



**EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL OF
AUSTRALIAN
JEWRY**

הוועד הפועל של יהודי אוסטרליה

The Elected Peak Representative Body of the Australian Jewish Community

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30 January 2026

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
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by email: pjcis@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

Review of the listing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a state sponsor of terrorism under the Criminal Code

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to your Committee's review of the listing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (**IRGC**) as a state sponsor of terrorism under the Criminal Code (hereinafter 'the Review'). The Executive Council of Australian Jewry (the **ECAJ**) is the peak, elected, representative body of the Australian Jewish community. It was established for that purpose in 1944 by Australian Jewish organisations and their elected leaders. The ECAJ's constituent organisations are the roof bodies of the Jewish community in each State and Territory.¹ Other major national Jewish organisations are affiliated to the ECAJ. Directly or indirectly some 200 Jewish organisations come under the umbrella of the ECAJ² and have a range of security needs that are responsive to the growing and diffuse nature of terrorism and hate crime.

The ECAJ has long been advocating for the listing of the IRGC as a state sponsor of terrorism under the Criminal Code (Cth). This position has been informed by well-documented expert evidence³ as to how the IRGC operates to actively harm democratic societies and to target Jewish communities. The Australian Jewish community has, for many years, been aware of the increasing involvement of the IRGC in antisemitic terrorist attacks on Jewish communities abroad, and the devastating impact of such attacks on those communities, and, more broadly, on the societies which these attacks seek to destabilise.⁴

¹ Namely, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, the Jewish Community Council of Victoria Inc, the Jewish Community Council of Western Australia Inc, the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies, the Jewish Community Council of South Australia, the Hobart Hebrew Congregation, the ACT Jewish Community Inc and the NT Jewish Community Association.

² <https://www.ecaj.org.au/about/>

³ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, House of Commons, Parliament of Canada, 12 June 2024, available at: [Evidence - FAAE \(44-1\) - No. 114 - House of Commons of Canada](#)

⁴ There is a widespread awareness of this among Jewish communities worldwide. See, for example: 'Designate the IRGC as a terrorist organisation', *World Jewish Congress*, 13 April 2022, available at <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/ar/videos/diplomacy/designate-the-irgc-as-a-terrorist-organization>

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Executive Summary

The intentional use of violence against civilians to achieve political, religious and ideological objectives is embedded in the worldview, doctrine and *modus operandi* of the IRGC. This ideology is translated into terrorist action, including suicide bombings and incendiary arson attacks against Israeli and Jewish civilians in several places around the world.

The IRGC is a central instrument of terrorism ultimately directed by Iran's supreme leader.⁵ It has been recognised as such by the Australian Government following its orchestration of violent antisemitic attacks on Australian soil.⁶ Such attacks bring the IRGC within the definition of a 'state sponsor of terrorism' contained in Part 5.3A of the Criminal Code (Cth), meaning that the IRGC's listing should be upheld.

IRGC activity in Australia and impact

Recent developments that sought to terrorise the Australian Jewish community, include the December 2024 arson attack against the Adass Israel Synagogue in Melbourne and the October 2024 arson attack against a kosher food establishment in Sydney, both of which were assessed by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) to have been orchestrated by the Iranian regime. These examples demonstrate that terrorism, unlike other crimes proscribed under Australian domestic law, is capable of amounting to an act of aggression under international law,⁷ which threatens international peace and security. It was for this reason that the Australian government expelled the Iranian ambassador to Australia and announced that it would legislate to proscribe the IRGC.⁸

This marked the first public acknowledgment of a foreign state sponsored organisation orchestrating antisemitic violence within Australia. ECAJ's Special Report on Anti-Jewish Incidents in Australia 2025⁹ documents the broader context in which these attacks occurred, including a sharp escalation since 2023 in the severity and quantity of antisemitic incidents nationally.⁹ The IRGC-linked attacks represented a qualitative shift from intimidation and vandalism to state-directed violence, fundamentally altering the threat environment for the Australian Jewish community.

Violent behaviour motivated by extremist religious world views which may involve the targeting of religious and ethnic groups remains an enduring and an escalating threat not only to the personal safety of citizens but also to social cohesion. Of the 83 sentencing decisions and appeals for persons convicted of terrorism offences under section 80.2C and Divisions 101–103 of the Commonwealth *Criminal Code* from 2002 to 2024, 78 were cases where perpetrators were religiously motivated, and were motivated by Islamic fundamentalism¹⁰, and, in all but one case, the perpetrators were motivated by "Islamic extremism", which describes extremist religious or ideological frameworks that are infused with antisemitism. The IRGC is the chief exporter of such extremist antisemitic frameworks.¹¹

⁵ Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Media Release, 'Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps listed as a state sponsor of terrorism' (2025).

⁶ Australian Security Magazine, 'Iran's reach exposed as ASIO connects IRGC to antisemitic attacks on Australian soil' (2025).

⁷ The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia, *Australian government announcement on the involvement of Iranian regime in antisemitic firebombing incidents*, Media conference, 26 August 2025: <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-38>.

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹ Special Report: Anti-Jewish Incidents in Australia 2025, ECAJ, 2 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ecaj.org.au/document/special-report-anti-jewish-incidents-in-australia-2025/>.

¹⁰ Spreadsheet of relevant terrorism sentencing cases, *Independent National Security Legislation Monitor*, available at: <https://www.inslm.gov.au/system/files/2025-12/spreadsheet-of-relevant-terrorism-sentencing-cases-v3.xlsx>

¹¹ Bassi, Justin, and Corera, James, 'State-sponsored antisemitism on Australian soil: why Australia's response matters', *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 27 August 2025, available at: [State-sponsored antisemitism on Australian soil: why Australia's response matters | The Strategist](https://www.aspi.org.au/strategist/article/state-sponsored-antisemitism-on-australian-soil-why-australia-s-response-matters)

Nature of the IRGC and statutory relevance

The IRGC is not a conventional military organisation.¹² It operates as an ideologically driven security and intelligence body tasked with exporting the Iranian regime's revolutionary objectives. Its external operations arm, the Quds Force, has been repeatedly identified by governments, courts, and intelligence agencies as responsible for planning, funding, and directing terrorist activity outside Iran.¹³ The IRGC's structure, mandate, and operational history place it squarely within the conduct contemplated by Australia's state sponsor of terrorism regime under the Criminal Code (Cth).

The statutory test for listing of a state sponsor of terrorism is set out in section 100.3 of the Criminal Code (Cth), and focuses on whether an entity is a foreign state organ, and (i) whether it or a member of it has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act targeted at Australia; or (ii) has advocated the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia. The definition of a 'member' of a state sponsor of terrorism includes:

- a) an employee or official of the entity;
- b) an individual who performs work for the entity under a contract;
- c) an individual who, under a law of a foreign country or of part of a foreign country, holds or performs the duties of an appointment, office or position that is in or relates to the entity;
- d) an individual who holds or performs the duties of an appointment, office or position that:
 - (i) is in or relates to the entity; and
 - (ii) is created by custom or convention of a foreign country or of part of a foreign country;
- e) an individual who is otherwise in the service of the entity (including service as a member of a military force or police force);
- f) an individual who:
 - i. is an authorised intermediary of an individual who is a member of the entity under any of the paragraphs of this definition; or
 - ii. holds the individual out to be the authorised intermediary of an individual who is a member of the entity under any of the paragraphs of this definition.

Therefore, the definition encompasses the use by the IRGC of deniable networks and "cut-outs", criminal proxies, ideologically aligned terrorist organisations, and intermediaries. The use of proxies and cut-outs does not diminish Iran's responsibility; rather, it is a defining feature of modern state-sponsored terrorism and one the legislation was expressly designed to capture.¹⁴

IRGC-linked antisemitic terrorism: international pattern

The IRGC's involvement in antisemitic terrorism is enduring, well-documented, and multi-jurisdictional. The 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Centre in Buenos Aires, which killed eighty-five people, remains the most devastating example of an IRGC orchestrated attack on a Jewish community. Argentine judicial authorities and international investigators have identified senior Iranian officials and IRGC-linked operatives, acting through Hezbollah – a proxy of the IRGC – as responsible for planning and directing the

¹² Keyani, Cameron, 'IRGC history and role in Iranian statecraft', *Security and Strategy Journal*, Alexander Hamilton Society, 8 April 2022, available at: [IRGC History and Role in Iranian Statecraft - AHS](#)

¹³ 'Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC): briefing', Board of Deputies of British Jews, 2026, available at: <https://bod.org.uk/irgc/>

¹⁴ Submission on Defining Terrorism, Executive Council of Australian Jewry, 30 October 2025, available at: <https://www.ecaj.org.au/redefining-terrorism/>; Direct PDF submission: <https://www.ecaj.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/20251029-ECAJ-submission-on-defining-terrorism.pdf>

attack.¹⁵ This attack illustrates both the IRGC's capacity for mass-casualty terrorism and its willingness to target Jewish civilians far beyond the Middle East.

Subsequent decades have seen repeated disruptions of IRGC-linked plots against synagogues, Jewish community leaders, and Israeli diplomatic missions in Europe, North America, and Asia.¹⁶ These plots commonly involve surveillance, recruitment of local criminal intermediaries, and covert logistics support, consistent with IRGC tradecraft.¹⁷ The ideological framing of such activity draws directly on Iranian regime antisemitic rhetoric, often couched in antizionist libels and propaganda, underscoring that these are not rogue operations but expressions of regime policy.

The IRGC's sustained material and operational support for Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis is a further aspect of its responsibility for transnational antisemitic terrorism. These organisations openly advocate violence against Jewish civilians and institutions and have executed attacks that seek to inflict mass casualties on Jewish civilians. The IRGC's provision of training, funding, weapons, and strategic direction constitutes substantial participation in terrorism as understood in international law and counterterrorism practice.¹⁸

In Australia, Hamas is listed in its entirety as a terrorist organisation¹⁹, and there is clear evidence that high-level contacts between Hamas and the Iranian regime began in 1990-1991 to subvert and negative the effect of the 1991 Middle East peace conference in Madrid and the beginnings of the Arab-Israeli peace process.²⁰ For the last thirty years, the IRGC has steadily intensified co-operation with Hamas. This has included training Hamas figures in suicide bombing, in building rockets, and smuggling weapons and munitions from Iran into Gaza.²¹

Iran's sponsorship played a major role in enabling Hamas to initiate the armed attack against Israel in May 2021, and the massacre in southern Israel on 7 October, 2023. Iran's support to Hamas was extended to the entire organisation, not merely to the al-Qassam Brigades, and Hamas' Gaza leader, Yahya al-Sinwar, acknowledged this to the Al-Jazeera network:

*"Our complete gratitude is extended to the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has spared us and the other Palestinian resistance factions nothing in recent years. They have provided us with money, weapons, and expertise. They have supported us in everything, with the grace of Allah. They deserve huge credit."*²²

The transnational pattern of IRGC sponsorship and involvement in terrorism abroad and its willingness to prepare, plan, assist in or foster the massacre of Jews in states where it has been active means its ongoing listing is imperative for the safety of Jewish Australians and Australians more generally.

¹⁵ '25 Years Since the AMIA Bombing', *Wilson Center*, 12 July 2019, available at:

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/25-years-the-amia-bombing>

¹⁶ Schweitzer, Yoram, and Shapira, Anat, 'Iran's involvement in international terrorism', *INSS*, July 2025, available at: https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Memo-244_digital.pdf

¹⁷ 'Argentina Court Calls Iran 'Terrorist State' Over Deadly 1994 Bombings', *Iran International Newsroom*, 12 April 2024, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202404121627>

¹⁸ Submission on Hamas Listing, ECAJ, 24 August 2021, available at: <https://www.ecaj.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/ECAJ-Submission-on-Hamas-listing-24.08.2021.pdf>

¹⁹ Australian National Security, 22 September 2024, [Hamas](#)

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ido Levy, 'How Iran Fuels Hamas Terrorism', *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Analysis/Policy Watch 3494*, 1 June 2021

²² 'Hamas Leader In Gaza Yahya Al-Sinwar Salutes Al-Jazeera TV, Iran, And Yasser Arafat', *MEMRI*, #8879, 26 May 2021

Comparative international practice

Australia's listing of the IRGC is consistent with a growing international recognition that the organisation functions as a terrorist entity rather than a conventional military force. The United States has designated the IRGC as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), while Canada has listed it under its Criminal Code terrorism framework. Parliamentary bodies and governments in the United Kingdom and various European Union member states have publicly acknowledged the IRGC's terrorist conduct and have debated or implemented restrictive measures targeting its activities.²³ On 29 January 2026, European Union Foreign Ministers decided to designate the IRGC as a terrorist organisation.²⁴ This follows a call on the EU by the European Parliament on 22 January 2026 *"to proceed without delay with the full designation of the IRGC, including the Basij militia and the Quds Force, as terrorist organisations"*.²⁵ Australia's approach therefore aligns with that adopted by its fellow democracies in treating state-directed terrorism as subject to legal accountability.

ASIO Director-General, Mike Burgess, explicitly recognised the evolving threat environment and the specific risks it poses to the Australian Jewish community in the 2025 annual threat assessment, and again during a Senate Estimates hearing on 25 February 2025, when he stated:

"In terms of threats to life, [antisemitism is] my agency's number one priority because of the weight of incidents we're seeing play out in this country.

*I don't believe we've done that in our history, certainly not in my six years as director general... It's the volume of incidents that we are dealing with."*²⁶

This challenging environment with unpredictable actors operating transnationally, a proliferation of disinformation and misinformation, a rapid expansion in online technologies and their reach, and novel and evolving terrorist ideologies, necessitates an approach that is as close as possible to a uniform approach with allied nations. This extends to the treatment of state sponsors of terrorism such as the IRGC.

Legal and policy justification for maintaining the listing

Maintaining the IRGC's listing is both legally justified and operationally necessary. The listing enables law enforcement and intelligence agencies to disrupt financial, logistical, and associative networks connected to the IRGC before additional violence occurs. The listing also sends a clear deterrent signal that Australia will not tolerate foreign-directed violence against Australian communities.

It is the ECAJ's view that removing the listing in the face of established evidence of IRGC coordination or involvement in antisemitic attacks in Australia would signal that state actors can engage in terrorism on

²³ Ardavan M. Khoshnood, 'The Islamic Republic of Iran's use of criminal intermediaries for extraterritorial assassinations and covert violence: a gray zone strategy of outsourced repression', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 3 Sept 2025, available at: [Full article: The Islamic Republic of Iran's use of criminal intermediaries for extraterritorial assassinations and covert violence: a gray zone strategy of outsourced repression](#)

²⁴ 'EU labels Iran's Revolutionary Guards a terrorist organisation in policy shift', *ABC News*, 30 January 2026: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-01-30/eu-designates-iran-revolutionary-guard-a-terror-organisation/106285596>

²⁵ European Parliament resolution of 22 January 2026 on the brutal repression against protesters in Iran (2026/2565(RSP)) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/301897/TA-10-2026-0023_EN.pdf

²⁶ Moore, Hannah, 'ASIO boss Mike Burgess declares antisemitism agency's top priority in terms of threats to life', *News.com.au*, 26 February 2025, available at: <https://www.news.com.au/national/politics/asio-boss-mike-burgess-declares-antisemitism-agencys-top-priority-in-terms-of-threats-to-life/news-story/f3587554ecbeb9f36e4759976fa0b997>.

our soil with impunity. Such an outcome would undermine the integrity of Australia's counterterrorism framework and weaken protections for vulnerable communities.

Conclusion

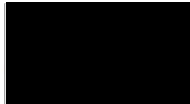
For the reasons set out above, ECAJ submits that the listing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a State Sponsor of Terrorism should be maintained. The evidence demonstrates a clear, continuing, and state-directed risk posed by the IRGC to the safety of the Australian Jewish community and, more broadly, to Australian society. The listing is proportionate, consistent with international best practice of several allied states, and essential to Australia's capacity to prevent and respond to state-sponsored terrorism.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of our response further.

Yours sincerely



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