



Section 4.12 Terrorism



Terrorism

Although terrorism, complex coordinated terrorist attacks, and targeted/mass violence events are not common in Hawai'i, it is critical not to confound a lack of historical examples as a lack of risk. Several iconic locations throughout the state with year-round tourism industries create clear targets for terrorist attacks or other active assailant situations.

CHANGES SINCE 2018

+0

Declared Disasters

+12

Terrorism Events

COUNTIES MOST VULNERABLE



Kaua'i Honolulu Maui Hawai'i

SOCIALLY VULNERABLE POPULATION

22.3% 316,257

Of Total Population

Persons

HAZARD RANKING



Low Medium High

COMMUNITY LIFELINES

1,369

Total

CLIMATE PROJECTIONS



While extremely unlikely, climate change impacts may act as an aggravating factor for terrorism



Climate impacts create the potential for the disadvantaged to turn to terrorism when the resources they need are unavailable

SQUARE MILES

7,420

Environmental Resources

6,095

State Buildings

337

Hawaiian Home Lands

975

Cultural Resources

1,104

Miles of State Road





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¹ Section Cover Photo: Stock photo





SECTION 4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.12 TERRORISM

2023 SHMP Update Changes

- ❖ The terrorism hazard profile is new to the 2023 plan update.
- ❖ Terrorism incidents that occurred in the State of Hawai'i from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2022, were researched for this 2023 SHMP Update.

4.12.1 HAZARD PROFILE

HAZARD DESCRIPTION

The term “terrorism” refers to intentional, criminal, malicious acts. The State of Hawai'i (Hawai'i Office of Homeland Security 2021) defines terrorism as:

“Any activity involving a criminally unlawful act that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources, that appears intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence government policy by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.”

As the nature of this kind of threat evolves, most recently in the United States and elsewhere to include threat actors perpetrating acts of domestic violent extremism, the state's approach to this threat category includes targeted violence. Targeted violence refers to any incident of violence that implicates homeland security, and in which a known or knowable attacker selects a particular target prior to the violent attack (US Department of Homeland Security 2019).

Terrorism and targeted violence, as assessed for the 2023 Hawai'i State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, includes the following:

- Mass shootings
- Arson or fire as a weapon
- Bombings/explosions
- Kidnapping or hostage-taking
- Vehicular attacks
- Other violent attacks meeting the definition of targeted violence, such as stabbings or active-shooter attacks

The effects of terrorism and targeted violence can include injuries, loss of life, property damage, or disruption of services such as electricity, water supplies, transportation, or communications. Effects may be immediate or delayed. Terrorists often choose targets that offer limited danger to themselves and areas with relatively easy





public access. Foreign terrorists look for visible targets where they can avoid detection before and after an attack, such as international airports, large cities, major special events, and high-profile landmarks. Perpetrators of targeted violence currently assessed to pose the greatest threat to the homeland are lone actors radicalized online who look to attack soft targets with easily accessible weapons (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2020).

In dealing with terrorism and targeted violence, the unpredictability of human beings must be considered. People with a desire to perform such acts may seek out targets of opportunity that may not fall into established lists of critical areas or facilities. First responders train to respond not only to organized terrorism events but also to random acts by individuals who, for a variety of reasons ranging from fear to emotional trauma to mental instability, may choose to harm others and destroy property. While education, heightened awareness, and early warning of unusual circumstances may deter terrorism and targeted violence, intentional acts that harm people and property are possible at any time. Public safety and homeland security entities must react to the threat, locating, isolating, and neutralizing further damage and investigating potential scenes and suspects to bring criminals to justice.

LOCATION

Terrorism and targeted violence can both occur in any place and at any time. Most instances of terrorism or targeted violence occur in locations with concentrated populations or locations of high economic or social value, such as stadiums, schools, prominent offices, or government buildings. Hawai'i has numerous locations of high economic and social value as well as densely populated beaches and shopping centers. The threat of terrorism and targeted violence does pose particular risks to the State of Hawai'i in these areas.

EXTENT

Acts of terrorism or targeted violence can range from minor to severe, with fatalities and damage that can fall into the same categories. Terrorist or targeted violence incidents involving the use of firearms, edged weapons, and similar weapons generally tend to result in fewer fatalities when compared to those incidents involving explosive devices, but active-shooter events that result in mass shootings present the potential to challenge this. Incidents may also damage surrounding buildings and structures, especially when explosive devices and firearms are utilized in the attack.

Warning Time

The National Terrorism Advisory System is designed to communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the American public. The Department of Homeland Security maintains the National Terrorism Advisory System. As of November 30, 2022, the system rates the national threat as "heightened threat environment." This is, in part, due to 'lone offenders and small groups motivated by a range of ideological beliefs and/or personal grievances continuing to pose a persistent and lethal threat to the Homeland; domestic actors and foreign terrorist organizations continuing to maintain a visible presence online in attempts to motivate supporters to conduct attacks in the Homeland.'





PREVIOUS OCCURRENCES AND LOSSES

Disaster and Emergency Declarations

No FEMA, USDA, or State of Hawai'i disaster declarations or proclamations related to terrorism have been issued relevant to Hawai'i or any of its counties (or nationally).

Event History

Table 4.12.1-1 summarizes terrorism and targeted violence incidents from 2018 to 2022. Although terrorism events are not common in Hawai'i, it is critical not to mistake a lack of historical examples for a lack of risk. As threats increase nationally and worldwide, Hawai'i can expect to see an increase in threats in the state. While not classified as terrorist incidents, several Hawai'i-based incidents in the recent past have exhibited characteristics of coordinated terrorist attacks.

Table 4.12.1-1. Terrorism and Targeted Violence Incidents from 2018 to 2022

Date of Incident	Event Type	Counties Affected	Impacts
2020	Stabbing, Shooting, Arson	Honolulu	3 dead, 1 wounded 5 homes destroyed & additional damaged
2020	Bomb threat/assault	Maui	1 arrested
2020	Barricade/shooting	Honolulu	1 arrested
2020	Threat at school	Honolulu	Resolved
2020	Stabbing	Honolulu	School lock-down, 2 wounded, 1 arrested
2020	Threat to school	Honolulu	School lock-down
2019	Shooting	Honolulu	3 dead, 1 wounded
2019	Threats to schools	Kaua'i	School lockdowns
2019	Shooting/Stand-off	Honolulu	1 arrested
2019	Barricade/kidnapping	Maui	1 arrested
2018	Terrorist aspirant	Honolulu	1 convicted
2018	Barricade/kidnapping	Honolulu	2 dead

Source: (Hawai'i Office of Homeland Security 2021)

PROBABILITY OF FUTURE HAZARD EVENTS

Overall Probability

Lack of historical data on terrorism and/or targeted violence incidents in Hawai'i (and nationally) impacts our ability to reasonably assign incident probability. However, even with such data, the risk to terrorism and/or targeted violence does not lend itself to probability analysis. Trend analysis, even in its broad-brush nature (where the likelihood of individual occurrences in specific localities is absent) can provide indications of preventative and protective activities to either thwart or mitigate the impacts of such unpredictable incidents..

Climate Change Impacts

While extremely unlikely, climate change impacts may act as an aggravating factor for terrorism (UN News 2021). Radicalization is when someone starts to believe or support extreme views, and in some cases, then participates





in violent groups or acts. Radicalization is a highly individualized process determined by the complex interaction of various personal and structural factors. Climate impacts can impair governance in ways that reduce government capacity and legitimacy, intensify competition for resources and livable territory, and necessitate invidious policies. Radicalized actors could respond to these developments by using violence, either to influence government behavior or to replace the role of the government in certain areas.

Climate change impacts are not projected to change the location, intensity, frequency, or duration of terrorism.

4.12.2 VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Overall, it is difficult to quantify potential losses due to terrorism because of the many variables that must be considered. Potential impacts may be local, regional, or statewide (and possible broader) depending on the magnitude and location of the event. A qualitative assessment is discussed below.

ASSESSMENT OF STATE VULNERABILITY AND POTENTIAL LOSSES

This section discusses statewide vulnerability of exposed state assets (state buildings and roads) and critical facilities to terrorism.

State Assets

All state-owned and leased facilities are vulnerable to terrorism.

Community Lifelines and Critical Facilities

All community lifelines and critical facilities are vulnerable to terrorism.

ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL VULNERABILITY AND POTENTIAL LOSSES

This section provides a summary of vulnerability and potential losses to socially vulnerable and total populations, general building stock, and environmental resources and cultural assets. The local HMPs were reviewed, and their discussions of terrorism are summarized below:

- Kaua'i County – The 2021 County of Kaua'i Multi-Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan qualitatively discusses bioterrorism-related health hazards and mentions terrorism in relation to dam failure.
- City and County of Honolulu – The 2020 Multi-Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for the City and County of Honolulu briefly mentions terrorism in relation to a mutual aid agreement with the Hawai'i National Guard Civilian Support Team, which specializes in chemical, biological, radio-logical and nuclear hazards.
- Maui County – The 2020 County of Maui Hazard Mitigation Plan Update briefly mentions terrorist attacks in relation to hazardous materials incidents.
- Hawai'i County – The 2020 County of Hawai'i Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan qualitatively discusses bioterrorism and includes a planning action focusing on terrorism at mass gatherings.

Socially Vulnerable and Total Populations

Because the entire population of the State of Hawai'i is exposed and vulnerable to terrorism, the exposed population in socially vulnerable communities is equal to the statewide population.





A survey found that persons with disabilities were more anxious about their personal risk from terrorism than were persons without disabilities, even when equally prepared. Another study reported that persons who increased their disaster preparations in response to the possibility of terrorist attacks included African Americans, Latinos, persons with disabilities or household dependents, and non-US-born populations (Eisenman, et al. 2009).

General Building Stock

All general building stock is vulnerable to terrorism.

Environmental Resources

Terrorism and targeted violence have the potential for harmful effects not only on economic and social life but also on the environment, particularly if such incidents impacts certain critical infrastructure such as water/wastewater, dams, or other systems that result in physical implications for the environment in which they reside. The environmental damage caused by terrorism includes but is not limited to terrestrial conflicts, terrorist camps and bases, training activities, and carbon dioxide emissions related to energy consumption (Bildirici and Gokmenoglu 2020).

Cultural Assets

All cultural assets are vulnerable to terrorism.

FUTURE CHANGES THAT MAY IMPACT STATE VULNERABILITY

Understanding future changes that impact vulnerability in the state can assist in planning for future development and ensuring that appropriate mitigation, planning, and preparedness measures are in place. The state considered the following factors to examine potential conditions that may affect hazard vulnerability:

- Change in the nature of terrorism/targeted violence threat actors of concern
- Potential or projected development
- Projected changes in population
- Other identified conditions as relevant and appropriate.

More than 2,900 acres of buildable land in the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) Community Development Districts, Maui Development Projects, and Enterprise Zones is available for development statewide. Because the entire state is vulnerable to terrorism, any type of development of any of this land will be susceptible to damage and impacts from this hazard.

