offenders in Australian prisons',¹⁴⁹ although there's been at least one study on the proactive integrated support model (PRISM), which is a federal government program. Under PRISM, two psychologists and an Islamic adviser work with those convicted of *jihadi* terrorism-related offences to offer 'moderate religious guidance, and positive community reintegration'.¹⁵⁰ The need for PRISM arose from the foreign fighters phenomenon, which effectively meant that Australia would have to deal with returning foreign fighters who had committed a crime by going to conflict zones and joining Islamic State, and the recognition that prisons are important recruitment centres for violent extremism. And yet, the existing mechanisms (before PRISM and post-sentencing detention) weren't tailored to protect the community, as the corrective services and the parole system were ill-equipped to deal with extremists.¹⁵¹

Foreign aid and humanitarian assistance

Foreign aid and humanitarian assistance help to alleviate human suffering, which groups such as al-Qaeda and Islamic State exploit. Many less violent militant groups also go into disaster areas and offer aid and assistance in return for being able to preach and 'educate'. So, for example, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, a Pakistani militant group with links to Lashkar-e-Taiba, sent thousands of volunteers to northern Pakistan following the 2005 earthquake. The group provided aid when the Pakistani Government didn't.¹⁵²

Successive Australian Governments have grappled with the issue of the foreign aid budget, which currently stands at around \$4 billion, arguably because 80% of Australians oppose such spending.¹⁵³ Ordinary Australians have a misconception about how much foreign aid is supplied. Notably, the 2018 Lowy Institute Poll found that Australians have wrong ideas about the size of the aid program: the average Australian believes that around 14% of the federal budget is spent on aid, when the proportion is only 0.8%.¹⁵⁴

By investing in communities that may be susceptible to proponents of violence, we ensure our security and influence, as noted in the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, which emphasised the importance of soft power for Australia. This is why, in March 2017, Julie Bishop launched a new policy framework (Development Approaches to Countering Violent Extremism) that seeks to counter and prevent violent extremism through education, civil society, governance, livelihoods, justice and the rule of law. The framework recognises a need to address macro-, meso- and micro-level drivers.¹⁵⁵ The policy is meant to support other initiatives, such as the Global Community Engagement and the Resilience Fund (in 2017, Australia provided \$3 million to the fund). It earmarked \$2.5 million to establish the Commonwealth Secretariat Counter-Violent Extremism Unit, about which there is little information.¹⁵⁶ These initiatives resonate with findings that countries with higher per capita income are less susceptible to conflict.¹⁵⁷

Foreign aid also helps prevent political instability, which terrorist groups also seek to exploit, as the aid can help a weak government provide basic social services and address human insecurity and thus serve as a powerful counterterrorism tool. Burcu Savun and Daniel Tirone have shown in an empirical study that countries that receive aid to address political and social ills are likely to see less domestic terrorism than those that don't.¹⁵⁸

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Australia dealt with the aftermath of 9/11 and the emergence of *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism by first supporting the international coalition campaign to militarily defeat al-Qaeda, the Taliban and their progenies and, second, by revising our domestic counterterrorism architecture. Included in the international campaign was the decision to deploy the ADF to Afghanistan and the Middle East. The experience of those campaigns has proven important in getting the ADF to adapt to a new type of warfare, and Australia subsequently played a crucial role in aiding the Philippines Army in defeating the ISIL-inspired insurgency in Marawi. Nevertheless, it's useful to question whether there's a need for Australia to continue its military presence in the Middle East,¹⁵⁹ as well as in Afghanistan. Put simply, we need to reassess whether it would be better to focus our resources on working with our regional partners to curtail any *Salafi-jihadi* activity in our immediate neighbourhood, and primarily in Southeast Asia, where a jihadist insurgency remains a real possibility.

The past 18 years have seen Australia adapt to the evolving *Salafi-jihadi* threat through a plethora of legislative measures and P/CVE programs. It could be said that in the immediate post-9/11 period and even more so after the Bali bombings in 2002, policymakers were determined to act to keep Australians safe from a new threat—religiously inspired suicide attacks—and that this driver continues in 2019. This has led to the charge that insufficient attention has been given to far-right white supremacists, although there wasn't discernible evidence that Australia was having to contend with the type of white supremacists who have become more noticeable in the US and Europe over the past few years. ASIO's 2017–18 annual report didn't mention far-right extremists, although its 2015–16 report did. The reports are drafted from assessments based on available information, and there was clearly no indication of a far-right white-supremacist threat.

Clearly, in the aftermath of Christchurch there may be a need to revisit the issue of far-right white supremacy in Australia, although one suspects that evidence of it is largely confined to the internet and online chatrooms. Australia has robust gun laws, making a massacre such as the one that occurred in Christchurch highly unlikely. And yet we must also not be complacent and should remember that Duncan Lewis has mentioned at Senate hearings that Australia does face threats from the far right, but that 'it is coming off a very low base.'¹⁶⁰

Additionally, we should also recognise that over the past few years, a strong system of public alertness has developed, so the authorities are alerted when individuals engage in unusual purchases. For example, in December 2016, employees at a Bunnings store in Victoria alerted the authorities because they were suspicious of Ahmed Mohamed for buying 700 nail-gun cartridges packed with gunpowder. Mohamed had bought nothing else but the cartridges.¹⁶¹

As we look to the future, we must recognise that *Salafi-jihadis* are committed to promoting their ideology through violence, and that the threat that they pose is constantly metastasising.

The challenge that we now face is how to continue to counter the threat without eroding our core values, which is one of their principal goals as they seek to divide us.

NOTES

- 1 In 2015, the Australian Government adopted a definition of violent extremism as referring to 'a willingness to use unlawful violence or support the use of violence by others to promote a political, ideological or religious goal. Violent extremism includes terrorism, other forms of politically motivated violence and some form of communal violence (e.g. racially motivated violence).' Council of Australian Governments, 2015, Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 7, [online](#).
- 2 Graham T Allison, 'Conceptual models and the Cuban missile crisis', *American Political Science Review*, 1969, 63(3):689–718, [online](#); Donald Holbrook, 'Designing and applying an "Extremist Media Index"', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2015, 9(5):57–68, [online](#).
- 3 There's a robust conversation as to whether foreign policy serves as a driver for terrorism, as seen for example with the UK's Joint Intelligence Committee 2003 report that warned Tony Blair that invading Iraq would empower al-Qaeda. Joint Intelligence Committee, *International terrorism: war with Iraq*, 10 February 2003, [online](#); Jon Schwarz, 'British intelligence warned Tony Blair of Manchester-like terrorism if the West invaded Iraq', *The Intercept*, 24 May 2017, [online](#). It doesn't seem that Australian policymakers have engaged in a robust conversation on the role of Australian foreign policy and the way that it's presented as a pull factor in radicalising young Australians.
- 4 On 15 July, Khaled Khayat and one of his brothers went to Sydney Airport with an explosive device. Khaled intended to place the device in the luggage of his brother, who was boarding an Etihad flight to Abu Dhabi. For some reason, Khaled opted not to place the device, and his brother boarded the flight without luggage. Andrew Zammit, 'New developments in the Islamic State's external operations: the 2017 Sydney plane plot', *The CTC Sentinel*, 2017, 10(9):13–19, [online](#).
- 5 Alex Oliver, *Lowy Institute Poll 2018: understanding Australian attitudes to the world*, Lowy Institute, 2018, [online](#).
- 6 John Silver, 'A crime unlike others: policing terrorism in Australia', *The Age*, 29 December 2018, [online](#).
- 7 A good example of this is the Victorian Government's 'Victorian. And proud of it' campaign ([online](#)). The campaign was designed to highlight diversity and multiculturalism in Victoria. Another example is the recognition in the 2015 Counter-Terrorism Strategy that, although groups such as ISIL and al-Qaeda 'claim to act in the name of Islam, the vast majority of Muslims reject their ideologies. Indeed it is Muslims who have suffered the most at the hands of terrorist groups.' Council of Australian Governments, 2015, Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 7, [online](#).
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- 9 Counterterrorism spending: protecting America while promoting efficiencies and accountability, *Stimson Center*, Washington DC, May 2018, [online](#).
- 10 Isaac Kfir, *Terrorism in the Indo-Pacific: glocalism comes of age*, ASPI, Canberra, May 2018, [online](#); Isaac Kfir, *A primer on the ideological and theological drivers of AQ and Daesh: al-Qaedaism*, ASPI, Canberra, June 2018, [online](#).
- 11 Eric Schmitt, 'ISIS may be waning, but global threats of terrorism continue to spread', *New York Times*, 6 July 2018, [online](#) (paywall). See also ASIO's latest report, *ASIO annual report, 2017–2018*, Australian Government, 2018, ISSN2204–4213, [online](#).
- 12 John G Horgan, Max Taylor, Mia Bloom, Charlie Winter, 'From cubs to lions: a six stage model of child socialization into the Islamic State', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2017, 40(7):645–664.
- 13 Diego Gambetta, Steffen Hertog, *Engineers of jihad: the curious connection between violent extremism and education*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 2018; Graeme Blair, C Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra, Jacob N Shapiro, 'Poverty and support for militant politics: evidence from Pakistan', *American Journal of Political Science*, 2013, 57(1):30–48; Jacob N Shapiro, C Christine Fair, 'Understanding support for Islamist militancy in Pakistan', *International Security*, 2010, 34(3):79–118, doi: 10.1162/isec.2010.34.3.79; Mubaraz Ahmed, Milo Comerford, Emman El-Badawy, *What the lives of 100 jihadis tell us about a global movement*, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, April 2016, [online](#).
- 14 Max Abrahms, 'What terrorists really want: terrorist motives and counterterrorism strategy', *International Security*, 2008, 32(4):78–105; Andrew H Kydd, Barbara F Walter, 'The strategies of terrorism', *International Security*, 2006, 31(1):49–80; Gordon H McCormick, 'Terrorist decision making', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2003, 6(1):473–507; David A Lake, 'Rational extremism: understanding terrorism in the twenty-first century', *Dialogue IO*, 2002 1(1):15–28.
- 15 It's worth noting the work of Jordanian journalist Fouad Hussein, who interviewed Seif al-Adl, an Egyptian national who allegedly took part in the 1998 bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and who later drafted what came to be known as the seven stages for the establishment of a caliphate in Syria and Iraq. Yassin Musharbash, 'The future of terrorism: what al-Qaida really wants', *Spiegel Online*, 12 August 2005, [online](#); Aaron Y Zelin, 'Jihad 2020: assessing al-Qaida's 20-year plan', *World Politics Review*, 11 September 2013, [online](#); Brian H Fishman, *The master plan: ISIS, al-Qaeda, and the jihadi strategy for final victory*, Yale University Press, London, 2016, 34–37.
- 16 For example, in Australia, the legislative requirement in s. 19AG of the Crimes Act 1914 (Cwlth) means that those convicted of terrorism offences must be 'sentenced to no less than three-quarters of the head sentence'. This means that those convicted of terrorism offences tend to serve lengthy prison sentences. Nicola McGarrity, 'Let the punishment match the offence: determining sentences for Australian terrorists', *International Journal for Crime and Justice*, 2013, 2(1):19.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFP	Australian Federal Police
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
AUSTRAC	Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre
CTF	counter-terrorism financing
EU	European Union
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
NGO	nongovernment organisation
P/CVE	preventing/countering violent extremism
PJCIS	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
PRISM	Proactive Integrated Support Model
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
SAS	Special Air Service
STEMM	science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine
UN	United Nations

18 years and counting

Australian counterterrorism, threats and responses