BRIC Quarterly Threat Assessment
Fourth Quarter 2015

BRIC

BOSTON REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER ★

(U//NP) SCOPE

(U//NP) This product is intended to provide law enforcement, public safety, and private sector security partners within the Metro Boston Homeland Security Region (MBHSR) with a quarterly assessment of intelligence relating to terrorism, violent extremism, and other significant public safety issues. This product also aims to provide an assessment of the MBHSR's vulnerabilities relative to the current threat environment.

(U//NP) KEY POINTS

- Contentious public issues including immigration to the US and ongoing foreign conflicts may provide inspiration to violent extremists of various ideologies
- Possible HVE attacks on military and law enforcement within the Homeland remain a significant threat
- Mass gatherings and lightly defended spaces continue to offer targets of opportunity to would-be attackers

(U//NP) CURRENT THREAT ENVIRONMENT

(U//NP) Summary

(U//NP) The BRIC has no specific or credible information to indicate a threat to the MBHSR at this time. However, vulnerable targets of opportunity are always available, especially in a densely populated metro area like Boston. Trends in violent extremism reflect the challenges of disrupting individual or small-cell attacks, the scale of which can make them difficult to detect.

(U//NP) Some recent terrorist attacks and violent extremist propaganda encourage would-be attackers to go after "targets of opportunity" or "soft" targets. ISIL in particular has seized on this, telling sympathizers to use whatever means available to them to conduct an attack. Significant inspired attacks during Q4 2015 include San Bernardino and the disrupted NYE plot in Rochester, New York. These incidents not only illustrate the impact of the internet in the radicalization and mobilization of violent extremists, but they also highlight that these offenders often select familiar, soft targets that are local to them.

(U//NP) In addition to inspiring lone offenders, ISIL demonstrated its ability to direct and conduct large attacks outside of the Middle East. The attacks in Paris in November 2015, which simultaneously targeted a stadium, theatre, and restaurants, highlighted ISIL's ability to plan and conduct a large-scale, coordinated attack. Additionally, ISIL utilized French and Belgian nationals who trained with the group in Syria to conduct these attacks – this underlines the significant challenges that the intelligence community is facing in identifying and tracking these individuals.

(U//NP) The availability of soft targets, the difficulty in identifying and tracking individuals who have fought with ISIL, and the significant amount of violent extremist propaganda currently being circulated emphasize the need for a high level of vigilance and diligent reporting of suspicious activity.

(U//LES) Please refer to the upcoming events section for a comprehensive list for Q1 2016.

(U//NP) Trends in Violent Extremism

- ***Directed vs. Inspired***
    - (U//NP) Recent events have marked a shift from "directed" terrorist attacks to incidents that could be classified as "inspired" by an extremist group or ideology. Directed attacks are conducted with the support of an extremist group, which may assist with steps such as surveillance, communication, financing, and weapons procurement. Examples of directed terrorist attacks include the 9/11 hijacking attacks and the London 7/7 bombings. Directed attacks are less frequent but can be more deadly, as established extremist groups often have greater resources and capabilities than a small cell or individual.

o (U//NP) An inspired attack involves little or no interaction with established extremist groups, and the attacker takes it upon him or herself to commit an act of violence. The attacker in an inspired attack may have "self-radicalized" by reading extremist materials readily available online, and may have also communicated with online extremist group militants or supporters. Examples of inspired attacks include the shootings at the "Draw Muhammad" contest in Garland, Texas, the shootings at Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and the hostage situation at the Lindt Chocolate Café in Sydney, Australia. Inspired attacks often prove more difficult to detect, as they are usually conducted by individuals or small groups who have little communication with established extremist groups or do so through encrypted means in order to conceal their activity.

- *Threat to Law Enforcement & Military Personnel / Facilities*

    o (U//NP) The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in particular has issued calls for supporters to attack "police, security, and intelligence members," emphasizing that would-be attackers can use any weapon available to them and that they need not ask for anyone's approval prior to attacking. This statement has been re-issued and emphasized by ISIL supporters and propaganda. Additionally, domestic terror groups such as violent militia groups have continually pushed back against perceived intrusions by the US government and law enforcement, and some individuals have recently acted out violently in the name of domestic extremist ideologies.

- *Small-Scale Attacks*

    o (U//NP) Radicalized individuals intent on committing a terrorist attack often face difficulties in procuring or creating weapons that can cause widespread damage, such as an improvised explosive device (IED). Many recent attacks, especially those conducted by individuals or small groups, have used small arms instead. These types of attacks require less planning than an IED or hijacking attack, as smaller weapons are more easily obtained and operated. Examples of small arms used recently in terror attacks include handguns, knives, and cars (used to ram into highly populated areas). ISIL in particular has encouraged these types of attacks in its propaganda, and the group's followers are quick to claim any incident that appears to be a terror attack. Small arms are most often used in inspired attacks, which tend to draw fewer casualties than directed attacks but are intended to cause fear and spark backlash.

    o (U//NP) The ongoing violence between Israelis and Palestinians in Israel underscores the popularity of small-scale attacks and the difficulty in intercepting them. Most of the attackers in the recent wave of unrest have acted alone and used knives, cars, or small guns. They choose targets of opportunity, looking for soldiers or law enforcement officers who are out on patrol or civilians gathering in predominantly Jewish areas. The attention these attacks have garnered may inspire people elsewhere to emulate this type of violence, especially as violent extremist groups are using video and images from the unrest to create event-specific propaganda to further radicalize their audience.

(U//NP) Attack Targeting Trends

(U//NP) Targets and communities most vulnerable to terrorist incidents are often highly visible or symbolic to the area or community. Target selection varies widely depending on the extremist affiliation of the individual or group looking to commit an attack, but high-impact targets are often appealing to more than one type of extremist group. Current trends in selecting targets for attacks in the US and the West include the following:

- *Military and law enforcement*

    o (U//NP) Various groups continue to prioritize targeting persons and facilities connected to the US military and/or any law enforcement agency. Groups that pose a threat to this category include Islamist militant groups, Sovereign Citizen extremists, and Militia extremists.

- *Religious gatherings and institutions*

    o (U//NP) Religious gatherings and institutions have long been a target for violence by extremist groups, and the current threat environment reflects this. Current events in the Middle East have brought additional attention to Jewish and Islamic facilities, both of which have faced recent threats and/or experienced attacks in the US and abroad.

- *Deliberately "provocative" events*

  o (U//NP) There is a history of groups with different ideological affiliations holding events intended to be deliberately provocative and offensive to some observers. The most recent trend tends to be gatherings held to encourage activities the organizers know will be offensive to conservative Muslims. For example – the creation of visual depictions of the prophet Muhammad are reviled by Islamist militant groups, some of which have sought to attack them in retaliation. The most prominent example of this in the US is the shooting at such an event in Garland, TX by two men sympathetic to ISIL.

- *Events featuring Inspire magazine "hit list" members*

  o (U//NP) Al-Qa'ida magazine *Inspire* featured a "hit list" of people wanted "for crimes against Islam" in 2013. This list, which includes several people based in the US, has inspired several attacks. The most prominent attack connected to an individual on this list is the killing of 12 people at the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015 – two brothers who may have had links to AQAP stormed the office armed with guns. *Charlie Hebdo* had previously published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad - Editor Stéphane Charbonnier, one of the deceased, was on the *Inspire* list. A recent issue of *Inspire*, released in September, includes a new hit list that calls for the assassination of various business leaders. This is representative of al-Qa'ida and other militant Islamist groups seeking to cause financial damage to Western countries.

- *Commercial facilities*

  o (U//NP) Many extremist groups commit attacks intending to damage the economy of the country affected. This means that commercial facilities are a desirable target, and many are "soft" targets, meaning they are not as tightly secured as government or military facilities. Multiple recent attacks and disrupted plots have included entertainment venues as targets, including the November Paris attacks, a January attack on a mall in Baghdad, and a plot to kill diners in a restaurant on New Year's Eve in Rochester, NY. This is reflective of propaganda encouraging sympathizers to attack how and where they are able, rather than prioritizing more complex plots against targets that hold greater significance.

(U//NP) SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS IN GLOBAL EXTREMISM – Q2

27 November 2015, Colorado Springs, CO: Robert Lewis Dear opened fire outside a Planned Parenthood, entering the building and shooting inside. Two civilians and a police officer were killed. Dear later cited his opposition to abortion as a motivation.

13 November 2015, Paris, France: Three groups of armed attackers wearing suicide vests hit multiple targets in Paris, including the Stade de France, various restaurants, and the Bataclan theatre. The attackers, who later were linked to ISIL, shot civilians indiscriminately, killing 130.

22 November 2015, Kabardino-Balkaria, Russia: Russian counterterrorism forces kill 11 militants allied with ISIL in a raid. The militants were allegedly involved in recruiting for ISIL and planning attacks in the North Caucasus.

5 November 2015, Dhaka, Bangladesh: The owners of two publishing companies were attacked by men armed with machetes, killing one. Both had published books by a Bangladeshi-American blogger. Ansar al-Islam claimed responsibility for the attack.

3 December 2015, San Bernardino, CA: Syed Farook and Tashfeen Malik entered a conference center, opening fire on the group inside. They fled the scene, leaving a pipe bomb behind. They were later killed in a firefight with police. Farook and Malik are thought to have been influenced by various extremist ideologies.

20 November 2015, Bamako, Mali: 2 gunmen stormed the Radisson Blu hotel, taking 170 hostages and killing 20. The attack was claimed by Al-Mourabitoun in collaboration with AQIM.

9 December 2015, Khandahar, Afghanistan: A coordinated Taliban attack on the Kandahar military complex killed at least 50 civilians and Afghan security forces. The attackers used guns and suicide bombers, and the siege lasted almost 24 hours.

(U//NP) INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

(U//NP) Threat Groups

(U//NP) The groups described below represent a significant international terrorist threat. This is not an exhaustive list of international extremist groups – those featured represent the most prominent known threat to the US in this category. *See the Appendix for the FBI definition of international terrorism.*

The flag commonly used by ISIL members and supporters

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (aka ISIL or ISIS)

- (U//NP) ISIL grew out of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI), which served as AQ's branch in the country. Led by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, AQI committed attacks against the Iraqi government and any area of perceived US influence, and the group's actions were notable for their extreme violence. After Zarqawi's death, Abu Umar al-Baghdadi replaced him, eventually breaking from AQ and declaring the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, seizing and holding territory in Iraq and Syria. The group's influence has led groups in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, the North Caucasus, Afghanistan, the Philippines and Yemen to pledge allegiance to the group, further extending ISIL's reach. Afghanistan, in particular, has seen rapid growth in the number of ISIL supporters, predominately former members of TTP and Afghan Taliban. The US Department of State put ISIL's Afghan branch—known as ISIL-Khorasan or ISIL-K—on its list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) on 1/14/16.

- An exodus of migrants from Syria and Iraq has strained the resources of the European countries to which they are traveling, and this will likely eventually affect the US in some capacity as well. Arrests in Belgium, France, and Germany that came out of the investigation into the network supporting the Paris attackers highlight the challenge of thoroughly screening migrants entering the EU and traveling within it. ISIL continually issues threats to Europe and the West, and hiding or recruiting sympathizers within the migrant population has worked for the group in the past and may continue to threaten the EU without significant changes in the screening process.

- (U//NP) ISIL in its current form represents a significant threat to the US, in large part due to its extensive outreach via social media, through which it speaks with contacts abroad and pushes out extremist materials. These materials, which include audio, video, text, and graphics, have proven the group's capability to create a message that resonates. The message the group pushes to its audience in the Western world is twofold: travel to Iraq or Syria to join the group (make *hijrah*), and if you cannot, commit an attack in your home country through any means possible. Though most ISIL attacks in the Western world have been small in scale, they have proven that ISIL is capable of extending its reach abroad. ISIL encourages and celebrates smaller attacks by individuals inspired by its narrative, and pro-ISIL attackers include individuals with a history of emotional issues. Through a combination of territorial gains, recruitment and use of foreign fighters, and savvy use of online communications, ISIL is challenging al-Qa'ida for leadership of the global Islamic extremist movement.

- (U//NP)Q4 saw some significant territorial defeats for ISIL, including the loss of the Iraqi city of Ramadi. However, the group proved itself capable of committing serious attacks abroad, as people linked to the group committed attacks in numerous countries including Turkey, France, Russia, Yemen, Egypt, and Libya. The husband and wife who committed the attack in San Bernardino, CA, were homegrown violent extremists who were radicalized in large part through online activity, though whether or not their allegiance was primarily to ISIL is not known at this point.

Al-Qa'ida and Affiliates
- **Al-Qa'ida Core**
  - (U//NP) Core al-Qa'ida, based in Pakistan, has lost potency due to aggressive US counterterrorism operations, in addition to losing some influence as challenges from ISIL call into question AQ's authority on violent Islamic jihad. Despite this, some of their affiliates in other parts of the world either have or are close to having the capability to commit an attack in the West. These affiliates are listed below.

The "Black Standard" flag sometimes used by al-Qa'ida affiliates

- **Khorasan Group**
  - (U//NP) The Khorasan Group is a term used to describe a network of al-Qa'ida veterans who are located in Syria and intent on committing attacks against the West. Intelligence officials believed the group was

preparing to attack Europe or the US in September of last year, which prompted airstrikes. Additionally, officials have stated that the Khorasan group has attempted to recruit Westerners for use in global operations.

- **Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)**
  - (U//NP) AQAP is based in Yemen, and the group has taken advantage of the deteriorating situation there to operate with minimal intrusions from the ousted government. AQAP is widely viewed as al-Qa'ida's most capable branch, and US security officials believe the group to be intent on committing attacks in the West and against Western interests abroad. AQAP has proven its ability to inspire HVEs in the US and elsewhere through online propaganda, in particular *Inspire* magazine and the speeches of deceased member Anwar al Awlaki.
  - (U//NP) AQAP suffered recent losses from tactical airstrikes, but unrest in Yemen has enabled significant members to remain active. The group is under pressure to prove its relevancy in the face of ISIL advances. Some observers note that AQAP could take advantage of the lack of oversight in Yemen, which could enable them to plan a significant attack without being disrupted.

- **Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)**
  - (U//NP) AQIM operates primarily in the Maghreb and the Sahel, including Mali and parts of Algeria, Niger, and Mauritania. US officials assessed the group to be largely focused on regional attacks – its primary objective is to overthrow governments it calls "apostate" governments. The group, which is a militant Islamist group like all al-Qa'ida affiliates, perceives the governments it opposes as not in line with their version of fundamentalist Islam. AQIM presents a threat to Western interests in the Sahel, but to this date the group has not conducted external attacks in Western countries.

- **Jabhat al-Nusra (aka Nusra Front, al-Qa'ida in Syria)**
  - (U//NP) Jabhat al-Nusra represents al-Qa'ida's arm in Syria, and it is a major player in the conflict there. The group's primary mission in Syria is to fight the Assad regime and counter ISIL advances under the leadership of Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani. The group has successfully recruited Westerners for its operations in Syria, which include suicide bombings, explosives, and small arms attacks. Though the group is primarily concerned with activity on the ground in Syria, leaders have voiced opposition to countries participating in the US-led coalition conducting airstrikes against militant positions in Syria.

Flag used by Jabhat al-Nusra fighters

A symbol used by al-Shabaab

- **Al-Shabaab (aka Shabaab)**
  - (U//NP) Al-Shabaab is a militant group based in Somalia that has successfully carried out significant attacks against targets it perceives as representative of Western influence, including the Westgate Mall and Garissa University, both in Kenya. Though the group has called for followers to commit attacks in the Western world, it is primarily focused on fighting African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and other regional military forces who have opposed their advances. Al-Shabaab has attempted to mimic ISIL's strategy of using social media to inspire lone offender attacks, but this strategy has yet to prove successful. Though al-Shabaab is assessed to have low capability of conducting external attacks, the group has previously been successful in recruiting Americans to travel to join them in Somalia.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (aka TTP, Pakistani Taliban)

- (U//NP) TTP is a Sunni Islamist militant umbrella organization that conducts attacks (mostly in Pakistan) intended to undermine the Pakistani military and government. The group, which is based in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) along the Afghan border, concentrates its efforts in Pakistan and poses a threat to Western interests there, especially Western forces. TTP has recently been plagued by rumors of splintering and defection within its ranks. Despite this, TTP recently conducted an attack on a school for military children in Peshawar, killing over 100 and sparking outrage in Pakistan. Though the TTP is not assessed to currently be a significant threat to the Homeland, it has successfully attempted to attack before – Faisal Shazad, who received training from the TTP, attempted to detonate a vehicle-borne IED in Times Square in 2010 and was arrested after boarding a flight to Dubai.

Afghan Taliban

- The Afghan Taliban is a Sunni Islamist militant group that held control of much of Afghanistan from 1996 until the US invaded the country in October 2001. The group still wields significant influence in some territories along the border with Pakistan, including FATA, Kandahar, and Helmand Province. Most insurgent attacks in Afghanistan can be attributed to the Taliban, which uses various tactics to hit civilians, sites of perceived Western influence, and government and law enforcement officials. The Taliban has been in the news of late due to a recent gain in territory – fighters briefly seized Kunduz in October before being driven back. The Taliban's new leader, Mullah Mansour, appears to have been able to consolidate power despite reports of infighting following the death of former leader Mullah Omar. Despite this, many fighters and commanders are defecting from the Taliban and joining ISIL's Afghan branch.

Boko Haram (aka Islamic State West Africa Province)

- (U//NP) Boko Haram, an Islamist extremist group, pledged allegiance to ISIL in 2015. Like ISIL, Boko Haram is seeking to remove the government of Nigeria and establish an Islamic "caliphate" in its place. The group operates primarily in northeast Nigeria, where it holds large amounts of territory. Boko Haram has killed thousands of people in Nigeria with techniques such as suicide bombings and VBIEDs, as well as using kidnapping to exert pressure on the government and create a climate of fear. Neighboring countries are attempting to work with Nigerian forces to push back Boko Haram, but so far this has not significantly slowed their operations and attacks occur frequently.

Extremist Groups in the North Caucasus

- (U//NP) Russia's North Caucasus region has a long history of terrorist activity, including the First and Second Chechen Wars, which spanned from the 1990s to the 2000s. The two most significant groups operating in the region at present are the Islamic Caucasus Emirate (ICE) and ISIL, which established a "province" there in the summer of 2015. ICE has maintained close ties to al-Qa'ida since 2007, though significant numbers of former ICE members in the Caucasus appear to have defected to ISIL. Since Russia began its bombing campaign in Syria in September 2015,there have been several small-scale attacks within Russia by suspected ISIL sympathizers, as well as several raids on ISIL hideouts as reported by Russian counterterrorism forces. This is reflective of a shift in propaganda that encouraged ISIL sympathizers in Russia to commit attacks at home in revenge for the country's bombing campaign in Syria.

Extremist Groups in Turkey

- (U//NP) There are currently several extremist groups operating in Turkey. The Marxist-Leninist group DHKP-C – engages in violence such as gun attacks, kidnappings, bombings, and suicide bombings. DHKP-C members are anti-Western and anti-capitalist, and often target law enforcement, government officials, and Western interests. The PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) is a Kurdish nationalist group that is seeking greater autonomy for Kurds. PKK fighters have fought the Turkish government over long periods of time, with cease-fire agreements in between. The PKK is currently also fighting ISIL. Both the DHKP-C and the PKK oppose Turkey's current government. Fighting between the PKK and Turkish police in predominantly Kurdish areas has flared in recent months, and the Turkish government is struggling to deal with the threat both from the PKK and ISIL.

(U//NP) DOMESTIC TERRORISM

(U//NP) Threat Groups

(U//NP) The groups described below represent a significant domestic terrorist threat. This is not an exhaustive list of domestic extremist groups – those featured represent the most prominent known threat to the US in this category. *See the Appendix for the FBI definition of domestic terrorism.*

Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVE)

- (U//NP) A HVE is a person who is primarily US-based and is involved in terrorist activities promoted by a foreign terrorist organization (FTO). Unlike an international terrorist, a HVE acts independently of a FTO, without significant support or direction. HVEs often "self-radicalize" by reading extremist materials online through various means. Self-radicalization presents an additional challenge for law enforcement, as people who consume extremist materials alone and online often do not run into the tripwires that an individual interacting "offline" with known associates of a

FTO would. Islamist extremist materials such as *Dabiq* magazine (ISIL) and *Inspire* magazine (al-Qa'ida) are tailored to this type of audience, and include information such as detailed instructions to create an IED. ISIL in particular has attempted to "cultivate" HVEs through extensive social media outreach and attention-grabbing propaganda, and their efforts have unfortunately proven successful in a number of cases.

- (U//NP) The narrative pushed by ISIL is currently the predominant ideological motivation for HVEs in the Homeland. Despite this, the June 2015 mass shooting in Charleston, SC illustrates that violent extremism can be motivated by a variety of ideologies.

Animal Rights and Environmental Extremists

- (U//NP) Animal rights and environmental extremists advocate for criminal behavior as a way to inflict damage upon people, businesses, and overall industries who benefit from what they perceive as the exploitation of animals and/or the environment. It should be made clear that animal rights and environmental extremists are distinct from the mainstream animal and environmental welfare movements due to their promotion of criminal activity as a means to an end. Groups that are part of this movement have engaged in arson, destruction of property, and small-scale bombings. The best-known groups in this category are the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), both of which have been involved in incidents that caused significant damage and expense.

Examples of fraudulent license plates used by Sovereign Citizens

Sovereign Citizen Extremists

- (U//NP) Adherents to the Sovereign Citizen movement do not recognize the authority of the US government, and subscribe to a number of conspiracy theories that they see as additionally supportive of this belief. Sovereign Citizens often engage in what is sometimes called "paper terrorism," or the filing of false liens and other frivolous documents in an attempt to free themselves from any debts or obligations. Some Sovereign Citizens may falsify other official documents, such as driver's licenses, license plates, state IDs, birth certificates, and social security cards. Belief in this ideology is constitutionally protected, however, there have been a number of incidents in which self-declared Sovereign Citizens have acted out violently against law enforcement, government officials, and government infrastructure.

Anarchist Extremists

- (U//NP) Anarchist extremists reject all conventional authority, including any government, legal system, or law enforcement agency. Belief in the superiority of an anarchic system is constitutionally protected, but a minority of anarchists believe that criminal violence is necessary to promote anarchy. There are a number of ideologies represented in the anarchist movement, including anti-capitalism and anti-globalization, and true to the philosophy, there is no central leadership. Tactics used by anarchist groups in the past have included IEDs, rioting, and arson.

Anti-Abortion Extremists

- (U//NP) Women's health clinics, clinic workers, and prominent abortion providers and advocates are often targets for harassment and occasionally violence by those who oppose abortion. Groups such as the Army of God (AOG) have justified the use of violence as necessary to stop abortions from being performed. Eric Rudolph, who bombed two abortion clinics in Georgia in 1997, is linked to AOG. Eight abortion clinic workers have been killed in the US since 1993, two of them in Brookline, MA. Multiple incidents of vandalism at Planned Parenthood clinics have been reported since September 2015, which is when the organization was brought to the attention of the public after being criticized by an anti-abortion group. The most significant act of violence against a clinic occurred in November 2015, when Robert Lewis Dear opened fire at a Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs, killing one police officer and two civilians.

(U//NP) THREAT MATRIX

The chart below represents a snapshot of the groups that are assessed to pose a significant threat to the MBHSR and should not be considered an exhaustive list.

Group	Intent	Capability	Opportunity in the MBHSR
AQAP	• Statement by new AQAP leader on June 10th calls on people to aim their "spears and swords" at America • Multiple attempts against US bound aviation	• Attempts on US bound aviation in 2009, 2010 and 2012 • Specialize in developing undetectable IEDs • Small arms attacks on soft targets using military tactics	• US-bound aviation: major international airport • Events hosting individuals "defaming" the prophet and other individuals on the AQAP hit list • Significant amount of Israeli and Jewish facilities throughout the region; frequent visits by Israeli dignitaries • Widely available targets of opportunity with minimal security appeal to those looking to cause mass casualties, spread fear
ISIL	• Repeatedly states its intent to attack within the Homeland • Encourages unaffiliated extremists to act on their behalf • Propaganda emphasizes hitting minimally secured "soft targets" such as entertainment venues to cause mass casualties	• Multiple arrests in the US of individuals linked to or inspired by ISIL, including 2 Boston-based individuals • Small scale, easy to execute attacks • Small arms, edged weapons, vehicles as weapons	• Extensive amount of uniformed law enforcement and military personnel and facilities; Boston based Usaamah RAHIM planned on attacking law enforcement • Individuals known for "defaming" the prophet and/or featured on the AQAP hit list • Significant amount of Israeli and Jewish facilities throughout the region, frequent visits by Israeli dignitaries
HVEs & Lone Offenders	• Remains the most significant, near-term threat to the Homeland	• Small scale, easy to achieve attacks encouraged • Small arms, edged weapons, vehicles used as weapons • IEDs constructed using directions in *Inspire* magazine or elsewhere online	• Extensive amount of uniformed law enforcement and military personnel and facilities • Events hosting individuals "defaming" the prophet and other individuals on the AQAP hit list • Significant amount of Israeli and Jewish facilities throughout the region, frequent visits by Israeli dignitaries • High profile mass gatherings such as the Boston Marathon and Boston's 4th of July celebration • Widely available targets of opportunity with minimal security appeal to those looking to cause mass casualties

Other AQ Affiliates • AQIM • Al-Shabaab	• Intent on attacking US and Western targets in their areas of operation • Maintain aspirations of attacking within the Homeland	• Capability within the Homeland is limited • Overseas attacks include suicide bombings, kidnappings, military assault tactics on soft targets	• Soft targets including hotels, universities, and other public gathering spaces remain vulnerable
Sovereign Citizen Extremists	• Violent adherents to the ideology see some segments of government as infringing on their rights • Makes law enforcement and government officials possible targets during planned or coincidental encounters	• Previous tactics include shootings, IED attacks • Lack of central structure means individual/small cell structure hard to detect	• Extensive amount of uniformed law enforcement and government facilities • Traffic stops or other routine interaction with law enforcement
Animal Rights and Environmental Extremists	• Maintain goal of inflicting damage on businesses and industries who they perceive as exploitative of animals and/or the environment	• Capability to inflict significant damage is limited	• Significant number of scientific research facilities in the MBHSR, both private sector and university affiliated
Anti-Abortion Extremists	• Activity focused mostly on reproductive health centers and / or staff	• Pro-life extremist criminal activity remains largely a lone offender issue, which makes these offenders difficult to identify ahead of time. • Most organized pro-life activity in the Boston area consists mostly of First Amendment protected activity	• Many clinics and practitioners that provide abortion services in the MBHSR

(U//NP) CYBER

(U//NP) Summary

(U//NP) Cyber intrusions continue to happen very frequently – likely at an even higher rate than recorded, since many incidents go unreported. Very few of these intrusions can be classified as terrorism, but some represent a significant threat to law enforcement and citizens. Incidents that may affect public safety include placing a false call to generate a large law enforcement response (aka "swatting"), disrupting websites that provide a service to the public, and gaining unapproved access to internal computer systems and data.

A symbol sometimes used by the hacktivist group Anonymous

(U//NP) Threat Groups

Hacktivists
- (U//NP) Certain malicious cyber actors are referred to as "hacktivists," in reference to when their hacking activity is intended to protest against or cause damage to a company, person, or government agency. The motives, targets, and strategies vary widely. Current events may prompt hacktivist activity – recent examples of this include police involved shootings and decisions in contentious court cases.
- (U//NP) Past malicious activity has included:
  - Swatting – the act of calling law enforcement authorities to report a critical incident at a victim's residence (e.g. a hostage situation, a mass shooting) when there is no real emergency.
  - Doxing – the act of compiling and posting an individual's personal information gathered from social media and other websites without permission, often used to encourage targeting of that individual.
  - DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) – an attack when multiple compromised systems are used to target a single system (e.g. a website or online service), rendering it unavailable.

State-Sponsored Actors
- (U//NP) State-sponsored cyber actors are malicious actors whose actions are supported by a state. Their aims and motivations vary greatly, but many recent attacks that are believed to be state-sponsored have been intended to gain unapproved access to restricted information. The most prominent recent example is the breach at the Office of Personnel Management, which may have exposed the personal information of approximately 20 million federal employees and contractors. These attacks are high-level, sophisticated exploits that often go active for some time before being detected, making them especially dangerous. This type of threat has an effect on both national security and private enterprise and reports of activity of this nature should be taken seriously.

(U//NP) UPCOMING QUARTER – SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

(U//NP) The BRIC has no credible information to suggest a specific threat to any of the events mentioned below. The BRIC continually works with federal partners to identify specific threats to events in the MBHSR; the BRIC will report out if any threats are identified relative to an event occurring within the MBHSR.

Primary District	Event	Venue	Start Time	End Time
Cambridge	Ayaan Hirsi Ali at Lesley University	Lesley University	1/27/2016 12:30	1/27/2016 12:30
D-4	Ayaan Hirsi Ali - Lesley University Boston Speakers Series	Symphony Hall	1/27/2016 20:00	1/27/2016 21:30
Cambridge	Ayaan Hirsi Ali Fundraising Event at Mount Auburn Hospital	Holy Trinity Armenian Church	1/28/2016 11:00	1/28/2016 12:00
A-1	The Beanpot	TD Garden	2/1/2016 16:30	2/1/2016 22:30
A-1	The Beanpot Championships	TD Garden	2/8/2016 17:00	2/8/2016 23:00
D-4	U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association Big Air Skiing Competition	Fenway Park	2/11/2016 8:00	2/12/2016 21:00

A-1	Snowball Fight! Colleges of Boston	Boston Common	2/13/2016 13:00	2/13/2016 15:00
B-2	New Balance Indoor Grand Prix (TELEVISED EVENT - NBC)	Reggie Lewis Center	2/14/2016 12:00	2/14/2016 13:00
C-6	3rd Annual Boston Police Foundation Gala	Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel	3/5/2016 18:00	3/5/2016 22:00
A-1	Hockey East Championship Tournament	TD Garden	3/18/2016 17:00	3/18/2016 22:00
D-14	Dropkick Murphys	Agganis Arena	3/19/2016 16:00	3/19/2016 22:00
A-1	Hockey East Championship Tournament	TD Garden	3/19/2016 19:00	3/19/2016 22:00
C-6	St. Patrick's Day Parade	South Boston	3/20/2016 11:00	3/20/2016 18:00
A-1	2016 ISU World Figure Skating Championships	TD Garden	3/28/2016 16:00	4/3/2016 16:00
D-14, Brookline, D-4, A-1	120th Boston Marathon	Commonwealth Av./Beacon St./Boylston St.	4/18/2016 6:00	4/18/2016 18:00

(U//NP) Law enforcement and private sector partners should note that the BRIC does not monitor or comment on protests and activities protected by the First Amendment, absent evidence of criminal nexus or public safety implications.

(U//NP) APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

(U) The FBI defines **domestic terrorism** as having the following three characteristics:

- Involve acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law;
- Appear intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
- Occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the US.[1]

(U) The FBI defines **international terrorism** as having the following three characteristics:

- Involve violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law;
- Appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
- Occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the US, or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum.

(U) DHS defines **domestic terrorism** as:
- Any act of violence that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources committed by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or its territories without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group. The act is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any state or other subdivision of the United States and appears to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.

(U) DHS defines a **homegrown violent extremist** as:
- A person of any citizenship who has lived in or operated primarily in the United States or its territories who advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically motivated terrorist activities (including providing

/material support to terrorism) in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by a terrorist organization, but who is acting independently of direction by a terrorist organization.

(U//NP) APPENDIX B: SOURCES

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