

## RISK INFORMATION – CHURCHES PROTECTING CROWDED PLACES

With the increased incidence of events referred to as “terrorism”, some of our churches have asked for guidance on the sort of preparation that they should undertake to minimise the possibility or the impact of such occurrences.

At one level, the preventative measures are little different to those to be undertaken to protect against other security exposures (e.g. unwanted people on premises), however, terrorists are generally wanting to make the biggest possible impact (i.e. casualties) and are not easily dissuaded.

This risk information document points you to resources issued by the Federal Government to guide your planning.

In 2017 the Federal Government published guidelines to help organisations in their planning for prevention of terrorist impacts on events and activities. Issued by the Australia-New Zealand Counter Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), the following publications should be referred to:

- Australia’s Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism
- Crowded places Self-Assessment Tool
- Crowded Places Security Audit

They can be found at:

<https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Securityandyourcommunity/Pages/australias-strategy-for-protecting-crowded-places-from-terrorism.aspx>

The **Strategy** document provides an explanation of the underlying principles and methodology used in the development of tools for use by organisers / owners of events or activities that might attract terrorist attention.

The **Self-Assessment Tool** is to assist organisers / owners to understand how attractive their location/event may be to terrorists.

The **Security Audit** will help organisers/owners identify security issues and gaps where additional measures may be required. The selection of control measures will be informed by discussions with police, local councils and, sometimes, by professional security experts.

Security measures should be designed in response to the perceived attractiveness of the location or event and should be proportionate to the level and type of threat(s). The Audit document says “*You should avoid investing in unnecessary protective security measures and ensure the functionality of*

The information provided is of a general nature only and may not identify all matters that need to be included in the design of effective controls for the subject area. Professional advice should be obtained on individual circumstances.

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*your location are preserved as far as reasonably possible, while reducing vulnerability and increasing safety.”*

All churches involved in the hosting or organising of “Crowded Places” style events should utilise the tools provided by ANZCTC as part of the overall process of identifying and controlling risks associated with an event. We also refer churches to the other risk guidance material available on the Baptist Insurance Services website.

Finally, please note that the completed Audit document is a guide to event organisers; it may also reveal significant vulnerabilities. As such, access to the completed document should be restricted to those who need to know.

### **References**

*Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), “Australia’s Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism”*

*ANZCTC, “Crowded Places Self-Assessment Tool”*

*ANZCTC, “Crowded Places Security Audit”*