Our vision
A safe and resilient Victoria, where communities, businesses, government and the police, work together to resist, respond and recover from acts of terrorism.

The threat
The threat of terrorism touches every corner of the globe, including Australia and here in Victoria. Over recent years, we have seen a worsening global threat environment and the threat to Victoria evolve. Some of our vulnerable young people are being targeted by terrorists who seek to radicalise them to commit acts of violence. Another increasing concern is the return home of Victorians who have gained specialist knowledge when fighting overseas with terrorist groups.

Victoria Police, working with their counterparts both interstate and internationally, have disrupted the plans of terrorists who have been preparing to launch attacks. Despite this, there have been a number of violent incidents in Australia, including in Victoria, that have been motivated by extreme racial and religious views and which undermine the cohesive fabric of our community.

Our approach
The number one priority of the Victorian Government is the safety and security of the people of Victoria.

The Victorian Government takes a joined up approach in responding to the threat of terrorism – working with all key partners. This approach seeks to balance the human rights of all Victorians, while acknowledging that the unique nature of terrorism demands extraordinary measures. It is underpinned by a focus on community resilience and social cohesion.

By working together we can minimise the threat and impact of terrorism in Victoria.

This Statement outlines the arrangements that are in place to protect and support Victorians before, during and after an act of terrorism. It also provides guidance on how to stay informed and engaged.
The best defence against terrorism is a strong and connected community.

Victoria’s best defence against terrorism is in maintaining a cohesive society and building resilience to acts of terrorism.

Recognising that government departments and police cannot do this alone, unique and diverse partnerships have been established with individuals, community organisations, businesses, service providers, academics and others. We work together in new ways, and better connect and align our efforts. These partnerships are reflected in the membership of the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Ministerial Taskforce, which was set up by the Victorian Government to guide evidence-based initiatives to address marginalisation within the community and prevent terrorism.

Terrorist organisations continue to develop and distribute violent extremist propaganda to influence people that may be vulnerable to radicalisation – whether it be from the far-right, far-left extremism or extremist Islamist ideologies.

To counter this increasingly prevalent messaging, the Victorian Government has developed programs that, together with community-led action, will drive and support positive and engaging dialogue, and ultimately build community resilience.

Victoria Police also work to develop strong capabilities in community engagement, including enhancement of the cultural awareness skills needed by police officers to effectively engage with diverse Victorian communities.

The Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Ministerial Taskforce has funded a range of initiatives at the community level that combat radicalisation. One such initiative is the Digital Literacy and Digital Citizenship Program, which helps young people realise when they are being manipulated online or confronted with online extremism.

NATIONAL COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM ARRANGEMENTS

Preventing and countering violent extremism is a shared effort between all Australian governments and communities to build resistance to all forms of violent extremism, whether politically, religiously or racially motivated. Victorian Government departments and agencies engage with the Commonwealth and other states and territories in countering violent extremism activities.

The objective of the Commonwealth Government’s Countering Violent Extremism Strategy is to address factors that make people vulnerable to extremist influences and recruitment by terrorists. The emphasis is on intervening early, before a police response might be necessary. Details on this approach can be found online at the livingsafetogether.gov.au website.

The ‘Victorian. And Proud of it.’ campaign reaffirms the glue that holds our society together – shared values, respect for human rights, and access to services and opportunities for all. For further details, please visit proud.vic.gov.au.
Effective and collaborative arrangements to counter terrorism

ROLE OF THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

Victoria has an ‘all communities, all emergencies’ approach to emergency management, meaning there is a consistent approach to managing a range of emergencies, including acts of terrorism and natural disasters.

The Security and Emergency Management Committee of Cabinet (SEMC) is chaired by the Premier and comprises ministers with security and emergency management responsibilities. SEMC directs and oversees the implementation of emergency management policies, strategies and programs. The Chief Commissioner of Police and the Emergency Management Commissioner attend SEMC in an advisory capacity. There is also a ministerial sub-committee that meets at the request of the Premier and reports to SEMC on matters relating specifically to counter-terrorism.

Victoria Police has lead responsibility for preventing, preparing for, and responding to a terrorist act, with support from emergency services agencies and government departments. Victoria Police plays a critical role in assessing risk based on intelligence, and putting strategies in place that address the threat of terrorism without overly restricting or undermining the Victorian way of life.

The Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for coordinating relief and recovery for all major emergencies, including terrorism. Other government departments play critical roles before, during and after an act of terrorism in line with their day-to-day responsibilities and activities.

NATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Long standing arrangements between all Australian governments guide counter-terrorism efforts. These arrangements not only provide for close coordination but also promote a culture of shared resources, ideas and best practice across all aspects of counter-terrorism work, including intelligence, policing, health and transport. These arrangements have been authorised through intergovernmental agreements and continue to be maintained and developed by national committees.

LEGISLATION

Victoria works closely with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to align our laws as closely as possible. The Victorian Government recognises the need for laws to be effective, agile and nationally consistent, as well as being proportionate and measured.

Victoria’s Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003 was amended in 2015 to complement Commonwealth legislation and provide police with greater powers to better protect Victoria. These amendments included changes to the use of covert search warrants; the use of preventative detention orders and prohibited contact orders; police powers to detain and decontaminate persons to limit the spread of dangerous material; special police powers; and protection of counter-terrorism information.

Provisions for special police powers means that the Premier may authorise the police to use special powers for certain limited purposes, such as stopping and searching a person, vehicles or premises without a warrant.

The Victorian Government is constantly reviewing legislation and policies to ensure Victoria Police and other law enforcement agencies have all the powers they need to protect the community from terrorism and violent extremism. One example of this is the commissioning in June 2017 of an independent Expert Panel to review laws currently available to prevent, investigate, monitor and respond to acts of terror.
EFFECTIVE AND AGILE INTELLIGENCE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Victoria has in place effective and agile law enforcement and intelligence arrangements that continue to be successful in preventing and disrupting planned terrorist activity. This is achieved through the hard work of state and federal police, and national security agencies, in conducting investigations that lead to criminal prosecutions. Implementing whole-of-government strategies and programs that aim to protect the community and potential terrorist targets are key to these arrangements.

Close cooperation with counterparts in the Commonwealth and other states and territories has proven critical in not only preventing and disrupting terrorist plots, but also in identifying emerging threats. Victoria’s approach to countering terrorism relies upon strong intelligence capacity and capabilities, together with an understanding of the strategic drivers that shape the national and global security environment.

ROLE OF BUSINESS

The Victorian Government, along with Victoria Police and other government departments and agencies, is committed to working with businesses of all sizes in Victoria to support them in reducing the threat of terrorism and its consequences.

Businesses manage their security risks by following robust and evidence-based guidelines, developed in partnership with police and other emergency services, as well as complying with regulations designed to protect their employees, customers and broader community.

Victorian and national arrangements focus on a number of key areas such as minimising the risk of terrorist attacks at places or venues where large numbers of people gather (often referred to as ‘crowded places’). Crowded places may include, but are not limited to, sporting venues, shopping complexes, public transport hubs, and major planned events.

Australia’s Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism was launched by the Commonwealth Government on 20 August 2017 and is designed to help venue owners and operators make crowded places more resilient to terrorism. Detailed practical guidance for owners and operators can be found on the National Security website (www.nationalsecurity.gov.au).

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The risk management of infrastructure that is critical to maintain the social and/or economic well-being of Victoria (often referred to as ‘critical infrastructure’) is a key focus of the Victorian Government. Examples of critical infrastructure include, but are not limited to, water and electricity. Turning on a tap and flicking on a light switch both rely on the operation of key infrastructure.

Victoria’s arrangements for critical infrastructure resilience are laid out in Part 7A of the Emergency Management Act 2013 and supporting regulations, as well as the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy 2015.

The Victorian Government works closely with the owners and operators of critical infrastructure through Sector Resilience Networks (SRNs) to raise awareness of dependencies and vulnerabilities, and share knowledge. There are eight identified critical infrastructure sectors covered by the SRNs – banking and finance, communications, energy, food supply, government, health, transport and water – with each convened by a relevant government department.
What happens if there is a terrorist incident?

Victoria has robust emergency management arrangements that are well-practised. An act of terrorism is one of the potential emergencies that may be faced.

RESPONSE

The immediate response to an act of terrorism in Victoria will involve a strong coordinated effort between Victorian Government departments and agencies under the leadership of Victoria Police. The police also have a leading role to prevent and prepare for any terrorist act, working closely with intelligence agencies and other police forces.

The Victoria Police response to a terrorist attack or threat is governed largely by their statutory responsibilities under the concurrent Emergency Management Act 1986 and the Emergency Management Act 2013. The response aims to be both strategic and scalable.

Victoria Police is well prepared to respond to actual or threatened acts of terrorism through intelligence-led, collaborative and proactive services. This well-developed response capability is the result of significant planning, the building of strong partnerships, and operating within an enabling legal framework.

Depending on where the incident occurs and the extent of the impacts, the response could also include other emergency services, local government, businesses and individuals.

If necessary, Victoria may ask for assistance from other states and territories or the Commonwealth to respond to a terrorist attack. Consistency in practices, procedures and equipment across jurisdictions is achieved and maintained through Victoria Police’s involvement in the work of the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), as well as through their involvement in the Joint Counter-Terrorism Team in Melbourne. The Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams operate in each state and territory and comprise federal and state police officers, as well as officers from the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO).

The focus of an initial response will be to:

- prevent or minimise loss of life, injury, damage to property or disruption to infrastructure;
- facilitate investigations into the threat or act, including the identification or detention of offenders; and
- ensure that the people affected by the threat are given immediate support.
STAY INFORMED AND ENGAGED

Well-established and practised communication channels that are used in other emergencies would also be used during a terrorist incident. Warnings and information would be provided to the community through Victoria Police and VicEmergency websites and social media, as well as through emergency broadcasters. Details of these sources of information are provided in the table.

Additionally, the National Terrorism Threat Advisory System informs Australians about the likelihood of an act of terrorism occurring in Australia to enable authorities, businesses and individuals to undertake appropriate measures to protect and preserve life and property.

When the threat level changes, the Commonwealth Government provides advice on what the threat level means, where the threat is coming from, potential targets and how a terrorist act may be carried out. The National Terrorism Threat Level is regularly reviewed in line with the security environment and intelligence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>What to expect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Police</td>
<td>Website vicpolicenews.com.au, Twitter &amp; Facebook @victoriapolice</td>
<td>Current information and advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vic Emergency</td>
<td>Website emergency.vic.gov.au, Twitter &amp; Facebook @vicemergency</td>
<td>Centralised emergency information and warnings, as well as relief and recovery information to support individuals, communities and businesses affected by major emergencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC radio and SKY News</td>
<td>Website nationalsecurity.gov.au</td>
<td>Details on the current National Terrorist Threat Level and the nature of the threat. Information for governments and businesses on the protection of critical infrastructure from terrorism.</td>
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RELIEF AND RECOVERY

As in all emergencies, recovery begins as early as possible, ideally at the time an emergency occurs. In the case of terrorism, the return to day-to-day activities is particularly important due to the psychological impacts of this type of criminal act. Recovery can continue for months, if not years.

A terrorist attack in Victoria is likely to cause strong reactions that may be physical, mental, emotional or behavioural. Children and young people can react to trauma very differently to adults, and often in ways that are surprising to parents and teachers.

Victoria has well-practised relief and recovery arrangements to support and assist those directly and indirectly affected by emergencies. These include services and advice to support the wellbeing of individuals, families and the community, including the most vulnerable.
We all play a role in countering terrorism

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We can all help to prevent terrorism by being alert to, and reporting, suspicious activity. Community reports of suspicious activity have helped prevent attacks in Victoria. All and any information, no matter how small, is important and may be the missing piece that police need to prevent a terrorist attack.

The nature of terrorism is changing. Callers now provide information on the use of websites or social media promoting violent extremist ideology, suspicious travel planning, or someone they know who is becoming radicalised towards violent extremism.

Call triple zero for emergency services

If you are ever in an emergency situation, or you witness a terrorist attack occurring, contact Triple Zero 000. This is a free call from any phone in Australia, even a phone box or disconnected mobile phone. For Text Telephone (TTY) users (hearing/speech impaired), call 106.

After dialling 000, an operator will ask which service you require – ambulance, police or fire. When on the phone, it is important to remain calm and speak slowly. Do not hang up until the operator has received the required information.

Contact the National Security Hotline

If you see or hear something that seems suspicious, call the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400. You can report information anonymously. Relevant information will be passed on to appropriate state and territory police for investigation.

If you do not speak English well, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 and ask them to contact the National Security Service and interpret for you. For TTY users the number is 1800 234 889.

Overseas callers should contact the Hotline on (+61) 1300 1234 01.

You can also email hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au and MMS 0429 771 822 the National Security Hotline.

Contact Crime Stoppers

You can report information about crime anonymously to Crime Stoppers by calling 1800 333 000 or reporting online at crimesstoppersvic.com.au.

Be a smart traveller

Terrorism is a worldwide threat and terrorist groups abroad have been known to target foreigners and places where foreign visitors gather. These include places such as hotels, transport systems, nightlife areas and other landmarks.

If planning an overseas trip you should check the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Smart Traveller website www.smartraveller.gov.au for up to date information and advice on the security situation in all foreign countries. This will inform you of the level of risk you may face, so that you can make informed decisions about where and when to travel overseas.
Further information

VICTORIA
Victorian Government
www.vic.gov.au
Emergency Management Victoria
emv.vic.gov.au
VicEmergency
emergency.vic.gov.au
Victoria – Crime Stoppers
crimestoppersvic.com.au
Victorian. And Proud of It.
proud.vic.gov.au

NATIONAL
Australian National Security
nationalsecurity.gov.au
Attorney-General’s Department
ag.gov.au
Smart Traveller
smartraveller.gov.au
Living Safe Together
livingsafetogether.gov.au