

Public information fact sheet

National Counter-Terrorism Alert System

What is the Alert System?

- The National Counter-Terrorism Alert System is a range of four levels (low, medium, high, extreme) that communicate an assessed risk of terrorism to Australia.
- The National Counter-Terrorism Alert System guides national preparation and planning. It also dictates levels of precaution and vigilance to minimise the risk of a terrorist incident occurring.
- The Australian Government Counter-Terrorism Committee regularly reviews alert levels, based on assessments of the threat environment.

What's changing?

- The four levels (low, medium, high, extreme) will remain the same; the difference is in how they are applied across the nation.
- The difference is that Australian governments will now be able to change an alert level in a targeted way, without any significant impact to non-affected communities, industry/business sectors or locations.

Why is it changing?

- The previous approach required a “one in, all in” approach. If an alert level was changed for one community, geographic location or sector it would be changed for all.
- The previous approach, while comprehensive, could be expensive and onerous for communities not at risk, particularly if requiring an increase in security systems.
- The increases in security and resources required to maintain a higher alert level can impact on a community's ability to maintain core business, keep critical infrastructure operating and maintain public confidence.

What are the benefits?

- The new Alert System will reduce unnecessary disruptions to everyday life. Impacts will be avoided in communities, locations or sectors not affected by the alert level change.
- Australian governments will now be able to change an alert level in a selective way, such as for one or more impacted communities, locations or sectors as required.

Who will communicate a change in alert level?

- A change in alert level(s) will be communicated by the Prime Minister or representative. The Chief Minister will provide more information specific to the Territory.

How does it apply to me?

- While the new System may not directly affect your day to day life, it is important that you are aware that these arrangements exist. All Australian governments are committed to ensuring that you can have confidence in Australia's ability to respond to any terrorist risk or situation.

Need more information?

- For more information about the process behind changing alert levels, please go to www.nationalsecurity.gov.au.