

Media Release



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TERRORISM RELATED CHARGES

Seventeen people have been arrested in Melbourne and Sydney as a result of a joint counter-terrorism operation involving the Australian Federal Police (AFP), NSW Police, Victoria Police, the NSW Crime Commission and Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO).

The men have been charged with a range of offences including sections of Commonwealth legislation that have not been previously used, relating to being a member of a terrorist group, conspiring to commit a terrorist act and directing a terrorist organisation.

The arrests follow the execution of 22 search warrants across Sydney and Melbourne this morning where officers seized a range of material including unidentified substances, firearms, travel documents, computers and backpacks.

AFP Deputy Commissioner John Lawler said: “By working collaboratively Australia's law enforcement and intelligence agencies have managed to disrupt the alleged activities of this group and therefore protect the Australian community from a potential terrorist threat.”

Police have arrested eight people in New South Wales this morning after executing warrants at homes in Lakemba, Belmore, Wiley Park, Greenacre, Illawong, Punchbowl, Hoxton Park, Condell Park, Ingleburn, Belfield, Bankstown and Kemps Creek. Nine people were also arrested in Victoria following the execution of warrants on homes in Dallas, Hoppers Crossing, Fawkner, Preston, Haberfield, Coburg, Yarraville, Meadow Heights, Hadfield, and Mount Druitt.

All have been charged under the Criminal Code Act 1995. The charges include Acts in Preparation of a Terrorist Act, being a member of a of a Terrorist Group, Conspiracy to Commit a Terrorist Act and one man has been charged with Directing a Terrorist Organisation.

“Today’s arrests follow a lengthy operation where law enforcement and intelligence agencies have been monitoring and investigating the activities of a group allegedly intent on carrying out what we assess as some sort of terrorist act in Australia, said NSW Police Commissioner Ken Moroney.

“It will be alleged in court that following months of discussion individuals had moved to the point of planning some sort of activity including the purchase of potentially dangerous materials,”

Police have urged anyone with information they believe may be connected to this operation to contact Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000 or the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400.

“People may have seen something suspicious around their home or work place and we are keen to hear from anyone with information, despite how insignificant it may seem, said Victorian Police Commissioner Christine Nixon.

Those charged are due to appear in Sydney and Melbourne courts later today.

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