

## The Festive Season and Security Risks – Aspects of the Same Virus

As Australia transitions out of the [COVID-19 crisis](#) and into the festive season, it is evident that many organisations have yet to accept the changing threat context. [Crisis fatigue](#) and disruption to the marketplace and the workplace are factors that have contributed to this situation.

There are business leaders and asset managers who are reflecting on how security services are valued, procured, delivered and managed. Experiences from COVID-19 have encouraged a re-think about traditional security services and systems in a pandemic and terrorism prone world.

Unfortunately for clients of security services, many security companies have failed to re-evaluate and update their governance, risk assessments and training to ensure that their service delivery is aligned to changing client contexts i.e. managing the pandemic, (cautiously) transitioning out of the pandemic crisis and now moving into the festive season. Security companies, especially those providing security personnel on site, need to be re-energised and genuinely poised to meet the security challenges. New performance agreements and perhaps replacing security personnel may need to be considered.

In conjunction with the joy and goodwill that naturally comes with the festive season, there is the additional joy related to an improving economy, 'social distancing' becoming further relaxed and interstate travel resuming. Commercial and government facilities will be increasingly re-occupied and transit systems, shopping centres, clubs and places of worship will become more crowded. In the new year, students and staff will return to university campuses. ['Crowded places'](#) are now returning as a predictable staple in the Australian community. Managers of crowded places need to prioritise fresh assessments of their security vulnerabilities and resilience against current and emerging security threats.

Recent terrorist attacks in crowded places overseas (including by right wing extremists) demonstrate that the intentions of terrorists have not waned. Leveraged by social media, terrorist attacks inspire like-minded people around the world who are sympathetic to terrorist ideologies and who have a propensity for violence.

It is wise to accept the intentions by terrorists have never disappeared, just frustrated by COVID. Australia is not immune from terrorism. For example, it was only in November this year that a man was sentenced in New South Wales to a maximum of 16 years for planning an imminent terrorist attack.

We suggest that you read our blog posted for the [previous festive season](#). There are important issues and practical recommendations that remain highly relevant and should be considered now.

It is also time to revisit the [Australian Government's guidance relating to terrorism](#). Please contact us if you would like to discuss.

We predict more organisations in 2021 will demand greater clarity on their security risks and seek fresh, innovative risk management solutions including maximising the benefits of Artificial Intelligence and IoT (Internet of Things) based security and [related systems](#).

There is a strong relationship between business resilience and security risk management and between business success and reasoned risk taking.

From our team, we wish you and your families joy and safety for the holiday season and a prosperous and healthy 2021. We thank you for the trust that you place with us.

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