Crowded Places Self-Assessment Tool

This self-assessment tool helps owners and operators of crowded places to understand how attractive their location may be for a terrorist to attack. It then provides guidance on what steps to take next.

Experience has shown that the issues listed in this self-assessment are amongst those that terrorists consider when identifying a target for attack.

In order to complete the self-assessment, it is essential that you read the accompanying explanatory notes for each of the following statements. This will provide you with a better understanding of some of the terms and concepts that are used in the assessment.

It is important to remember that this self-assessment needs to be conducted from the perspective of a would-be attacker; not from your perspective as to the current level of security you have at your location.

Please note that the descriptive words around the numerical scale often differ from statement to statement. The factors that are most likely to influence terrorist target selection are rated on a scale of 1 to 7; other factors are rated on a scale of 1 to 5.

Figure 1 - Process for self-assessment
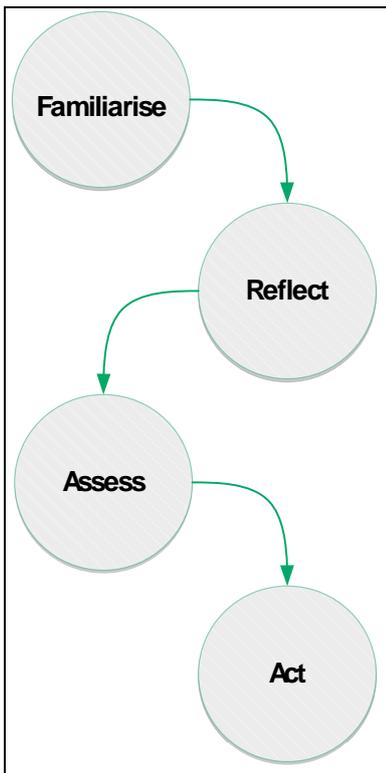
Note:
South Australia Police provides an online terrorist attractiveness self-assessment tool on its website. If your crowded place is located within South Australia, please undertake the
self-assessment by visiting https://www.police.sa.gov.au/online-services/mass-gatherings and follow the instructions on that website.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The location is symbolic – historical, iconic, religious, cultural or political
If a crowded place is symbolic it is serving as a representation - something that has a greater meaning because of what it represents. When a crowded place represents something else that extends beyond its functional purpose and is more abstract, it is symbolic.

The symbolism may relate to a physical structure, such as a cathedral or a significant national building which is a major tourist draw-card. It could be an event, such as an ANZAC Day parade, where the physical location may not be as important as the attendees or the event itself.

The location attracts a large number of people at any one time
It is not always easy to quantify a large number of people. This number is entirely relative - a large number of people for one city may be a small number for another.

One way of looking at this is to consider the largest gathering of people at any one time at an existing location in your particular state or territory. Think of that location as a (7) on the scale and make an assessment of your own crowded place based on a comparison with that location.

While this approach means there will be differences across Australia, it ensures that at a state and territory level there are others, such as government and police, who are viewing your crowded place in the same way as you in terms of size.

People gather at the location on a predictable basis
Predictability of people gathering at a location in numbers provides an offender with a degree of certainty over the availability of potential human targets at a particular time.

Predictability of people gathering at a location can be assessed in a number of ways, including:

- The location's history and tradition
- Advertising by owners and operators
- Online and social media presence
- Media interest
- Publicly available programs and schedules

When assessing predictability around your crowded place for this self-assessment it is important to take into the account the total volume of information about your location that is available in the public domain on issues such as location, events and timings.

The density of people at the location is high
Different crowded places will have different densities of people. For example, a popular music concert that is held indoors for a two-hour period will probably have a higher level of people density than an event held outside in multiple locations over a two-week period. Obviously, the greater the number of people in one location the greater the opportunity for an offender to inflict maximum harm to others.

The following two extremes may assist when considering how to view the density of your crowded place. Consider the first scenario as the lowest on the scale (1 point) and the second scenario the highest (7 points):

- Scenario One: the location is attended by a small number of people, the area is large and open, people are unconstrained in their movements, there are multiple points of attraction, people are evenly distributed throughout the area and the location has a number of entry and exit points.

- Scenario Two: the location is attended by a large number of people, the area is small and enclosed, people are constrained in their movements, there is only one point of attraction, people are heavily concentrated throughout the area and the location has few entry and exit points.

The location, event and/or likely attendees has significant social importance for the nation, state or territory
A location has social importance if it creates meaning for people. Something is important, socially, if it affects the social order of our community and promotes cohesion amongst its members. It may improve recreation and liveability for an area. It may be a central gathering point for a city. A Christmas parade or a large event to support victims of a natural disaster are both considered examples of crowded places that have social importance.

If the location was interrupted in its function it would have a significant economic impact upon the nation, state or territory
The economic impact of a terrorist attack upon a crowded place can be assessed across the following three broad areas:

- Consumer confidence (visitations)
- Business activity (consumption and investment)
- Employment (full-time employees)

When considering these three areas of perceived impact, examine them broadly; for example, the on-site and off-site impact, direct and in-direct impacts and the duration of the impact.

The protective security at the location (people, physical or technical) would be perceived by a potential attacker to be able to detect, control, delay or stop their access
Please remember it is how a terrorist may view your location as a potential target – not how vulnerable to a terrorist attack you consider your location is. How obvious are the following protective security measures at your location to a would-be attacker?

People
It is not only security officers who undertake security functions at crowded places. A good approach to security is one where all staff (including volunteers) accept responsibility for the security of the location, irrespective of their normal jobs. Ensuring security functions are clearly visible can act as an important deterrent to would-be-offenders. These can include (depending upon the location):

- High visibility security patrols;
- Access control point searching of bags;
- Access control point use of screening technologies;
- Direct and random engagement with members of the public;
- Protection of secure zones;
- VIP escorts.

Physical
Physical security refers to the barriers that exist at a location that may prevent or delay intrusion into an area by potential offenders. Barriers can be naturally forming, such as bodies of water or land that is difficult to traverse. Barriers are also constructed and these include fences, walls, bollards, gates and specifically configured temporary or permanent access points to crowded places.

Most physical barriers are capable of eventually being defeated by an offender. However, their importance lays in their ability to delay access by an unauthorised person, thereby providing more time to detect and respond to the threat.

As with technical security, physical security is the most effective when used in conjunction with staff who have security training and responsibility for security embedded within their roles.

Technical
The purpose of technical security is to detect the existence of people or activities that may pose a threat to a crowded place. Technical security includes:

- Intrusion detection and access control systems for secure areas;
- CCTV;
- X-ray equipment;
- Explosive material detectors;
- Metal detectors.

Just a reminder, these technical measures should only be considered within this assessment if they act as a visual deterrent to a would-be attacker.

An offender would be able to enter, attack the location and leave without detection
The root of this question is the perceived difficulty of the offender to enter your crowded place, attack the location and leave without detection.

While terrorist attacks on crowded places may involve the offender committing suicide, this is not always the case. Some terrorists want to survive the attack and escape.

When thinking about the nature of the terrorist attack, remember that it is likely to involve unsophisticated and readily available weapons such as knives, long-arm guns, motor vehicles, and home-made explosive devices.

An offender undertaking planning for an attack could easily access information about the location – online or elsewhere
Most offenders undertake research about their targeted crowded place prior to the attack and spend considerable effort planning for it. How easy is it for someone planning an attack at your location to access information about the site online, in publications or through surveillance of the crowded place?

Circle the number that best describes your crowded place for each of the following statements:

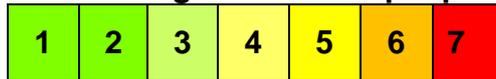### The location is symbolic – historical, iconic, religious, cultural or political
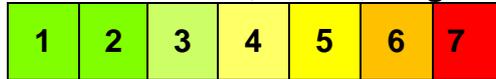
Not at All Symbolic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Extremely Symbolic

The location attracts a large number of people at any one time

Not at All Large | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Extremely Large

People gather at the location on a predictable basis

Not at All Predictable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Extremely Predictable
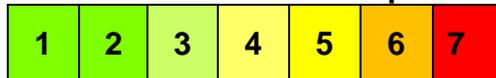
The density of people at the location is high
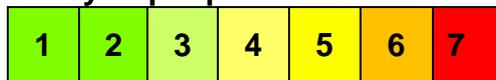
Very Low Density | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Extremely High

The location has significant social importance for the nation, state or territory

Very Low Social Importance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Extremely High Social Importance

If the location was interrupted in its function it would have a significant economic impact upon the nation, state or territory
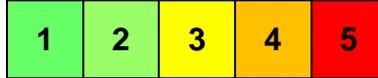
Very Low Economic Impact | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Extremely High Economic Impact

According to a potential attacker, the protective security at the location (people, physical, or technical) would be able to detect, control, delay or stop their access
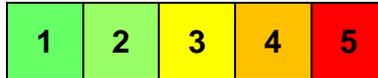
Always | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Never

An offender would be able to enter, attack the location and leave without detection

Not at all Likely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Extremely Likely
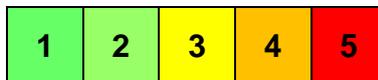
An offender undertaking planning for an attack could easily access information about the location – online or elsewhere

Not at all Easy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Extremely Easy

What's next?

First, ensure that you read and understood the Explanatory Notes prior to completing the self-assessment. Add up the total score from the self-assessment.

All owners and operators should then complete the *Crowded Places Security Audit* found on the nationalsecurity.gov.au website. The Audit may identify security gaps that may require further action. This can include speaking to a professional security consultant. Please refer to page 16 of the Strategy for tips on how to select a security consultant.

You will also find other very useful reference material on the national security website that will assist in protecting your crowded place. This material includes guidance on topics such as active armed offenders, improvised explosive devices and hostile vehicle mitigation.

If you have scored 40 OR MORE from the self-assessment:

Contact the relevant area of your state or territory police (contact details can be found at www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/CrowdedPlaces), and:
- Advise them of the result of your self-assessment, after which police will discuss your results and may provide further guidance;
- If you are interested, seek information about being involved in a Crowded Places Forum.

If you have scored 39 OR LESS from the self-assessment:

Consider whether you should join a Crowded Places Forum. For further information on joining a Crowded Places Forum, please contact the relevant area of your state and territory police (contact details can be found at www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/CrowdedPlaces).

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