



# JOINT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



10 May 2017

## (U//FOUO) **White Supremacist Extremism Poses Persistent Threat of Lethal Violence**

### (U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This *Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB)* is intended to provide new insight into the targeting preferences of white supremacist extremists and the state of white supremacist extremism violence in the United States. This *JIB* is provided by the FBI and DHS to support their respective activities and to assist federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government counterterrorism and law enforcement officials and private sector security partners in deterring, preventing, or disrupting terrorist attacks in the United States.

IA-0154-17

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## (U//FOUO) **White Supremacist Extremist Movement Continues to Pose Threat of Violence to US Law Enforcement**

(U//FOUO) We assess lone actors and small cells within the white supremacist extremist (WSE) movement likely will continue to pose a threat of lethal violence over the next year.\*† This assessment is based on a review of lethal and potentially lethal incidents of WSE violence from 2000 to 2016 and the often spontaneous and opportunistic nature of these acts that limits prevention by law enforcement.

### (U) **Opportunistic Targeting of Minority Groups Typical of WSE Violence**

(U//FOUO) We judge the opportunistic nature of WSE attacks and the use of edged and other weapons instead of firearms likely contributed to the relatively low number of fatalities in 2016 compared to previous years (see Figure 1). WSEs committed one lethal and five potentially lethal attacks in 2016. All six attacks involved the opportunistic targeting of racial or religious minorities, including Hispanics, African-Americans, a Chinese student, and one person perceived to be Jewish. Distinct from previous years, attackers in these incidents showed a preference for edged weapons over firearms.

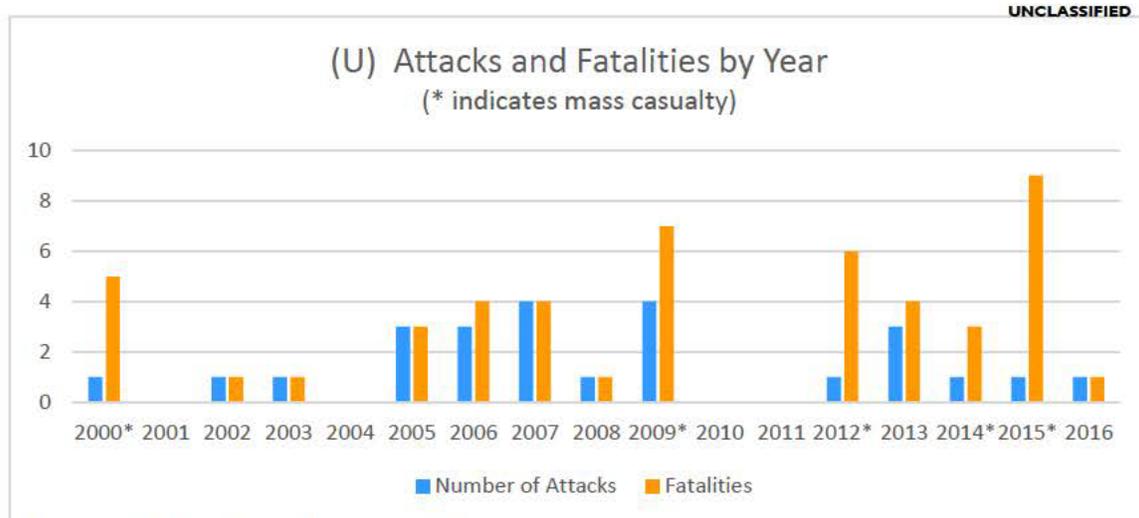
- » (U//FOUO) On 18 February 2016, a WSE allegedly attacked an 18-year-old Chinese student with a hatchet while she was taking photos for a school project in Nashville, Indiana. The victim survived the attack but suffered two-inch deep lacerations on her back. According to court documents, the suspect self-identified as a white supremacist and stated he wanted to kill the student because of her race.<sup>1</sup> The individual is currently in custody awaiting trial.
- » (U//FOUO) On 28 February 2016, three WSE members of a local racist skinhead group were arrested on multiple counts of felonious assault with a deadly weapon and one count of felonious assault with force likely to cause injury after they allegedly attacked a group of Hispanic men with knives in a Los Angeles County park. According to open source media reports, the three suspects allegedly yelled racial slurs before assaulting the victims. All three suspects are currently awaiting trial.<sup>2</sup>
- » (U//FOUO) On 21 August 2016, local authorities arrested a self-identified WSE for allegedly murdering an African-American male with a knife in Fort Wayne, Indiana, due to the victim's race, according to open source media reporting.<sup>3,4,5</sup>
- » (U//FOUO) On 3 December 2016, local authorities arrested two WSEs for allegedly stabbing another Klansman multiple times following an argument in an East Yanceyville, North Carolina, residence. According to law enforcement sources, the suspects accused the

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\* (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define a lone actor as an individual acting alone or without the witting support of others to further social or political goals, wholly or in part, through activities that involve unlawful acts of force or violence. Lone offenders may act within the context of recognized domestic extremist ideologies, their own interpretation of those ideologies, or personal beliefs. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophical embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected activities.

† (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define white supremacist extremists as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to support their belief in the intellectual and moral superiority of the white race over other races. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected activities.

victim of being Jewish and secretly working for law enforcement; they were charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill or inflict serious injury. They are currently being held in jail awaiting trial.<sup>6</sup>



**(U) Figure 1: Attacks and fatalities by Year**

(Source: Derived from incident data collected from FBI investigations, other law enforcement reporting, and open sources.)

(U//FOUO) There were no mass-casualty attacks in 2016, although there was one plot to commit mass-casualty violence, which attests to the ongoing threat of such violence from the WSE movement.\* In this instance, the plotter, a juvenile, allegedly planned to target racial and religious minority classmates using firearms.

- » (U//FOUO) On 7 October 2016, local authorities disrupted a plot by a WSE who allegedly planned to conduct a shooting at a high school in Hilliard, Ohio. The suspect was arrested following a local law enforcement investigation that uncovered specific planning, including explosives research, weapons and equipment pricing, recruitment efforts, and a map indicating where to effectively place shooters. The suspect's phone contained Nazi imagery, images associated with white supremacy ideology, information about school shootings, and language advocating for killing Jewish persons and African-Americans. The individual remains in custody pending further legal actions, according to open source media reporting.<sup>7</sup>

### (U) 2016 Violence Diffuse among Ideological Factions

(U//FOUO) The perpetrators of WSE lethal and potentially lethal violence in 2016 included members of racist skinhead groups, Klan members, and individuals who lacked group affiliations.†

\* (U) For purposes of this bulletin, "mass-casualty violence" refers to criminal acts or plots in which an individual or group actually or clearly intended to (a) kill three or more people, or (b) cause grievous bodily harm to ten or more people (cf. 18 USC § 530C(b)(1)).

† (U//FOUO) The WSE movement is experiencing widespread infighting and a lack of charismatic leadership, which have made it difficult for groups to organize nationally and sustain their memberships and influence. In addition, the Internet, including the emergence of social media, has enabled individuals to engage the WSE movement without joining organized groups.

One of these attacks also involved a suspected WSE who was a member of a racist prison gang and acted without direction or sanction of the gang. The ideology apparent in the motivation behind this attack represents a departure from usual racist prison gang activity, whose members typically pursue organized criminal activity for purposes of financial gain.

- » (U//FOUO) On 16 August 2016, a WSE allegedly stabbed an African-American man in Olympia, Washington, after seeing him kiss a Caucasian woman outside a restaurant. The victim survived the attack. The suspect stated to police upon his arrest that he was part of a white supremacist group and had come to fight “Black Lives Matters people.” The individual is a member of a Washington State-based racist prison gang and is currently in jail, charged with two counts of second-degree assault with a deadly weapon and one count of malicious harassment, according to FBI reporting.<sup>8</sup>

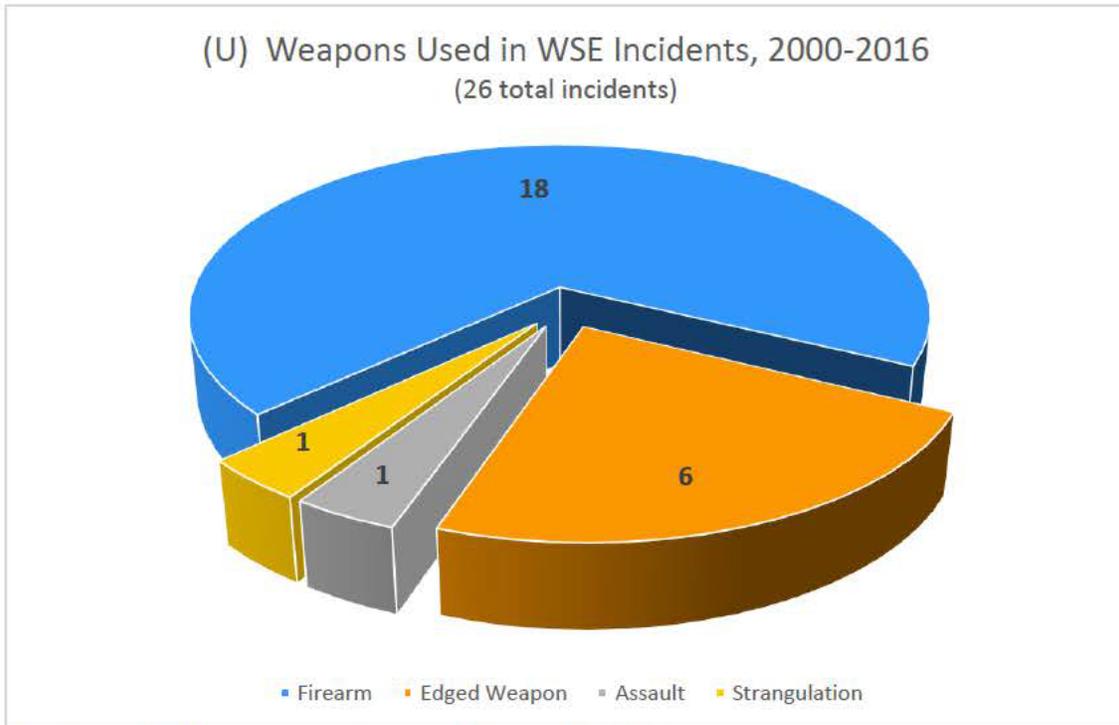
**(U) Motivations of Racist Prison Gang Members**

(U) The FBI and DHS label racist prison gangs as profit-driven organizations that lack the ideological objectives of WSE groups. Racist prison gangs, for example, may tolerate associations with minority gangs in furtherance of their criminal business enterprises. Despite the tendency of racist prison gang members to prioritize financial gain over ideology, members have occasionally targeted minorities for ideological reasons.

**(U) Perspective**

(U//FOUO) WSEs were responsible for 49 homicides in 26 attacks from 2000 to 2016 (see Figure 1), more than any other domestic extremist movement. WSEs used firearms in most of these lethal incidents, which were typically mass-casualty attacks. Knives and other edged weapons caused the second-most fatalities (see Figure 2).<sup>9,10,11</sup>

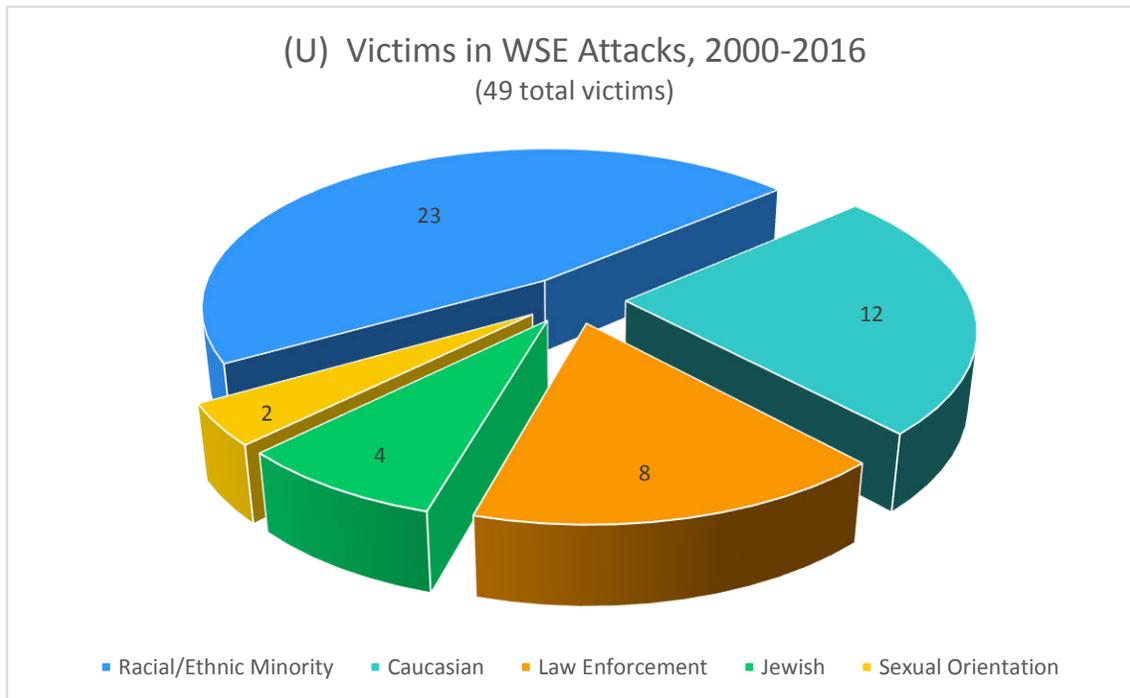
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**(U) Figure 2: Weapons used in WSE incidents, 2000-2016**  
 (Source: Derived from incident data collected from FBI investigations, other law enforcement reporting, and open sources.)

(U//FOUO) A review of incidents since 2000 shows racial minorities have been the primary victims of WSE lethal violence (see Figure 3). The second most common victims were other Caucasians, including the homeless, drug dealers, sex offenders, and other white supremacists perceived as disloyal to the WSE movement. Adherents of the WSE movement view these persons as legitimate targets, as they pose a threat to, or reflect poorly on, the white race. Other targets have included persons or facilities associated with government and law enforcement.

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(U) **Figure 3: Victims in WSE attacks, 2000-2016**

(Source: Derived from incident data collected from FBI investigations, other law enforcement reporting, and open sources.)

### (U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) We assess most WSE lethal violence over the next year very likely will derive from the capabilities of lone offenders or small cells, rather than the resources of larger groups, due to the decentralized and often disorganized status of the WSE movement. Although plot-derived mass-casualty violence remains possible, we judge it more likely that violence will continue to be spontaneous and involve targets of opportunity. Despite a lack of shooting attacks in 2016, firearms likely will continue to pose the greatest threat of lethal violence by WSEs due to their availability and ease of use.

### (U) FBI and DHS Resources about Active Shooter Situations

(U) Both FBI and DHS maintain resources on the Internet that provide information on active shooter scenarios:

- » (U) **FBI:** <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/fbi-releases-study-on-active-shooter-incidents>
- » (U) **DHS:** <http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>

**(U) Source Summary Statement**

(U) Domestic extremist incident data collected for this intelligence bulletin from 2000–2016 was derived from FBI investigations, court documents, and open source reporting; the FBI and DHS deem these sources to be credible and reliable.\* The open source reporting was current as of 17 February 2017. As the ideological motivations behind a criminal action are often underreported, ambiguous, or unclear, multiple sources help provide the corroboration necessary to make the case for an incident being an act of domestic extremism. When available, statements made by the subjects, as transcribed in court documents, were particularly helpful in identifying the ideological motivations behind white supremacist extremist violent attacks and plots.

**(U) Report Suspicious Activity**

**(U) To report suspicious activity, law enforcement, Fire-EMS, private security personnel, and emergency managers should follow established protocols; all other personnel should call 911 or contact local law enforcement.** Suspicious activity reports (SARs) will be forwarded to the appropriate fusion center and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force for further action. For more information on the Nationwide SAR Initiative, visit <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/resources.aspx>.

**(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response**

(U//FOUO) Information contained in this intelligence bulletin is for official use only. No portion of this bulletin should be released to the media, the general public, or over nonsecure Internet servers. Release of this material could adversely affect or jeopardize investigative activities.

(U) For comments or questions related to the content or dissemination of this document, please contact the FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section by email at [FBI\\_CTAS@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:FBI_CTAS@ic.fbi.gov) or the I&A Production Branch by e-mail at [IA.PM@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:IA.PM@hq.dhs.gov).

(U) Tracked by: HSEC-8.2, HSEC-8.3, HSEC-8.4, HSEC-8.5

<sup>1</sup> (U); Online news article; CBS News; "FBI Investigating Indiana Hatchet Attack as Hate Crime"; 26 February 2016; <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/fbi-investigating-indiana-hatchet-attack-as-hate-crime/>; accessed on 14 February 2017;.

<sup>2</sup> (U); Online newspaper article; *The New York Times*; "3 Men Charged with Hate Crimes in Attack on Hispanics in California"; 4 March 2016; <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/05/us/hate-crime-charges-lake-los-angeles-california.html>; accessed on 14 February 2017.

<sup>3</sup> (U); Online news article; WANE News Channel 15; "White Supremacist Admits to Fatal Stabbing, Charged with Murder"; 14 October 2016; <http://wane.com/2016/10/14/white-supremacist-admits-to-fatal-stabbing-charged-with-murder/>; accessed on 15 February 2017.

<sup>4</sup> (U); Affidavit for Probable Cause; Allen Superior Court; *State of Indiana vs. Aaryn Snyder*; 27 September 2016.

<sup>5</sup> (U//FOUO); FBI; Electronic Communication; 44F-IP-7108692, serial 1; 24 February 2016; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

<sup>6</sup> (U); Online newspaper article; *The New York Times*; "Two Klan Leaders are Charged in a NC Stabbing"; 7 December 2016; <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/us/klan-grand-dragon-arrest-stabbing-north-carolina.html>; accessed on 15 February 2017.

\* (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define domestic extremists as individuals based and operating entirely within the United States or its territories without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group or other foreign power who seek to further political or social goals, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

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- <sup>7</sup> (U); Online newspaper article; *The Columbus Dispatch*; "Hilliard Davidson Student Planned School Shooting, Prosecutors Charge"; 11 October 2016;  
[http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2016/10/11/Hilliard\\_plot.html](http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2016/10/11/Hilliard_plot.html); accessed on 15 February 2017.
- <sup>8</sup> (U//FOUO); FBI; Electronic Communication; 266N-SE-2071205-INTELPRODS, serial 2; 18 October 2016;  
“(U//FOUO) Individual Information Sheet: Daniel Brett Rowe”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.
- <sup>9</sup> (U); FBI; Graphic; 25 April 2016; 2000-2015; “(U) Victim Fatalities Caused by Domestic Extremists, 2000-2015”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a finished intelligence product depicting results of FBI incident analysis.
- <sup>10</sup> (U); FBI; Intelligence Study; 11 August 2015; 2014; (U) *2014 National Intelligence Study: Domestic Extremism Continues to Pose a Medium-Level Threat*; pp. 7-8; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a finished intelligence product.
- <sup>11</sup> (U); FBI; Intelligence Study; 14 November 2016; (U) *2015 National Threat Report: Domestic Extremism Poses Medium-Level Threat*; pp. 7-8; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; Source is a finished intelligence product.



**Homeland Security**

Office of Intelligence and Analysis

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|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Observe, identify, and/or disrupt threats   | <input type="checkbox"/> Initiate your own regional-specific analysis   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share with partners   | <input type="checkbox"/> Initiate your own topic-specific analysis      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allocate resources (e.g. equipment and personnel)                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop long-term homeland security strategies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reprioritize organizational focus   | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not plan to use                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Author or adjust policies and guidelines  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/>                    |

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