Assessing the Mass Attacks Threat to Texas

January 2020

Texas
Department of Public Safety

Assessing the Threat of Mass Attacks in Texas

A State Intelligence Estimate

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

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

January 2020

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

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(U) Executive Summary

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

- **(U) Mass attacks pose a persistent and varied threat to the State of Texas.** Recent significant mass attacks in Texas and throughout the United States occurred with little or no advance warning by lone actors with varying motivations. Future attacks will most likely occur on soft targets including schools, religious institutions, commercial facilities, and other locations where there are mass gatherings of people with little or no security. However, more secure structures such as government, military, and law enforcement facilities, are also possible targets for future attacks.

- **(U) Racially motivated attacks are currently the most violently active type of Domestic Terrorism within the United States and Texas.** In 2018 and 2019, at least four major attacks occurred in the United States (including one in Texas) conducted by racially motivated actors, and at least four other incidents were thwarted. This activity outnumbered other types of domestic terrorism. While other types of domestic terrorism have shown threatening and forceful behavior, the loss of life from recent racially motivated domestic terrorism attacks elevates the nature of this specific threat.

- **(U) Firearms are the primary weapons used by Domestic Terrorists, Homegrown Violent Extremists, and Non-Ideologically Motivated Violent Criminals to conduct mass attacks.** All 10 of the mass attacks conducted in Texas between January 2009 and December 2019 included in this assessment involved the primary use of firearms by attackers. The majority of national mass attacks during this same period also involved the primary use of firearms by attackers. However, the use of explosives, vehicles, and knives will continue to be a viable threat.

- **(U) There is no single profile of a mass attacker.** Recent significant mass attacks in the United States and Texas indicate mass attacker motivations are unique and dependent on a combination of variables, including personal, group, community, socio-political, and ideological factors.

- **(U) High-profile mass attacks worldwide are inspiring copy-cat and retaliatory violent attacks in the United States.** A series of recent mass attacks at various international locations have at least indirectly inspired retaliatory or copy-cat attacks elsewhere, including in Texas. The transnational notoriety associated with attackers; the ease of online consumption of extremist propaganda; and the dissemination of online manifestos by mass attackers is exacerbating this trend.

- **(U) Domestic Terrorists and Homegrown Violent Extremists are using operationally secure social media platforms to radicalize and mobilize to conduct mass attacks with limited advance warning to law enforcement.** Recent high-profile mass attacks in the United States have involved the use of social media by mass attackers to radicalize, mobilize, and remain operationally secure until their attacks were imminent.

- **(U) Federal and state laws have not kept pace with the tremendous technological advancements in digital communications and the monstrous amounts of data added to the internet every second.** Intelligence collection challenges related to technology and social media, and threat actors' use of complex and encrypted communication methods, hamper law enforcement efforts to preempt potential mass attackers before an incident occurs. The private sector exclusively possess the combined expertise, knowledge, capabilities and resources needed

to systematically detect likely threats to life on the internet, and to report them in a timely manner, in compliance with federal and state privacy and civil liberty safeguards.

(U) Table of Contents

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(U) Acknowledgements

(U) The Texas Fusion Center (TxFC) collaborated with law enforcement, criminal justice, and non-governmental agencies across Texas and the United States in the production of this State Intelligence Estimate. Their contributions were invaluable to developing an accurate and complete assessment. This collaboration underscores the commitment among agencies across the state to share information, intelligence, and capabilities to address public safety threats across all jurisdictions and disciplines at all levels, and we are grateful to the numerous agencies that contributed to this assessment.

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(U) Preface

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

(U) There is no consensus on the definition of mass attacks. For the purposes of this report, the TxFC defines mass attacks as acts of intentional violence in populated areas that resulted in three or more persons (not including the perpetrator) being killed or wounded. This definition closely aligns with those used by federal law enforcement agencies.

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

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

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(U) Introduction

(U) Recent tragedies in cities like El Paso, Odessa, Sutherland Springs, and Santa Fe highlight the potential growth of a persistent threat to Texas: mass attacks. This document will examine the current mass attack threat posed to Texas, providing an overview of the types of actors that can conduct these attacks. This includes ideologically motivated individuals. Because any analysis of ideologically motivated attacks requires a discussion of the ideology involved, the subject is understandably sensitive. Americans enjoy a profound freedom, codified in the First Amendment, which protects expression of belief, even when such expression may be repugnant to mainstream ideals. Therefore, discussion of belief, opinion, or ideology is only included in this document to provide context when the threat or application of criminal behavior, force, or violence exists.

(U) Scope

(U) The purpose of this report is to assess the threat of mass attacks to Texas for senior government, law enforcement officials, and the citizens of Texas. This report identifies recent significant mass attacks in the United States and Texas and provides an overview of the main threat actors responsible for conducting mass attacks. The report addresses mass attack trends as well as commonalities among attacks and perpetrators in terms of targets, motivations, and demographics. It also discusses the current challenges to federal, state, and local law enforcement's ability to prevent future mass attacks.
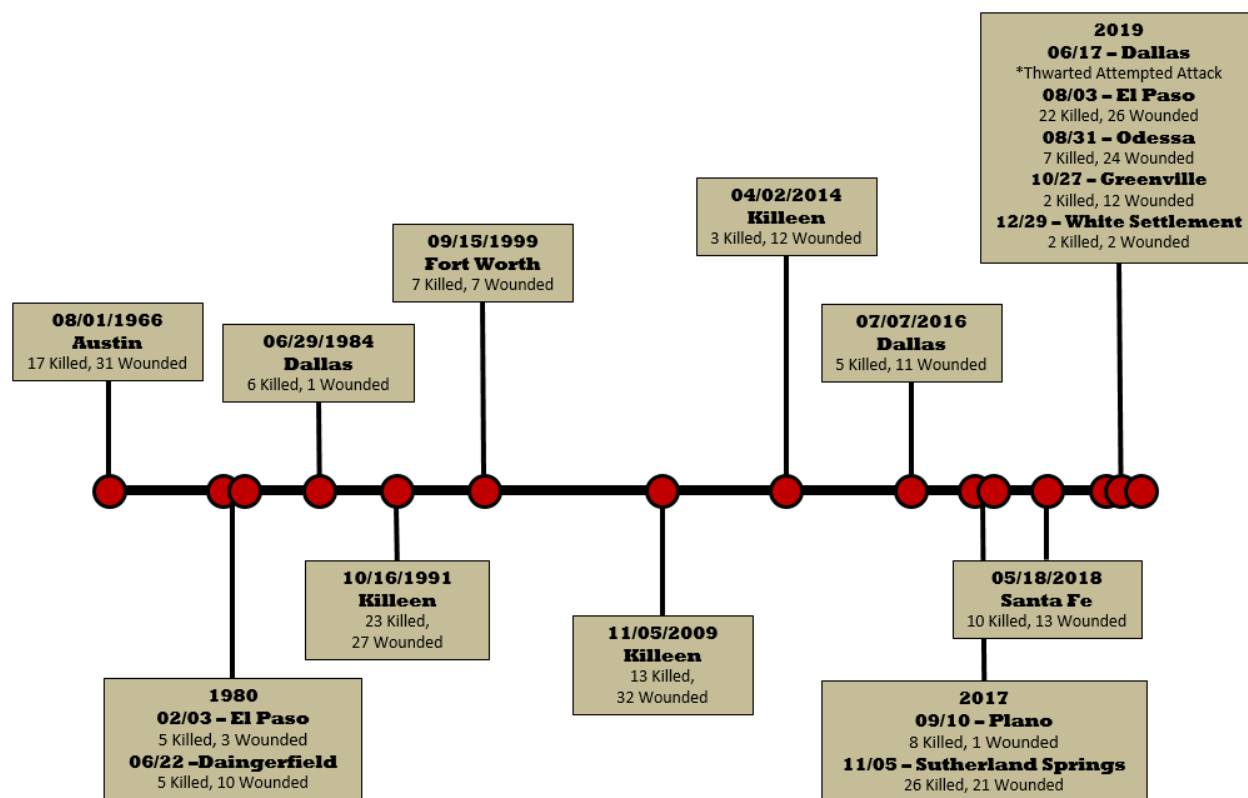
(U) Due to the large quantity of historical mass attack incidents, a qualitative selection narrowed the mass attacks included in this report based on incident characteristics such as a high casualty count, relation to a significant radicalization or tactical trend, and/or a nexus to Texas. The included attacks do not represent a comprehensive quantitative count of all mass attacks in the United States between 2009 and the date of publication.

(U) This report provides numerous examples of mass attack incidents, including casualty counts. Some of the incidents referenced in this report are the subject of ongoing investigations. Information contained within these examples represents the best available reporting at the time of this report's production, and is subject to change.

(U) Background

(U) The threat of mass attacks represents a significant, dynamic threat to public safety. Historically, mass attacks are not a new threat to Texas, dating back to one of the earliest mass attacks in modern American history, the 1966 Tower Shooting at the University of Texas-Austin in Austin, Texas. However, Texas has seen a particularly high period of activity for mass attacks in recent years. A number of events with notably large casualty counts further mark this period of high activity (Appendix B).

(U) The threat of mass attacks represents a significant, dynamic threat to public safety. Since 2009, multiple significant mass attacks have occurred in the United States and Texas. Multiple and diverse actor types have perpetrated these attacks, including domestic terrorists (DT), homegrown violent extremists (HVE), and non-ideologically motivated violent criminals (NIMVC). These attacks have caused substantial human death and suffering, as well as economic damage against a range of targets. Online notoriety associated with mass attacks and their perpetrators raises the risk of subsequent like-minded or retaliatory attacks. Mass attack actors present unique challenges to law enforcement's ability to prevent future mass attacks, including a lack of advance warning, the proliferation of social media applications enabling ideological radicalization, and constraints on law enforcement's intelligence collection and investigation abilities.

(U) Timeline depicts examples of conudcted and thwarted mass attacks in Texas since 1966. Image is not a comprehensive list of all mass attacks during this time period. Casualty counts represent best available data at the time of this report's production and are subject to change.

(U) Definition of Key Terms

(U) Definitions for the purposes of this report include the following:

- **(U) Mass Attack:** acts of intentional violence in populated areas that resulted in three or more persons (not including the perpetrator) being killed or wounded.

- **(U) Domestic Terrorism:** the furtherance of political or social goals by U.S.-based individuals/groups through acts or threats of force or violence, and in violation of criminal law.

  o **(U) Racially Motivated Actors:** An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a bias against a single or multiple racial and/or ethnic populations.

  o **(U) Anti-government Actors:** An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a rejection of governmental authority, a perceived governmental injustice, or belief the government has failed in one or more of its duties.

- o **(U) Single Issue Actors:** An individual or group who displays or threatens force or violence motivated by a single, typically social, goal or grievance.

- **(U) Homegrown Violent Extremists:** The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) define a HVE as a person of any citizenship who lives or operates primarily in the United States or its territories, and who advocates, engages in, or is preparing to engage in or support terrorist activities in furtherance of a Foreign Terrorist Organization's (FTO) objectives, but who is acting independently of foreign terrorist direction.[1] HVEs are distinct from traditional domestic terrorists who engage in unlawful acts of violence to intimidate civilian populations or attempt to influence domestic policy without direction from or influence from a foreign actor.

- **(U) Non-Ideologically Motivated Violent Criminals:** Perpetrators of mass attacks who do not intend for their violent criminal acts to further their political or social ideology.

- **(U) Radicalization:** The FBI, DHS, and NCTC define radicalization as the process through which individuals come to believe that their engagement in or facilitation of non-state violence to achieve social and political change is necessary and justified.[2]

- **(U) Hate Crime:** The FBI defines a hate crime as a criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity.[3]

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(U) Domestic Terrorists

(U) Overview

(U) Domestic terrorists include racially motivated, (e.g., white racially motivated, black racially motivated, etc.), anti-government (e.g., militia, sovereign citizen, and anarchist), and single issue (i.e., animal rights, environmental, abortion, and involuntary celibate [Incel]) actors. Although a complex blending of personal and ideological grievances motivates individual DT attackers, some underlying drivers of domestic terrorism include perceptions of government or law enforcement overreach, socio-political conditions, racism, anti-Semitism or anti-Muslim beliefs, and reactions to legislative actions.[4]

(U) According to the FBI, in recent years there have been more domestic terrorism subjects arrested and more deaths caused by DTs than international terrorists – both FTOs and HVEs. Lone offenders represent the vast majority of recent DT mass attackers in the United States. Targets include commercial facilities, mass gatherings, religious institutions, and government, military, and law enforcement targets, with the primary weapon being firearms.[5]

(U) Racially motivated actors have been responsible for the most lethal attacks among DT threat groups in recent years.[6] The modern racially motivated DT movement is highly decentralized, characterized by lone offenders and disaggregated small cells without a formal affiliation with a broader organization or movement. [7] [8]

(U) Involuntary Celibate Community Encourage Individual Violent Acts

(U) Involuntary celibates, also known as "Incels," blame women and society for their failure to develop intimate relationships. Many advocate the use of violence against persons, both women and men, they perceive to be successfully engaging in such relationships.[9] Following a mass shooting attack by Elliott Rodger in 2014, many Incels praise him as the "Supreme Gentleman" and support the idea of similar attacks, sometimes called an "Incel Rebellion."[10] Incels utilize symbology in their communications, particularly in language. They refer to attractive women as "Staceys" and unattractive women as "Beckys." "Chads" (alpha males) are men perceived as desirable to attractive women.[11]

(U) Recent DT Mass Attacks

(U) Since 2012, multiple mass attacks conducted by suspected DT actors have occurred in the United States and Texas, including the following[a]:

- (U) On December 28, 2019, Grafton Thomas entered the home of a Hasidic Jewish rabbi in Monsey, New York, and proceeded to attack the occupants inside with a machete, seriously wounding five individuals, before fleeing. Dozens of parishioners from a nearby synagogue were attending a Hanukkah celebration at the rabbi's home. Authorities arrested Thomas hours later after stopping his vehicle in New York City, New York. Subsequent investigation of the suspect's residence revealed a number of handwritten journals containing anti-Semitic sentiments and

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[a] (U) Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

possible support for the Black Hebrew Israelites movement. A search of Thomas' phone also revealed recent internet searches suggesting potential targeting of Jewish facilities, such as "Why did Hitler hate the Jews," "German Jewish Temples near me," and "Prominent companies founded by Jews in America." Federal authorities have charged Thomas with five counts of Obstruction of Free Exercise of Religious Beliefs Involving an Attempt to Kill and Use of Dangerous Weapon, and Resulting in Bodily Injury.[12]

- (U) On December 10, 2019, David Anderson and Francine Graham attacked a law enforcement officer in a cemetery before opening fire on a kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey. The attacks killed four individuals in total: the officer at the cemetery, and three citizens in the market. Both subjects died after engaging law enforcement in a long gun battle, while barricaded in the market. Although the investigation is ongoing, authorities believe the subjects had some connection to the Black Hebrew Israelites, but are working to determine if that connection went beyond an "expressed interest." However, regardless of group affiliation, the attack motivation appears to stem from anti-Semitism and anti-law enforcement beliefs.[13] [14]

- (U) On August 3, 2019, Patrick Wood Crusius opened fire in an **El Paso, Texas** Walmart, killing 22 people and injuring 26 others.[15] Prior to the shooting Crusius posted a manifesto on a digital media platform in which he justified his actions as a response to the perceived ethnic replacement of whites by Hispanics and voiced support for the Christchurch, New Zealand shooter and his manifesto.[16] Crusius is awaiting trial on state charges, including capital murder.[17]

(U) Patrick Crusius

- (U) On July 28, 2019, Santino William Legan killed three people and wounded 12 others at the Gilroy Garlic Festival in Gilroy, California, before committing suicide on scene. As of August 2019, the FBI indicated Legan explored a number of violent ideologies.[18] Prior to the attack, he reportedly posted photos to social media referencing a book associated with white supremacy.[19] According to the FBI, Legan possessed a list of possible mass attack targets throughout the United States, including federal buildings, courthouses, political organizations, religious institutions, and food festivals.[20]

- (U) On April 27, 2019, John Timothy Earnest attacked congregants at a synagogue in Poway, California, killing one person and injuring three others. Prior to the attack, he uploaded a manifesto online. Earnest claimed the New Zealand attack was a catalyst for his attack, he also

stated his actions were "because the Jewish people are destroying the white race."[21] He also confessed to an arson incident at the Dar-ul-Arqam Mosque and Islamic Center in Escondido, California, on March 24, 2019. As of January 2020, Earnest is awaiting trial on numerous federal and state charges, including federal hate crime charges.[22]
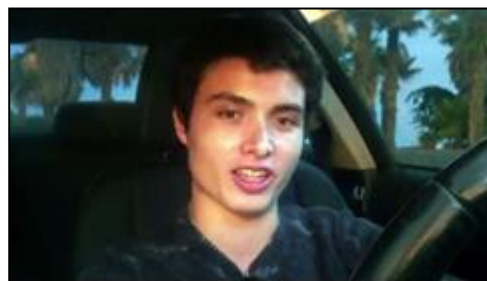

(U) John Earnest

- (U) On October 27, 2018, Robert D. Bowers shot and killed 11 congregants at a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania synagogue. According to the indictment, Bowers wounded four responding law enforcement officers and made statements to officers on scene indicating a desire to "kill Jews." As of January 2020, Bowers is awaiting trial on hate crimes and other federal charges.[23]

- (U) On July 7, 2016, Micah Johnson opened fire on a group of police officers in **Dallas, Texas**, killing five officers and wounding others, including two civilians.[24] After the initial shooting ended, Johnson engaged in a standoff with police in a parking garage. During the standoff, Johnson stated he wanted to kill white people, especially white officers.[25] Subsequent investigation revealed Johnson had liked several social media sites for BRM groups. [26]

(U) Micah Johnson

- (U) On November 27, 2015, Robert Lewis Dear, Jr. killed three people and injured nine others at a reproductive health care facility in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He surrendered to law enforcement authorities on scene after a five-hour standoff.[27] Dear reportedly later claimed that he was "a warrior for the babies."[28]

- (U) On October 1, 2015, Christopher Harper-Mercer conducted a mass attack at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon, killing nine people and wounding seven others before committing suicide. Harper-Mercer authored a manifesto complaining about not having a girlfriend and praising mass killers such as Elliot Rodger. Harper-Mercer's manifesto espoused ideology consistent with the Incel community.[29]

- (U) On June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof shot and killed nine African Americans at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Three additional victims survived the attack. Roof used a semi-automatic handgun during the attack. Prior to the shooting, Roof posted a manifesto online expressing white racially motivated beliefs. He chose to commit the attack in a church to receive notoriety, hoping the incident would ignite racial tensions nationwide.[30] [31]

- (U) On May 23, 2014, Elliot Rodger killed six people and wounded 14 at the University of California, Santa Barbara.[32] He engaged in a firefight with law enforcement officers before wrecking his vehicle and committing suicide.[33] Rodger wrote a 137-page manifesto titled "My Twisted World," in which he

(U) Elliott Rodger

expressed that his inability to establish romantic relationships with women was a reason for the attack. Rodger also posted a video online before his attack.[34]

(U) Recent Thwarted DT Mass Attacks and Plots

(U) Since 2014, authorities in the United States and Texas thwarted multiple potential mass attacks and plots associated with DTs, including the following[b]:

- (U) On August 8, 2019, Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) officials arrested Las Vegas-area security guard and suspected WRM actor Conor Climo, charging him with possession of bomb-making materials. Climo had engaged in online communications with other WRM actors and regularly used racial, anti-Semitic, and homosexual slurs. According to the complaint, Climo discussed attacking a synagogue and surveilling a bar frequented by minorities. He also attempted to recruit a homeless individual for pre-attack surveillance against other targets. While executing a search warrant on Climo's residence, federal authorities seized a notebook containing sketches for a potential attack.[35] As of January 2020, Climo was awaiting trial.

- (U) On August 7, 2019, authorities arrested 18-year old Justin Olsen in Boardman, Ohio, on charges of threatening to assault a federal law enforcement officer. Olsen made threatening online posts in February 2019 under the user name "ArmyOfChrist." These posts included support for mass attacks and the targeting of a reproductive health care facility. In these posts, Olsen encouraged online users to "shoot every federal agent on sight." When the FBI searched Olsen's residence, they found numerous weapons and over 10,000 rounds of ammunition. [36] As of January 2020, Olsen was awaiting trial.

- (U) On July 13, 2019, Tacoma, Washington police officers shot and killed Willem Van Spronsen after he attacked an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center. Van Spronsen, armed with a semi-automatic rifle, threw incendiary objects at the facility, and attempted to ignite a 500-gallon propane tank. Van Spronsen was a self-described anarchist, with a criminal history associated with protesting at ICE detention centers. Prior to the attack, Van Spronsen sent his friends a manifesto, expressing his opposition to detention centers and his regret that he "will miss the rest of the revolution."[37] [38]

- (U) On June 17, 2019, Brian Isaack Clyde attacked the Earle Cabell Federal Building in **Dallas, Texas**. Heavily armed and dressed in body armor, Clyde approached the building and opened fire on the front door. Law enforcement quickly engaged Clyde, who died in the ensuing exchange of gunfire. Prior to the shooting Clyde posted Incel-related items online.[39] [40]

(U) Brian Clyde

- (U) On February 2, 2019, federal authorities arrested Benjamin Bogard of **New Braunfels, Texas**, and charged him with one count of possession of obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children, stemming from an investigation concerning Bogard's social media posts stating he wanted to purchase explosive precursors to conduct an attack. The investigation uncovered Bogard made anti-Jewish, white racially motivated, and Islamic extremist statements, and

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[b] Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

had taken steps to plan an attack. In the months leading to his indictment, Bogard conducted internet searches about buildings to bomb and types of explosive precursors, made a video showing himself setting fire to a document he claimed was the U.S. Constitution, and discussed buying a gun and ammunition to attack the Texas State Capitol.[41][42][43]

- (U) On October 26, 2018, federal authorities arrested Cesar Sayoc of Aventura, Florida, in connection with the mailing of potentially viable parcel improvised explosive devices (IED) sent to 13 high-profile individuals, including former President Barack Obama, former Vice President Joseph Biden, and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Sayoc has a lengthy criminal history, including a previous arrest for threatening to use a bomb. Forensic evidence, including DNA found on two devices, helped identify Sayoc, who pled guilty to 65 felonies, including the use of weapons of mass destruction and interstate mailing of explosives. Sayoc's social media indicated extreme bias against the targeted individuals and in some cases referenced direct and veiled violent intentions.[44][45][46][47]

- (U) On July 13, 2018, police arrested and charged Walter Edward Stolper with a hate crime, attempted first-degree murder, attempted arson, and possession of a destructive device after receiving a tip that Stolper planned to set fire to a Miami Beach, Florida, condominium building to "kill all Jews" inside. Authorities encountered Stolper in the parking garage of his condominium complex moving two plastic containers of gasoline. In addition, police found gasoline-filled containers in the garbage chute dumpster and 28 containers with gasoline and explosive materials inside Stolper's storage unit. Stolper was angry with his Jewish neighbors and his upcoming eviction may have served as a catalyst for the attack. A search of his residence also revealed artifacts with swastikas and books of Nazi ideology.[48][49]

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(U) Homegrown Violent Extremists

(U) Overview

(U) In the last two decades, the international terrorism threat to the United States and Texas has increasingly shifted away from sophisticated, externally directed, or enabled FTO plots and attacks toward self-initiated plots and mass attacks conducted by lone actor HVEs. These HVEs typically find inspiration from FTOs – especially the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS) and its affiliates – but are not usually members of FTOs or individually directed or enabled by an FTO. [50] [51] While the threat of large scale mass attacks conducted by ISIS, al-Qaeda, and other Sunni Islamist FTO affiliates has not disappeared, persistent U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts at home and abroad since the September 11, 2001 attacks have diminished the transnational operational capacity of many FTOs to attack U.S. homeland targets.[52]

(U) HVEs represent the greatest international terrorism mass attack threat to the United States. This is due primarily to their ability to often remain undetected by law enforcement until operational, and their general preference to attack soft targets with simple, readily accessible weapons. Preferred weapons include small arms, edged weapons, vehicles, and rudimentary IEDs.[53] Law enforcement faces significant challenges in identifying and disrupting HVEs due, in part, to their limited connection with an FTO, ability to rapidly mobilize, and use of encrypted communications. The heavy use of social media by FTOs provides would-be HVEs with ample sources of readily accessible propaganda to inspire radicalization and operational planning.[54]

(U) Recent HVE Mass Attacks

(U) Since 2009, multiple mass attacks conducted by HVEs have occurred in the United States and Texas, including the following[c]:
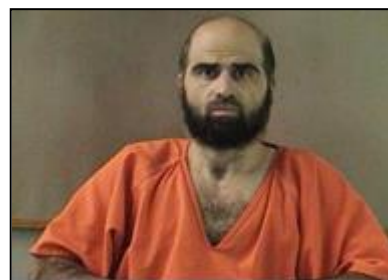
- (U) On October 31, 2017, Sayfullo Saipov drove a rental pickup truck through a bike lane and pedestrian walkway in New York City, killing eight people and injuring 12 others. The suspect drove the vehicle along the walkway for several city blocks before coming to a stop after crashing into a school bus. Saipov then exited the vehicle yelling "Allahu Akbar" while carrying a pellet and paintball gun. Responding officers shot and took him into custody. Saipov later admitted to viewing ISIS videos online, which motivated him to engage in the attack.[55] [56] [57]

- (U) On June 12, 2016, Omar Mateen killed 49 people and injured 53 others at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. During the attack, Mateen called 911 multiple times, claiming to support ISIS and admire the Boston Marathon bombers. Law enforcement officers shot and killed Mateen after a lengthy standoff. Mateen may have originally planned to target Disney World, but likely changed plans due to the presence of law enforcement at the facility.[58] [59]

- (U) On December 2, 2015, Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik killed 14 people and injured an additional 22 at the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health in California. Law enforcement officers killed both Farook and Malik during a traffic stop the same day, after a shootout. Both subjects' radicalization potentially came from inspiration by FTOs, though it does not appear they were members of a larger organized group.[60] [61]

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[c] Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

- (U) On April 15, 2013, brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev killed three and injured 264 attendees at the finish line of the Boston Marathon in Boston, Massachusetts, using two pressure-cooker IEDs. A few days later, the subjects murdered a police officer. They subsequently stole a vehicle and engaged in a firefight with police when located. Tamerlan Tsarnaev died the same day from wounds received during the incident. Law enforcement officers apprehended Dzhokhar Tsarnaev shortly thereafter. The brothers, inspired by al-Qa'ida ideology, obtained directions to build the IEDs from an issue of *Inspire,* an al-Qa'ida affiliated magazine disseminated online.[62] [63] [64] [65] [66]

- (U) On November 5, 2009, Nidal Malik Hasan shot and killed 13 people and injured more than 30 others at the Fort Hood military base in **Killeen, Texas**. Hasan used a semi-automatic handgun during the attack. Responding officers shot Hasan multiple times and took him into custody. Hasan was an Army psychiatrist at Fort Hood who had previously expressed concern about "the military's role in killing Muslims." When committing the attack at Fort Hood, Hasan targeted a group of soldiers awaiting medical appointments.[67] [68] [69]

(U) Nidal Hasan

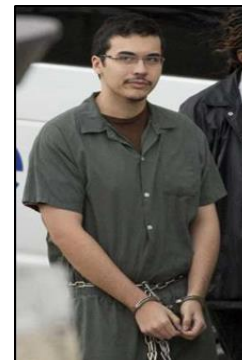## *(U) Recent Thwarted HVE Mass Attacks and Plots*

(U) Since 2015, authorities in the United States and Texas thwarted multiple potential mass attacks and plots associated with HVEs, including the following[d]:

- (U) On April 26, 2019, authorities arrested Mark Steven Domingo of Reseda, California, on federal charges regarding a plot to detonate an improvised explosive device to cause mass casualties. In online posts and conversations with an FBI source, Domingo expressed support for ISIS and revealed his desire to wage "jihad" and seek revenge for attacks against Muslims. After considering targets including Jewish people, churches, a military facility, and police officers, Domingo chose to target a reported white racially motivated rally scheduled to take place in Long Beach, California. Domingo possessed at least one assault rifle, and was a former U.S. Army infantryman with combat experience in Afghanistan. [70] As of January 2020, Domingo was awaiting trial.

- (U) On May 1, 2018, law enforcement arrested Matin Azizi-Yarand of **Plano, Texas**, after he plotted an ISIS-inspired attack targeting a mall, his school, and a Hindu temple. Azizi-Yarand told an FBI Undercover Employee that he would carry out an attack in the United States if he could not travel abroad to join ISIS. He indicated to an FBI Confidential Human Source that he made plans to travel to Pakistan to join ISIS in Afghanistan, but that ISIS videos advised travel was increasingly prohibitive and that striking targets in the West was more valuable. After deciding to attack a local shopping mall, Azizi-Yarand conducted preoperational surveillance, made efforts to procure weapons, and drafted a martyrdom speech. Authorities charged Azizi-Yarand under Texas state law with criminal solicitation with the intent to commit Capital Murder of a Texas Peace Officer and Terroristic Threat.[71] [72]

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[d] Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

- (U) On December 8, 2017, Kaan Sercan Damlarkaya, a U.S. citizen from **Houston, Texas**, was arrested and charged with unlawfully distributing explosive making information and attempting to provide material support to ISIS. Damlarkaya had attempted to travel to Syria to join ISIS multiple times since 2014. In late 2017, he stated his intention to travel overseas to join ISIS or, if unable to do so, to carry out a terrorist attack in the United States using IEDs and edged weapons.[73] Damlarkaya also distributed to ISIS supporters information about how to combine explosive Triacetone Triperoxide (TATP) with a pressure cooker device containing shrapnel.[74] [75]

(U) Kaan Damlarkaya

- (U) On January 7, 2016, federal authorities arrested Iraq-born **Houston, Texas**, resident Omar Faraj Saeed al-Hardan on charges of attempting to provide material support to ISIS, procurement of citizenship or naturalization unlawfully, and making false statements to investigators. Al-Hardan entered the United States as an Iraqi refugee in November 2009, and received permanent residence status in August 2011. During his naturalization application process, al-Hardan knowingly lied about his previous association with ISIS and weapons training. He later attempted to provide training, advice, and assistance to ISIS. During the investigation, Al Hardan also posted statements on social media in support of ISIS, including his plans to travel to Syria and fight alongside ISIS to become a martyr. During his hearing, al-Hardan admitted to accumulating circuitry components and possibly bombing a military installation and shopping malls on behalf of ISIS. [76] [77] [78] [79]

- (U) On May 3, 2015, Arizona residents Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi opened fire with semi-automatic rifles outside of the "Muhammad Art Exhibit and Contest" in **Garland, Texas**. Police killed both shooters on scene, and ISIS later claimed responsibility for the attack. Further investigation revealed Elton Simpson had been in contact with Junaid Hussain, a British jihadist who operated with ISIS in Syria. Hussain communicated with Simpson via social media and appears to have had prior knowledge of the attack. Simpson, a convert to Islam, previously served three years of probation for lying to the FBI about attempting to travel to Somalia to fight for al-Shabaab. Ten days before the attack, a prominent Somali-American propagandist encouraged fellow Muslims to attack the Garland event: "The brothers from the Charlie Hebdo attack did their part. It's time for the brothers in the #US to do their part." Simpson, via a social media account with the username "Shariah is Light" and an avatar of the late al-Qaeda propagandist Anwar al-Awlaki, responded to the call to arms, publicly asking his friend in Somalia to communicate with him on social media. Simpson and Soofi then drove from Arizona to Garland in a vehicle carrying assault rifles, body armor, and hundreds of rounds of ammunition. Prior to the attack, Simpson posted on social media a final time, using the hashtag #texasattack. Hussein and others quickly re-circulated the hashtag throughout the pro-ISIS community on social media in an effort to encourage similar acts.[80] [81] [82]

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(U) Non-Ideologically Motivated Violent Criminals

(U) Overview

(U) Mass attacks conducted by NIMVCs differ from those conducted by DTs and HVEs because NIMVCs do not exhibit intent for their acts of criminal violence to further social or political goals. Non-Ideologically Motivated Violent Criminals may be motivated to carry out mass attacks for a wide variety of reasons, including personal grievances such as financial problems or domestic violence, mental health issues, and criminal activities. Because of the highly individualized, variable nature of NIMVC mass attack motivations and the perpetrators' lack of ideological association, NIMVCs present uniquely serious challenges to law enforcement's ability to prevent mass attacks.

(U) Recent NIMVC Mass Attacks

(U) Since 2009, multiple mass attacks conducted by NIMVCs have occurred in the United States and Texas, including the following[e]:

- (U) On December 29, 2019, Keith Thomas Kinnunen opened fire with a shotgun during services at a church in **White Settlement, Texas**, killing two congregants and injuring at least two others. An armed parishioner, acting as church security, quickly engaged and killed Kinnunen before he could inflict further damage. Investigators are currently working to determine motivation for the attack. Kinnunen disguised his appearance during the attack by wearing a wig and beard.[83 84 85]

- (U) On October 27, 2019, an unknown assailant attacked an off-campus Texas A&M University-Commerce homecoming party at a commercial facility in **Greenville, Texas**, with a handgun, killing two people and injuring 12 others. As of January 2020, the shooting remains under investigation.[86]

- (U) On August 31, 2019, Seth Ator killed seven people and injured 24 others in a mass shooting incident in **Odessa, Texas**. The incident started after Ator was terminated from his job, later shot a Texas DPS Trooper during a traffic stop, and then began driving along a major roadway firing his rifle at civilians. Law enforcement officers shot and killed Ator near a movie theater. Ator used a rifle during his attack. He was not legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack because of a disqualifying mental health issue from 2006, and in 2014, he received a denial in his attempt to purchase a weapon based on returns from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Ator later purchased the rifle used in the attack through a private sale.[87 88 89 90]

(U) Seth Ator

- (U) On August 4, 2019, Connor Betts killed nine and injured 27 others in a nightlife district in Dayton, Ohio. Betts committed the attack using a long rifle and was shot and killed by law enforcement officers on scene. Betts may have targeted his sister during the attack. The suspect's social media indicated a possible interest in violence, particularly sexual violence, against women.[91]

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[e] Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial.

- (U) On May 31, 2019, DeWayne Craddock engaged in a mass shooting against his coworkers in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Using two legally obtained pistols, Craddock killed 12 people and wounded four others. Law enforcement officers shot him at the scene of the attack and he died while en route to the hospital. Craddock submitted his two-week notice earlier on the same day, but his motive for the attack remains unknown.[92][93]

- (U) On November 7, 2018, Ian David Long used a handgun to conduct a mass attack at a bar and grill in Thousand Oaks, California, killing 12 people and wounding 16 more. He killed himself on scene after engaging in gunfire with law enforcement officers. Long possibly experienced mental health issues.[94][95]

- (U) On May 18, 2018, Dimitrios Pagourtzis conducted a mass shooting at a school in **Santa Fe, Texas**, using a pistol and a shotgun.[96] Pagourtzis killed ten people at the school, including eight students, and wounded 13 others before surrendering to law enforcement on scene.[97] Pagourtzis used a shotgun and .38 caliber revolver during his attack. Law enforcement found IEDs at the scene, and indicated he kept a personal journal the included extensive violent ideations but no clear motive for the attack. [98][99] As of November 2019, a judge declared that Pagourtzis is incompetent to stand trial.[100]

- (U) On February 14, 2018, Nikolas Cruz killed 17 people and wounded 17 others at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.[101] Law enforcement arrested Cruz, a former student at the school, in a neighborhood near the school after identifying him from video surveillance. He used a semi-automatic rifle in the attack, which he owned legally. He also had a gas mask and smoke grenades in his possession.[102] As of January 2020, Cruz was awaiting trial.

- (U) On November 5, 2017, Devin Patrick Kelley attacked the First Baptist Church in **Sutherland Springs, Texas**, killing 26 people and wounding 21 others. He used a semi-automatic rifle and a semi-automatic handgun.[103] During the incident, he exchanged gunfire with a citizen outside the church before fleeing in his vehicle. After wrecking his vehicle, Kelley committed suicide.[104] Kelley had prior involvement with law enforcement after he escaped from a behavioral health facility in New Mexico in 2012. He also had a conviction from 2012 for Assault to a Minor and received a sentence of one year at Holliman AFB. Records indicate that the Department of the Air Force issued a bad conduct discharge on Kelley in 2014. [105] Kelley was able to purchase firearms because his domestic violence conviction while in the Air Force went unreported.[106]

(U) Devin Kelley

- (U) On October 1, 2017, Stephen Paddock began shooting from the 32nd floor of a hotel into a crowd of people attending the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada. He killed 58 people and injured nearly 900 more (when including those injured in the ensuing panic) before committing suicide in the hotel room. Law enforcement authorities located 23 firearms in Paddock's room, one outfitted with a bump stock, a device enabling it to function similarly to an automatic weapon.[107] Authorities have not identify a motive for the attacks.[108]

- (U) On September 10, 2017, Spencer Hight killed eight people, including his wife who filed for divorce in July, and injured one using a semi-automatic rifle at a house party in **Plano, Texas**. In addition to the rifle, he had a handgun, a shotgun, and a knife at the time of the attack. A police officer responding to the incident shot and killed Hight on scene. Prior to the attack, Hight was drinking at a bar where he displayed a gun and a knife.[109]

- (U) On June 14, 2017, James Hodgkinson used a handgun and rifle to attack a baseball practice attended by Republican Congressmen in Alexandria, Virginia, wounding five people. Hodgkinson expressed disagreement with Republican beliefs, but never made any known direct threats toward political officials.[110]

- (U) On April 2, 2014, Ivan Lopez killed three and injured 12 in a mass shooting attack at the Fort Hood military base in **Killeen, Texas**. Lopez used a legally obtained handgun in the attack before killing himself. Prior to the attack, Lopez engaged in an argument with several others at the base regarding his request for leave. After a heated discussion, Lopez left the office and later returned to attack individuals there.[111] [112]

- (U) On September 16, 2013, Aaron Alexis killed 12 people and injured four at a Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. Responding law enforcement officers shot and killed the attacker. Alexis was an independent contractor employed at the Navy Yard for approximately one week prior to the incident. He used a shotgun and a pistol in the attack, and both weapons had statements etched into them. One of the statements read, "Better off this way." Alexis reportedly had a history of issues with mental illness.[113] [114]

- (U) On December 14, 2012, Adam Lanza engaged in a mass shooting event at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut. During the incident, he killed twenty students and six employees of the school before committing suicide. Prior to the school shootings, he killed his mother. Lanza used a rifle and two handguns during the incident, and an officer later discovered a shotgun in his vehicle. He reportedly exhibited signs of a mental disorder.[115] [116]

- (U) On July 20, 2012, James Holmes entered a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, shooting and killing 12 people and wounding an additional 58. Holmes took a shotgun, a rifle, a handgun, tear gas, and 700 rounds of ammunition to the theater with him. Shortly after the attack, he surrendered to law enforcement authorities on scene. Holmes also endangered police officers by setting up explosive devices at his residence.[117] [118]

- (U) On January 8, 2011, Jared Loughner committed a mass attack on a "Congress on Your Corner" event in Tucson, Arizona, attended by U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords. Loughner shot and killed six people, and injured an additional 13 more, including Rep. Giffords. Bystanders at the event overwhelmed and disarmed Loughner and law enforcement officers took him into custody shortly thereafter. Prior to the attack, some acquaintances who encountered Loughner expressed concern regarding his behavior. After the incident, he was reportedly determined to suffer from mental illness.[119] [120]

- (U) On April 3, 2009, Jiverly Wong killed 13 people and injured four more at the American Civic Association Immigration Center in Binghamton, New York, before committing suicide. He used two legally obtained handguns in the attack. Wong was a naturalized citizen, and had reportedly taken English classes at the center. He told a news station via letter that he initiated the attack because he experienced "degradation due to his lack of English skills." There were no known mental health issues in his past.[121] [122] [123] [124]
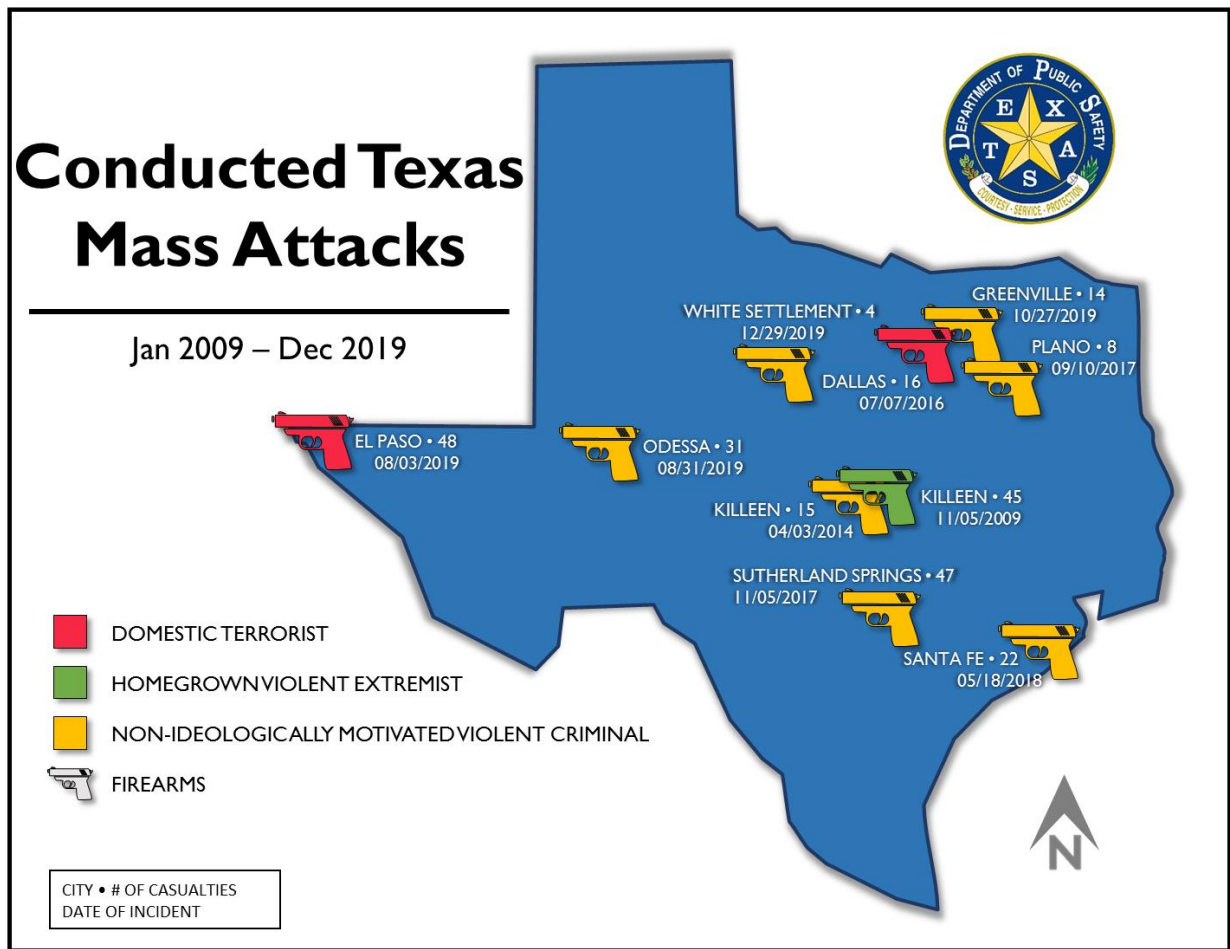
(U) Recent Thwarted NIMVC Mass Attacks and Plots

(U) Since 2009, authorities in the United States and Texas thwarted multiple potential mass attacks and plots associated with NIMVCs, including the following[f]:

- (U) On August 20, 2019, following a tip from a co-worker, authorities arrested Rodolfo Montoya of Huntington Beach, California, at his home for threatening to carry out a mass attack at the Long Beach, California, hotel where he worked. His planned attack was most likely in response to a human resources dispute. Law enforcement seized firearms, hundreds of rounds of ammunition, and tactical gear, including high-capacity magazines and a rifle. Montoya did not appear to have a criminal history that would prevent him from legally owning the types of guns allowed in California. Authorities charged Montoya with manufacturing and distributing assault weapons, possession of an assault weapon, and making a criminal threat.[125]

- (U) On August 1, 2019, law enforcement in **Lubbock, Texas**, arrested William Patrick Williams for making a false statement and representation to a Federal Firearms Licensee while purchasing a firearm. Williams' grandmother previously convinced Williams to commit himself to a medical facility after expressing homicidal and suicidal thoughts, including a desire to conduct a shooting at a hotel and commit suicide by cop. Based on the stated threats, law enforcement officers obtained Williams' consent to search his hotel room, and subsequently discovered a rifle, four knives, ammunition, and 17 magazines.[126] [127]

(U) William Williams

- (U) On May 15, 2019, **Fort Bend, Texas**, resident Maximillion Young was arrested on felony charges of possession of explosive components after authorities, acting on a tip from two of Young's classmates, found bomb-making materials at his home. The students reported a conversation they had with Young during which he described himself as a sociopath and talked about his fascination with bombs and shrapnel and what he might do with IEDs. Police also found a semi-automatic rifle, a handgun, a shotgun, and two military-style ammunition boxes in a safe in a guest bedroom closet. [128]

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[f] Throughout this report, the presumption of innocence remains for those cases where the suspect is awaiting or currently standing trial, or has been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial. Subject names are included only for those arrested and formally charged with a mass attack-related crime.

(U) Graphic provides visual of the Texas-based conducted mass attacks included in this report. This image is not comprehensive and does not necessarily include all incidents that met mass attack criteria during the stated period.

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(U) Graphic provides visual of the Texas-based thwarted mass attacks included in this report. This image is not comprehensive and does not necessarily include all incidents that met mass attack criteria during the stated period.

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(U) Mass Attack Perpetrator Profiles, TTPs, and Pre-Operational Indicators

(U) Introduction

(U) With the recent high level of mass attack activity in the United States, federal law enforcement organizations have focused a significant amount of analysis on such events to better understand trends, and improve pre-emption. While there are indicators and identifiable characteristics associated with mass attacks, the most authoritative government assessments conclude there is no single profile of a mass attacker. Additionally, there is no single warning sign or behavioral trait always associated with mass attackers. However, there are several indicators and traits commonly found with mass attackers. Awareness of common warning signs can aid with early detection and intervention, which could prevent mass attacks.
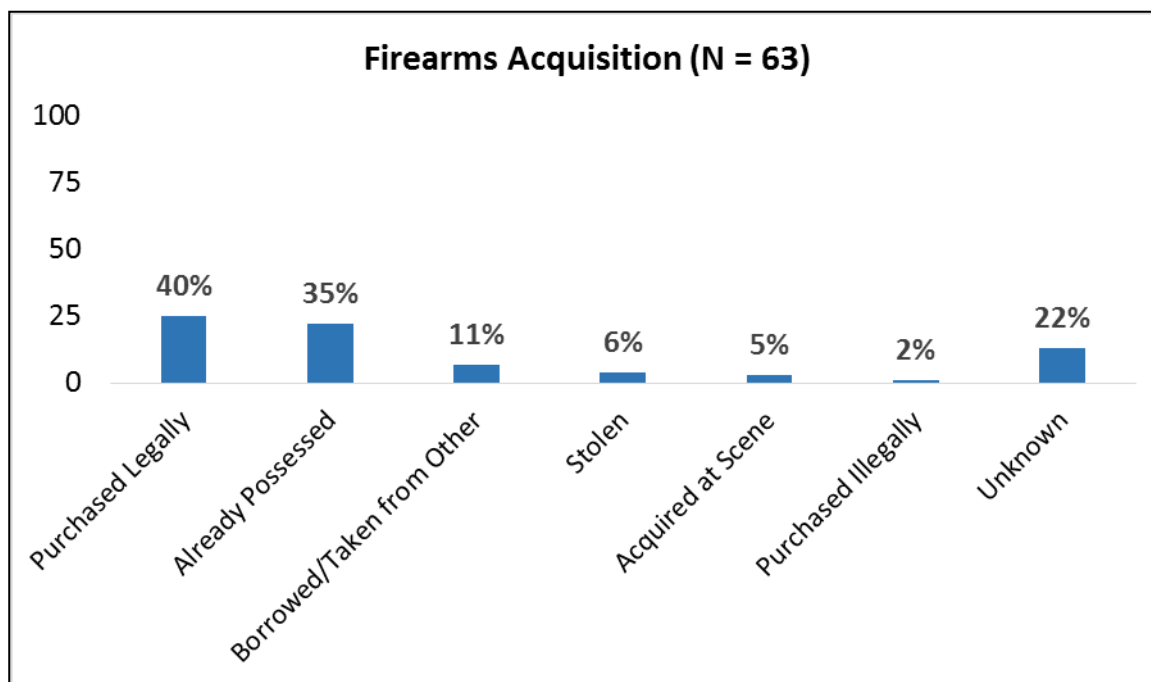
(U) There are two federal reports discussed in this section that provide insight into some of these warning signs. When possible a discussion of Texas examples follows. These examples include the 10 Texas-based conducted mass attacks mentioned in this report. Due to ongoing investigations, not every characteristic category is available for each of the 10 Texas-based examples.

(U) FBI Findings[129] [130]

(U) The FBI has published two comprehensive studies of active shooter attacks occurring between 2000 and 2013 in the United States. The FBI defines active shooter as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area." Depending on the attack involved, these events may or may not always qualify as a "mass attacks." However, these reports offer key insights into attack behaviors. The reports excluded attacks not involving firearms and the reports classified gang- and drug-related killings as outside their scope. The FBI reports analyzed several attack-related items, focusing on demographics, attack locations, firearms acquisitions, stressors, mental health, grievances, and concerning behaviors and communications. The first report, "A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States between 2000 – 2013," analyzed 160 active shooter incidents that killed 486 people and wounded 557. The subsequent report, "A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States between 2000 – 2013," analyzed a subset of 63 of the 160 instances from the first study.

(U) The Incidents

(U) Of the active shooter attacks included in the FBI's review of pre-attack behaviors, 40 percent of the 63 attackers legally purchased a firearm to carry out the attack, 35 percent already possessed a firearm which was not obtained solely for the attack, and 17 percent either borrowed or stole the firearm. Only two percent of the included attackers purchased the firearm illegally.

Firearms Acquisition (N = 63)

Purchased Legally	40%
Already Possessed	35%
Borrowed/Taken from Other	11%
Stolen	6%
Acquired at Scene	5%
Purchased Illegally	2%
Unknown	22%

(U) FBI Study: Active Shooter Firearms Acquisition

*Data percentages detailed above add to greater than 100% as active shooters could have obtained multiple firearms in different ways. Graphic recreated.

(U) Many of the 160 active shooter attacks occurred in commercial areas (46 percent), predominately at businesses with high pedestrian traffic (such as shopping malls), and resulted in 124 people killed and 181 wounded. For those locations open to pedestrian traffic, the majority of shooters (72 percent) did not work at the location. However, for those locations closed to pedestrian traffic, 96 percent of shooters were either current or former employees.

(U) Educational environments comprised the second most common attack location (24 percent) and resulted in 117 deaths and 120 wounded. School attacks accounted for some of the higher casualty counts in active shooter attacks. The majority of such attacks occurred at pre-kindergarten through high schools, including school board meetings, (69 percent), where the shooter was frequently a current student (in the high school and middle school shootings). Of the 27 cases, 67 percent of attackers were apprehended at the scene, and 30 percent committed suicide at the scene. The remaining education-related shootings (31 percent) occurred at institutions of higher education, which resulted in 60 fatalities and 60 wounded, and mostly involved current or former students. In these instances, 42 percent of attackers were apprehended at the scene, 33 percent committed suicide at the scene, and 17 percent were killed by police at the scene.
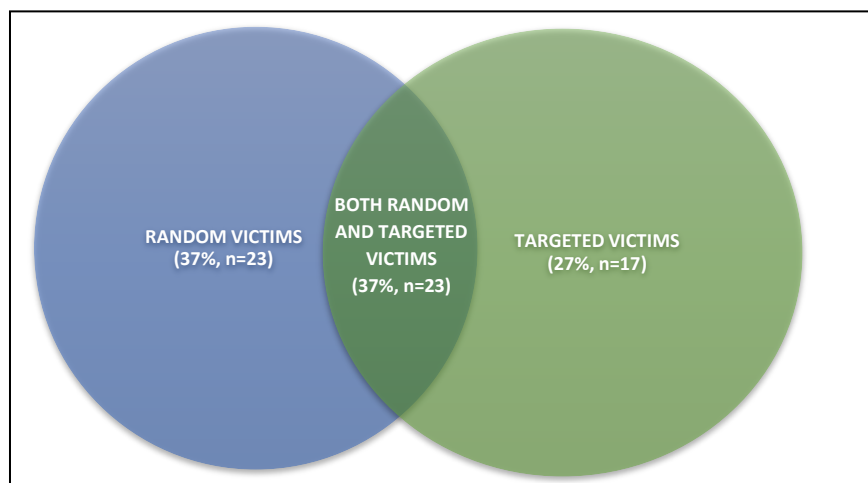
(U) The Attackers

(U) The FBI reported that the 63 active shooters included in its pre-attack behaviors report were predominately conducted by males (94 percent), with ages ranging from 12 to 88 (average age of 38 years). Among the shooters age 18 years or older, 44 percent were employed, 38 percent were unemployed, and 24 percent had a military background. Fifty-seven percent of attackers were single, 13 percent were married, 13 percent were divorced, 11 percent had a partner but not married, and six percent were separated. Thirty-five percent of active shooters had adult criminal convictions, and 62 percent had a history of acting in abusive, harassing, or oppressive ways. Of the 63 shooters, 25 percent had a

diagnosed mental illness prior to the attack. The most prominent mental diagnoses involved mood disorders (75 percent). In addition, 48 percent of the perpetrators had suicidal ideations or engaged in suicide-related behaviors, with 70 percent of those occurring within a year prior to the shooting.

(U) Motives, Beliefs, and Targeting

(U) The FBI determined 79 percent of the 63 active shooter attacks covered in its 2018 report appeared to be motivated by some form of grievance, and that no known or an unknown grievance was identified for the remaining 21 percent of cases. Nearly half (44 percent) of the active shooters with a grievance experienced a precipitating or triggering event generally close in time to the shooting. The most common identified grievances were an adverse interpersonal action against the shooter (33 percent) and an adverse employment action against the shooter (16 percent). Ideology or hatred of a group accounted for less than seven percent of active shooter attacks, indicating that the grievance(s) most linked to the attack were distinctly personal to the shooter and their daily lives. The majority of shooters (64 percent) targeted specific people (and in many cases attacked their intended targets and random victims), and in cases where the amount of time spent planning the attack could be determined, 77 percent of active shooters spent a week or longer planning their attack.

(U) FBI Study: Targeted Victims, does not sum to 100% due to rounding.
Graphic recreated.

(U) Key Investigative Themes

(U) The FBI's review of pre-attack behaviors indicated that active shooters typically experienced an average of 3.6 separate stressors in the year prior to their attack. Of the 63 incidents reviewed, mental health was a key stressor in more than half (62 percent) of attackers, and financial strain was present in half (49 percent). Active shooters displayed an average of 4.7 observable concerning behaviors (e.g., mental health, interpersonal interactions, and statements of intent to do harm) via verbal communication and physical actions. Of the 40 active shooters who had a specific target, 55 percent of them made threats or had a prior confrontation, and 95 percent of made threats in person. Aside from direct threats, 51 percent of active shooters expressed intent to commit a violent crime. Eighty-eight percent of active shooters ages 17 or younger also expressed intent to commit a violent crime, though the communication was sometimes a general expression of desire to commit an attack and not directed at the eventual target.

Of the 63 cases reviewed by the FBI, 30 percent of active shooters left some form of communication, such as manifestos, videos, or social media postings, claiming credit for the attack and/or articulating their motives for the shooting.

(U) U.S. Secret Service Findings[131] [132]

(U) For the last two years, the U.S. Secret Service's (USSS) National Threat Assessment Center has produced reports analyzing trends in mass attacks in U.S. public spaces for each year. The National Threat Assessment Center defines mass attacks as "acts of intentional violence in public spaces…or semi-public spaces…during which significant harm was caused to three or more persons." The USSS studies excluded violence related to criminal acts (e.g., gang and drug activity), failed attempts at a mass attack, and spontaneous violence. The USSS 2018 report analyzed 27 mass attacks that resulted in 91 deaths and 107 injuries, and the USSS 2017 report covered 28 incidents that resulted in 147 deaths and 700 injuries. These assessments highlighted similar themes observed in the behaviors and circumstances of the attackers: most of the attackers utilized firearms; two thirds of attackers had a history of mental health symptoms; nearly all had at least one significant stressor[g] within the last five years; half were motivated by a grievance; and nearly all made threatening or concerning communications prior to the attacks.
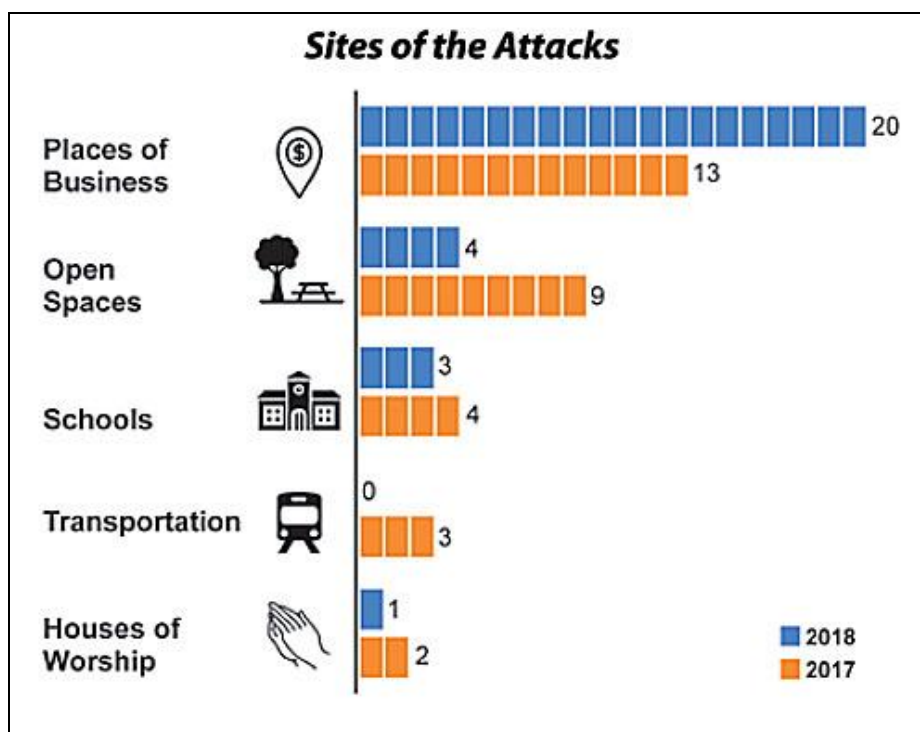
(U) The Incidents

(U) The USSS identified, of the 27 incidents in 2018, 24 of the attackers used firearms, and at least 10 of those using firearms possessed their weapons illegally. Of the 10 who illegally possessed firearms, eight had felony convictions, were the subjects of protective orders, or had some other factor that would have prevented them from purchasing or possessing a firearm. The 2018 data is consistent with the 2017 report on mass attacks, which found that 23 of the attackers that year used firearms, and that 10 of those attackers possessed their weapons illegally. After firearms, the use of vehicles to cause harm was the next most frequently used weapon, with three vehicle-related incidents in both 2017 and 2018.

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** All 10 mass attacks in Texas included in this document involved firearms.

    - (U) Keith Thomas Kinnunen used a shotgun during the White Settlement attack.[133]

    - (U) The currently unknown shooter from the Greenville, Texas attack used a handgun.[134]

    - (U) Seth Ator used a semi-automatic rifle during his attack. Ator was not legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack because of a disqualifying mental health issue from 2006, and in 2014, he received a denial in his attempt to purchase a weapon based on returns from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Ator later purchased the semi-automatic rifle used in the attack through a private sale.[135] [136] [137]

    - (U) Patrick Crusius used a semi-automatic rifle that he purchased online from Romania during his attack. The El Paso chief of police indicated the weapon used in the attack was legally purchased.[138] [139]

    - (U) Dimitrios Pagourtzis used a shotgun and .38 caliber revolver during his attack. Law enforcement found IEDs at the scene. Pagourtzis was not legally eligible to purchase

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[g] (U) The FBI defines stressors as "physical, psychological, or social forces that place real or perceived demands/pressures on an individual and which may cause psychological and/or physical distress."

firearms prior to the attack because he was 17 years-old at the time, but he used weapons legally owned by his parents to conduct the attack.[140]

o (U) Devin Kelley used a semi-automatic rifle and a semi-automatic handgun during his attack. Kelley was not legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack due to a 2012 military conviction for domestic abuse of his wife and step-son, but his military conviction was not reported as required.[141] [142]

o (U) Spencer Hight was armed with a semi-automatic rifle, a .38 caliber handgun, and a folding knife during his attack. Law enforcement also found a third gun at his apartment.[143]

o (U) Micah Johnson used a semi-automatic rifle during his attack. Law enforcement also found two handguns at the scene. Johnson was legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack.[144] [145] [146]

o (U) Ivan Lopez used a semi-automatic handgun during his attack. Lopez was legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack.[147]

o (U) Nidal Hasan used a semi-automatic handgun during his attack. Hasan was legally eligible to purchase firearms prior to the attack.[148]

(U) USSS Study: Sites of Attacks

(U) Between 2017 and 2018, there was a shift in statistics regarding the targeted locations of mass attacks. Places of business remained the most frequent location, with 13 in 2017 and 20 in 2018. The second most frequent location for mass attacks was open spaces. Schools and houses of worship comprised the majority of the remaining locations. The four attacks on schools in 2017 included two elementary schools, one high school, and one university. In 2018, all school-related mass attacks occurred

at high schools. This lack of consistency suggests there is no year-to-year pattern for type of educational institutions targeted.

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the 10 mass attacks in Texas included in this document, two occurred in open spaces, two targeted commercial facilities, two targeted military facilities, one targeted a school, two targeted a religious institution, and one occurred at a residence.

(U) Approximately half of all 2017 and 2018 mass attacks ended with either the perpetrator committing suicide or departing the scene on their own. Law enforcement intervention at the scene ended six attacks in 2018 and five attacks in 2017.

(U) The Attackers

(U) Males overwhelmingly conducted the 2017 and 2018 mass attacks. The age of perpetrators ranged from 15 years old to the mid-60s.

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the nine mass attacks in Texas included in this document involving an identified single perpetrator, the average age of the attacker was 30 years old.

(U) In 2017, 20 attackers had histories of criminal charges, with 15 attackers having charges for violent offenses. For each year, approximately one-third of attackers had histories of domestic violence, though not all instances resulted in arrests or charges.

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the nine mass attacks in Texas included in this document involving an identified single perpetrator, three involved attackers with documented criminal histories prior to their attacks.

  - (U) Keith Thomas Kinnunen had a criminal record, to include a previous arrest for a weapons related charge in New Jersey.[149]

  - (U) Seth Ator had several criminal charges stemming from 2001, including criminal mischief, criminal trespass, and evading arrest.[150]

  - (U) Devin Kelley had a previous charge of possession of marijuana in 2006 and received a military conviction for domestic abuse of his wife and stepson in 2012.[151]

Mental Health Symptoms	2017	2018
	n	n
Depression	4	10
Psychotic Symptoms	9	10
Paranoia	6	9
Delusions	2	5
Hallucinations	6	1
Suicidal Thoughts	6	8

(U) USSS Study: Perpetrator Mental Health. Graphic recreated.

(U) According to the USSS, in both 2017 and 2018, approximately two-thirds of perpetrators experienced mental health symptoms prior to the attacks, with the most common symptoms being psychosis (e.g.,

paranoia, hallucinations, or delusions), depression, and suicidal thoughts. A history of substance abuse was found in approximately half of attackers in 2017, but only six in 2018.

(U) Motives, Beliefs, and Targeting

(U) The USSS reports determined that mass attacks in 2017 and 2018 resulted from a range of motives, and that some attackers had multiple motives. However, law enforcement has not identified motives for every attack; motives for four attacks in 2017 and six attacks in 2018 are unknown. For both years, grievances were the most common motive (approximately half of all mass attacks). In 2018, domestic and personal grievances were the most common motives, whereas workplace grievances were the most prevalent motive in 2017. The attacker's mental health symptoms and ideology were the next most common motives, and between one-quarter and one-third of attackers in both years subscribed to a belief system associated with violence (e.g., white racially motivated, conspiracy theories, and sovereign citizens).

Components to Motive	2017	2018
Grievances	**46%**	**52%**
Domestic	18%	22%
Personal	7%	22%
Workplace	21%	11%
Mental Health/Psychosis	**14%**	**19%**
Ideological	**21%**	**7%**
Fame	**4%**	**4%**
Political	**4%**	**0%**
Unknown	**14%**	**22%**
*Percentages exceed 100 as some attackers had more than one motive		

(U) USSS Study: Perpetrator Motivations. Graphic recreated.

(U) Eleven attackers each year exhibited a fixation, defined in the study as "an intense or obsessive preoccupation with a person, activity, or belief to the point that it negatively impacted aspects of their lives." In 2018, fixation appeared to correspond with discriminate target selection, as eleven mass attackers appeared to have pre-selected targets, even though seven of those attacks resulted in harm to both the targeted person and random bystanders. In more than half of the attacks in 2018 attackers targeted people indiscriminately.

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the 10 mass attacks in Texas included in this document, seven were conducted by NIMVC perpetrators, two by DTs, and one by a HVE.

(U) Key Investigative Themes

(U) The majority of mass attackers in 2017 and 2018 had at least one significant stressor in the five years preceding the attack, with over half experiencing stress related to financial instability. Additionally, most of the attackers engaged in some form of concerning communication, predominantly threats and worrying statements (e.g., racist and misogynistic comments). In 2018, approximately one-third of all perpetrators threatened someone prior to their attack, with one-fourth of that sub-set of perpetrators threatening their eventual targets.
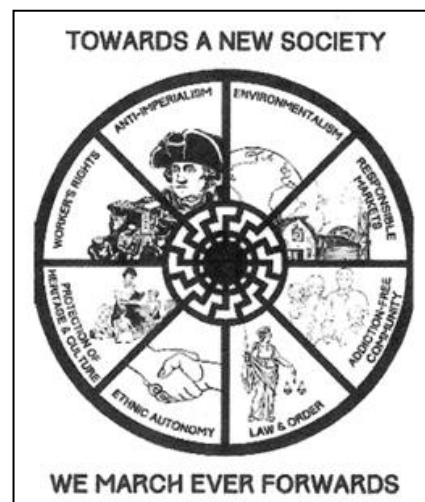
- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the 10 mass attacks in Texas included in this document, at least one perpetrator used social media to make expressed/implied threats of violence prior to their attacks, and one used social media to express support for a group associated with public calls for violence against law enforcement.

    o (U) Patrick Crusius uploaded a manifesto to social media websites minutes prior to initiating his attack at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, in which he detailed his intention to conduct a violent attack against Hispanics in retaliation for their "invasion" of Texas and "cultural and ethnic replacement" of ethnically European whites.[152] [153]

    o (U) Micah Johnson expressed support for an organization that had previously called for the murders of police officers throughout the United States.[154]

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** Of the 10 mass attacks in Texas included in this document, two perpetrators verbally and/or physically engaged in suspicious activity related to their eventual motive for violence prior to their attacks.

    o (U) Spencer Hight expressed violent ideations while inebriated at a commercial facility where he also displayed a handgun and knife.[155]

    o (U) Nidal Hasan expressed ideological opposition to U.S. military operations in Middle Eastern countries.[156]

- **(U) Texas Attacks:** For at least one of the mass attacks in Texas included in this document, law enforcement was aware of potential indicators of violent behavior associated with the perpetrators prior to the attacks.

    o (U) During a February 2011 encounter with law enforcement officials in Amarillo, Texas, Seth Ator demonstrated potential indicators of mental health issues, a desire for a stand-off with law enforcement, and potential preparations for some sort of violent encounter, including the construction of an underground shelter in the yard behind his residence.[157]

(U) Emerging Trends: Transnational Effects of Mass Attacks

(U) An important attribute distinguishing domestic terrorists from HVEs is the lack of inspiration from an FTO. However, recent domestic terrorism attacks, predominately by white racially motivated (WRM) actors, demonstrate an increasingly international link between domestic and foreign actors with similar motivations. Because WRM attackers frequently operate alone, they are also typically self-radicalized, many through information obtained on digital media platforms. The globalized nature of digital media allows many of these actors to access, and become inspired by, the ideals and actions of foreign actors. Similarly, the actions of U.S.-based individuals can inspire similar events in foreign countries. A recent trend of WRM actors across the globe posting manifestos online prior to conducting an attack also allows the messaging of these individuals to spread transnationally. [158]

(U) Transnational linkages between U.S. and international WRM actors fall primarily into two categories: inspiration and training. A number of recent domestic attackers, including John Earnest (Poway, California attack) and Patrick Crusius (El Paso, Texas attack), have drawn inspiration from, or identified with, Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant and Anders Breivik, who conducted a 2011 WRM mass attack in Norway that killed 77 individuals.[159] [160] Tarrant in turn, while also idolizing Breivik, drew inspiration from U.S. WRM actor Dylann Roof.[161] Since Patrick Crusius conducted a WRM attack in El Paso, Texas on August 3, 2019, there have been at least two international attacks explicitly inspired by his actions or demonstrating similar tactics.

- (U) On October 9, 2019, 27 year old German citizen Stephan Balliet attempted a mass attack at a synagogue holding Yom Kippur services in Halle, Germany. After failing to gain entry to the synagogue, Balliet shot and killed a woman nearby. Balliet then drove to a kebab shop, where he shot and killed another individual before his eventual arrest. Balliet livestreamed the attack online. Prior to the attack, he also uploaded a manifesto on social media, in which he described his objectives as proving the viability of improvised weapons, increasing the morale of "oppressed" whites, and killing as many non-white people – preferably Jews – as possible.[162] [163]

- (U) Prior to attacking a mosque in Baerum, Norway, Philip Manshaus made online posts praising Patrick Crusius for "fighting to reclaim his country." Manshaus' posts urged readers to conduct mass attacks to initiate a race war. [164]

(U) Symbology Posted by
Tarrant in Manifesto

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(U) Challenges to Law Enforcement

(U) Introduction

(U) Law enforcement's ability to prevent future mass attacks faces several challenges. These challenges include complex legal considerations and constraints on the collection and exploitation of mass attacker pre-operational indicators.

(U) Legal Considerations

(U) Legal considerations that challenge law enforcement's ability to prevent future mass attacks are complex and varied. They typically revolve around the fundamental issue of balancing constitutionally protected free speech, privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties with the vital need to protect the public from potential DT, HVE, and NIMVC mass attackers. Achieving the proper balance is critical for detecting and preventing mass attacks, while also ensuring no infringement upon civil liberties. Two of the most notable challenges are achieving this balance while collecting and exploiting violent threats and pre-operational indicators posted on social media, and conducting investigations into potential DT mass attackers given the lack of a chargeable domestic terrorism statute.

(U) To open a domestic terrorism related investigation, law enforcement agencies must meet a minimum criminal predicate threshold. According to the FBI, it opens domestic terrorism investigations on individuals based on information concerning the actual occurrence or threat of violent criminal actions by subjects in furtherance of an ideology.[165] However, the absence of a chargeable federal domestic terrorism statute substantially limits the FBI's ability to conduct domestic terrorism investigations. This includes looking into potential DT mass attackers and charging DTs planning to conduct a mass attack – or who actually conducted a mass attack – with a "domestic terrorism" offense.

(U) The limits imposed by the lack of a federal domestic terrorism statute stand in stark contrast to the FBI's ability to investigate and prosecute HVEs. In the international terrorism realm, for example, the FBI may open an investigation on an individual suspected of attempting to provide material support to a FTO formally designated as such by the U.S. Department of State.[166] But because no corollary domestic terrorism statute exists, the FBI and federal prosecutors are forced to rely on weapons, fraud, and assault charges, probation violations, drug offenses, hate crime laws, and other charges that are not explicitly linked to terrorism.[167] Even with a chargeable statute, law enforcement would still have the difficult task of discerning a potential mass attacker's motive as either a DT or NIMVC for investigative and prosecutorial purposes.

(U) When law enforcement collects violent threat information and pre-operational indicators posted on social media for analysis and investigation, they must distinguish between potential criminal conduct in the form of "true threats"[h] and lawful speech.[168] This process requires the evaluation of threat credibility, assessment of its relevance to public safety, and evaluation of both the information's source reliability and content validity.[169] The process is time consuming and highly context-specific. To be effective, it requires well-trained analysts possessing well-developed critical thinking skills, an understanding of potential mass attacker pre-operational indicators, and familiarization with local, state, and federal criminal laws.

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[h] (U) True threats are statements where the speaker communicates a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group.

(U) Intelligence Collection Challenges

(U) The ability of law enforcement to identify potential mass attack threats and pre-operational indicators is dependent on the ability to collect and exploit information from a variety of sources. These sources include members of the public, federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, private sector partners, and expressed/implied threats of violence posted online. The collection and exploitation of this information presents a myriad of challenges, particularly regarding the real-time, open source social media collection and analysis. The public is a particular resource, as they are often in the best position to identify and report pre-attack indicators.

- (U) On August 16, 2019, an individual in a foreign nation submitted a tip regarding a **Brownsville, Texas**-based subject's open source posts of mass shooting ideations. The subject commented in a video, "I always have a vivid image of me gunning down everyone in a hall way as people run and clench to the walls and some people jumping out of the windows to cling to their lives." The subject included his first and last name within the posts, and directed viewers to check out his other accounts. After meeting with the subject, Texas Rangers and Brownsville Police Department placed him under arrest for making a Terroristic Threat. There were no weapons discovered in the subject's possession.

(U) As global internet traffic and social media use expands, it is likely to cause a similar growth in threats made across these platforms and other sources of publicly available information. Based on perceived past successes, mass attack actors will likely continue to exploit digital media. This includes continuing to post manifestos and attempting to live stream attacks in the hope of inspiring similar actions by others. As a result, a corresponding increase in international connections and inspiration of mass attack actors in Texas and nationwide remains a concern. The ability for mass attack actors to inspire such an audience on such wide-reaching platforms is also likely to continue perpetuating the lone actor phenomenon.

(U) Outlook

(U) Mass attacks conducted by lone actor DTs, HVEs, and NIMVCs will continue to occur in the future with little to no advance warning in Texas and throughout the United States. High-profile mass attacks worldwide will inspire future copy-cat and retaliatory violent attacks, facilitated by the international notoriety associated with attackers and the ease of online consumption of extremist messaging and propaganda.

(U) Mass attackers will continue to target schools, religious institutions, commercial facilities, mass gatherings, and government, military, and law enforcement officials and facilities, primarily using firearms to conduct their attacks. Public venues will remain attractive targets, largely because the presence of large crowds, public accessibility, limited egress routes, and gaps in security response capabilities facilitate the timing of attacks to maximize casualties.

(U) Tactical options available to mass attackers will expand in the future due to technological developments lowering the cost and complexity of obtaining armed UAS and "ghost guns" (i.e., weapons not commercially manufactured and lacking serial numbers such as 3D-printed firearms.) Mass attackers are also likely to continue using protective gear such as armored vests, helmets, masks, and hearing protection when carrying out attacks.

(U) Mass attackers – especially racially motivated DTs, Incel DTs, and HVEs – will continue to harness increasingly operationally secure online communication platforms, social media, and encrypted applications to communicate, disseminate propaganda, generate a virtual environment conducive to radicalizing and mobilizing themselves and others to violence, and evade law enforcement detection prior to their attacks. Law enforcement will be challenged to identify, collect, and exploit pre-operational indicators of mass attacks from these platforms.

(U) Despite some commonalities, the process of radicalization and mobilization to violence for each mass attacker will remain unique and dependent on a combination of variables, including personal, group, community, socio-political, and ideological factors.

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(U) Appendix A: State Intelligence Estimates

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

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

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

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(U) Appendix B: Table of Texas-Based Conducted and Thwarted Mass Attack Examples

Date	Location	Description	Killed	Wounded	Weapon
August 1, 1966	Austin	University of Texas-Austin tower shooting	17	31	Firearm
February 3, 1980	El Paso	Shooting at a bar	5	3	Firearm
June 22, 1980	Daingerfield	Shooting at a church	5	10	Firearm
June 29, 1984	Dallas	Shooting at night club	6	1	Firearm
October 16, 1991	Killeen	Shooting at Luby's Cafeteria	23	27	Firearm
September 15, 1999	Fort Worth	Shooting at a church	7	7	Firearm
November 5, 2009	Killeen	Shooting at Fort Hood (HVE)	13	32	Firearm
April 2, 2014	Killeen	Shooting at Fort Hood (NIMVC)	3	12	Firearm
July 7, 2016	Dallas	Ambush attack on law enforcement (DT)	5	11	Firearm
September 10, 2017	Plano	Shooting at a house party (NIMVC)	8	1	Firearm
November 5, 2017	Sutherland Springs	Shooting at a church (NIMVC)	26	21	Firearm
May 18, 2018	Santa Fe	School shooting (NIMVC)	10	13	Firearm
June 17, 2019	Dallas	Thwarted attempted attack on federal building (DT)	*	*	Firearm
August 3, 2019	El Paso	Shooting at Walmart (DT)	22	26	Firearm
August 31, 2019	Odessa	Multiple shootings along major roadway (NIMVC)	7	24	Firearm
October 27, 2019	Greenville	Shooting at a party venue (NIMVC)	2	12	Firearm
December 29, 2019	White Settlement	Shooting at a church (NIMVC)	2	2	Firearm

*(U) Table depicts examples of conducted and thwarted mass attacks in Texas since 1966. This is not a comprehensive list of all mass attacks during this time period. Casualty counts represent best available data at the time of this report's production and are subject to change.

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