A CSG ANALYSIS
OF REPORTED ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS
IN AUSTRALIA IN 2020

COMMUNITY
SECURITY GROUP

Sign at COVID-related protest, Melbourne, 30 May 2020

This publication is a specialist analysis by the Community Security Group. It is different in purpose and scope to that of the Annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia which is researched and published by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), the elected national representative body of the Australian Jewish Community. The ECAJ Antisemitism Report is a comprehensive report of antisemitic incidents and public comtisemitic discourse in Australia. This publication, authored by the Community Security Group, complements the ECAJ Antisemitism Report and provides additional analysis specifically of antisemitic incidents that have been reported to the various Community Security Groups and other relevant security bodies in Australia for use in the provision of security protection to the Australian Jewish Community. Because they serve different purposes, the ECAJ Antisemitism Report and this publication cover different time periods and apply different collection methods and different classifications of incidents.

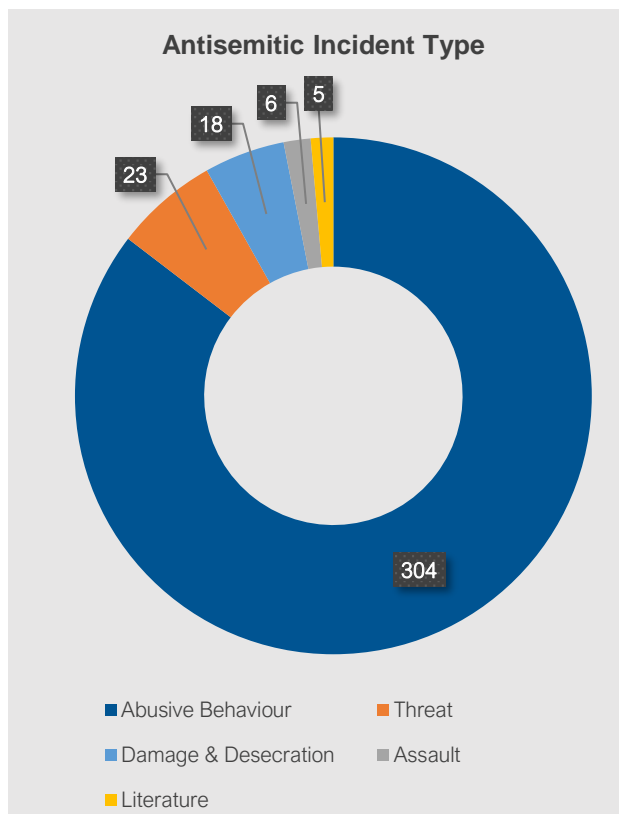# CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report will statistically review antisemitic incidents in the 2020 calendar year reported to the Community Security Group (CSG) across Australia. This is the third published report by CSG on antisemitic incident statistics, albeit CSG has been recording antisemitic incidents since its inception.

CSG recorded 356 antisemitic incidents in Australia in 2020. This is 21% lower than the 451 antisemitic incidents reported to CSG in 2019 but 3.8% higher than the 343 antisemitic incidents reported to CSG in 2018. The decrease in antisemitic incidents reported to CSG in 2020 is likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic during which Jewish communal activity either ceased or significantly decreased for substantial periods throughout the year across Australia as a result of government restrictions and 'lockdowns', particularly in New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria. Whilst there was a decrease in the number of incidents recorded, figures from 2020, such as incident type and monthly breakdowns, were proportionally similar to 2019, demonstrating a consistent pattern of antisemitic activity in Australia.

The cause of the decrease in antisemitic incidents in 2020 is not attributed to a decrease in the level of antisemitism in Australia. Affiliate groups around the world have recorded similar decreases in antisemitic incidents in 2020 attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, amidst a backdrop of rising antisemitism globally. Likewise, authorities and research institutes have recorded general increases in extremist and antisemitic rhetoric throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly online. Notably, whilst CSG recorded a 21% decrease in antisemitic incidents, some incident types increased, such as incidents involving extreme right discourse, which increased by 13%.
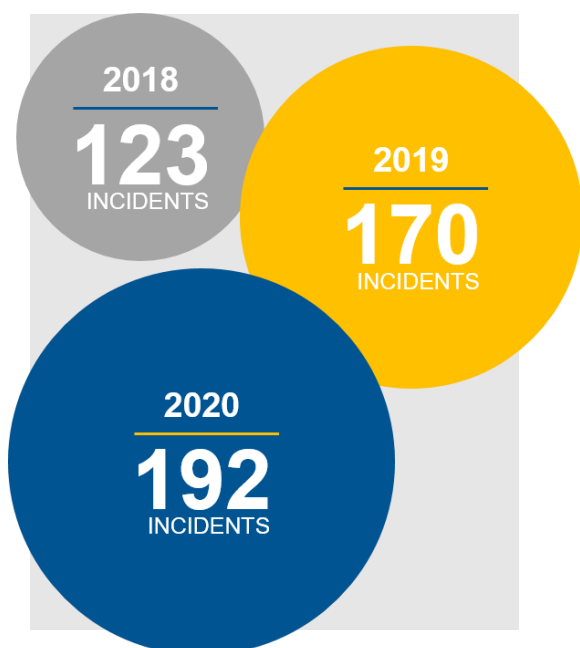
KEY FINDINGS

- The single highest category of antisemitic incident reported was abusive behaviour at 304 incidents (85.4%), followed by 23 threats (6.5%), 18 incidents of damage and desecration (5.1%), 6 assaults (1.7%) and 5 incidents of literature (1.4%).

Antisemitic Incident Type

- Abusive Behaviour
- Threat
- Damage & Desecration
- Assault
- Literature

- NSW experienced the highest reported antisemitic incidents at 220 (61.8%), followed by 86 incidents in Victoria (24.2%), 24 in Queensland, 18 in Western Australia, 3 in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), 3 in South Australia, 2 in Tasmania and no incidents reported in the Northern Territory.

- The highest recorded target location of antisemitic incidents was public places, with 161 incidents reported (45.2%), followed by 66 incidents at Jewish organisations (18.5%), 62 incidents at Synagogues (17.4%), 25 incidents at a Jewish private residence, business or property (7%), 25 incidents at Jewish schools (7%) and 17 at private property (4.8%).

- CSG recorded 23 threats in 2020, which included a threat to conduct a shooting at multiple Synagogues, a number of direct threats made towards identifiably Jewish individuals and threats made to security personnel standing outside of Jewish communal sites. This represents a 15% decrease compared to the 27 incidents of this type reported in 2019.

- CSG recorded 6 assaults in 2020, which represents a 50% decrease from the 12 incidents of this type recorded in 2019. Four of the 6 assaults reported in Australia targeted identifiably Jewish individuals, whilst 2 assaults involved school children. Assaults included physical violence and projectiles.

- CSG recorded 304 incidents of abusive behaviour, which represents a 16% decrease from the 362 incidents recorded in 2019. This also represents 86% of total antisemitic incidents in 2020.

- CSG recorded 18 incidents of damage and desecration to Jewish property, which represents a 42% decrease from the 31 incidents reported in 2019. In 10 of these incidents, the target was a Synagogue; 4 occurred at a Jewish private residence, business or property, 3 at Jewish schools and 1 at private property.

- An average of 30 antisemitic incidents were reported every month in 2020, a decrease from an average of 38 incidents per month in 2019, consistent with the overall decrease in antisemitic incidents in 2020.

- Extreme right discourse was reported in 192 incidents, constituting 54% of all antisemitic incidents reported to CSG. This figure is 13% higher than the 170 incidents reported with extreme right discourse in 2019, despite the fact that CSG recorded a 21% decrease in antisemitic incidents in 2020. This is a further increase from the 140% increase reported between 2018 and 2019, consistent with the rise of the extreme right more broadly. Extreme right discourse includes neo-Nazi discourse or symbology, such as Sieg Heil gestures and swastika graffiti.

Extreme Right Discourse: 2018-2020

- A notable portion of incidents took place during the Jewish Sabbath or festivals. A total of 58 incidents were reported during the Sabbath, representing 16% of all antisemitic incidents, whilst 18 incidents occurred during Jewish festivals, comprising 5%. Six percent of all antisemitic incidents also occurred during the Jewish High Holy Day period (18 September 2020 – 11 October 2020).

- Thirteen incidents involved schoolchild victims, of which 7 occurred at Jewish schools, 4 at non-Jewish schools, 1 in an 'other public area' and 1 during out of school sport.

- A total of 4 offenders were charged, comprising 1.1% of all antisemitic incidents. Note, a large portion of antisemitic incidents do not constitute criminal offences and reporting of this statistic varies state by state.

- Police were notified of 182 antisemitic incidents, constituting 51% of all reported antisemitic incidents. Separately, CSG was notified of 43 incidents by law enforcement, 14 of which had not been previously reported.

- In addition to the 356 antisemitic incidents reported to CSG in 2020, a further 366 reports of suspicious activity were made to CSG. One hundred and forty of these reports were passed onto law enforcement, representing 38% of total suspicious activity reports. In total, the CSG workforce reported, processed and assessed 880 incident reports, as part of CSG's role in the provision of security protection to the Australian Jewish Community. This equates to an average of 2.4 incidents per day in 2020.

It is highly likely that there is under-reporting of antisemitic incidents to CSG and law enforcement in Australia. As a result, the number of antisemitic incidents is likely higher than recorded in this report. CSG encourages the Jewish Community to report these incidents in future through the CSG Alert app or the CSG national emergency, advice and assistance hotline on 1300 000 CSG (274) and to local police.

ABOUT CSG

The Community Security Group (CSG) oversees the specialised and specific security needs of the Jewish Community in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia; these organisations work closely with their associated Jewish Community Council or Jewish Board of Deputies, under the auspices of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ). In each representative state, CSG works closely with government and law enforcement to ensure oversight of the Jewish Communities' security and emergency management programs and policies.

DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS

CSG defines an antisemitic incident as any malicious act aimed at Jewish people, organisations or property, where there is evidence that the act has antisemitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are or are believed to be Jewish.[1]
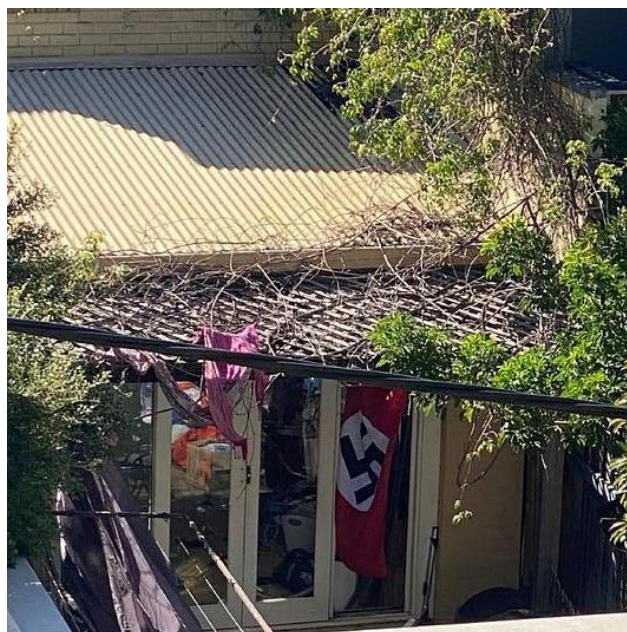
Antisemitic motivation, language or targeting must be demonstrated for the incident to be classified as antisemitic. This definition is not dictated by Commonwealth or state legislation, with both non-criminal and criminal incidents included in this report.

The general activities of antisemitic organisations have not been included in this statistical assessment, as these activities are far-ranging, significantly unpublicised and, in some cases, so voluminous that the data would be substantially and improperly skewed.

Antisemitic incidents may occur in a variety of forms, including physical force against people or property, verbal or written abuse and antisemitic posters, leaflets or stickers. A large amount of antisemitic activity also takes place online, particularly on social media platforms. CSG statistically records all formally reported antisemitic online activity but excludes proactively located antisemitic material. Antisemitic incidents online are recorded only when the victim and/or the offender is located in Australia.

Incidents that are strictly anti-Israel are not classified as antisemitic. However, incidents containing some anti-Israel component have been classified as antisemitic where the incident has involved antisemitic discourse, evident antisemitic motivation and/or the targeting of a victim because they are, or are believed to be, Jewish or associated with the Jewish Community.

An incident involving neo-Nazi symbology, specifically including the swastika, is categorically considered antisemitic where there is an intended public audience or victim.

Nazi flag raised several hundred metres from a Synagogue, Sydney, 19 April 2020.

---

[1] CSG has based this publication on the model of the Community Security Trust's (CST) annual and biannual publication on antisemitic incidents; 'Antisemitic Incidents Report 2020', Community Security Trust, 2021.
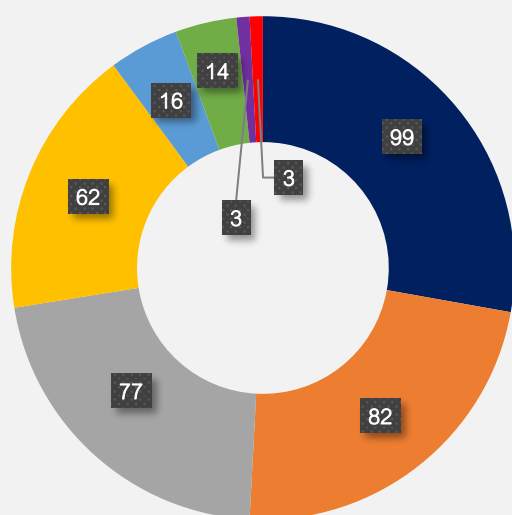
REPORTING

Antisemitic incidents are reported to CSG from an array of sources, including from victims and their family or friends, witnesses, the CSG workforce, third party commercial security guards operating at Jewish sites, other Jewish organisations and law enforcement agencies.

The highest reporter type to CSG in 2020 was victims in 99 incidents (28%). Seventy-seven incidents were additionally reported by witnesses, not victims, comprising 22%, whilst family or friends of the victim as well as other representatives of the victim were each the reporter in 3 incidents, both comprising 1% respectively.

The second highest reporter were other Jewish organisations, making 82 reports which comprised 23% of all antisemitic incidents. This was closely followed by CSG personnel who reported 62 incidents, representing 17%. Commercial third-party security personnel also reported 16 antisemitic incidents (5%).

CSG notified police of 182 antisemitic incidents (51%), whilst law enforcement separately reported 43 incidents to CSG, 14 of which had not been previously reported.

Incident Reporting by Reporter Type

- ■ Victim
- ■ Other Jewish organisation
- ■ Witness not victim
- ■ CSG Staff/Volunteers
- ■ Commercial third-party security
- ■ Law enforcement
- ■ Family/friend of victim/witness
- ■ Other representative of victim/witness

REPORTING METHOD TO CSG

There are a number of channels through which reports of antisemitic incidents can be made to CSG. CSG has a dedicated 24/7 emergency, advice and assistance hotline, in addition to a smartphone application and website. Reports are also made through the CSG Control Room, by email and by phone call.
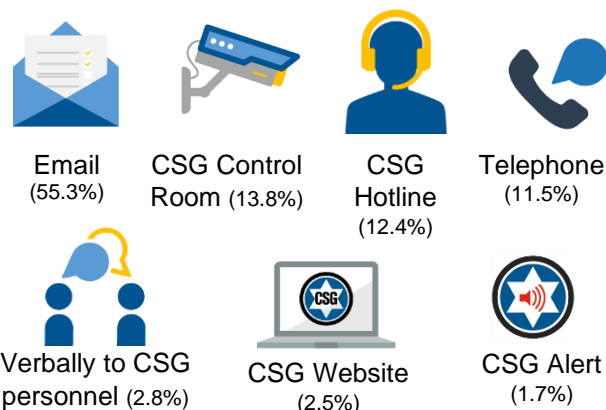
The most used reporting channel in 2020 was email, in 197 incidents, comprising 55.3% of all incidents reported. Second to email, 49 incidents were reported to the CSG Control Room (13.8%), 44 to the CSG emergency, advice and assistance hotline (12.4%) and 41 by telephone call (11.5%). A further 10 reports were made verbally to CSG personnel (2.8%), followed by 9 reports to the CSG website (2.5%) and 6 reports via the CSG Alert app (1.7%).

CSG staff have undergone specialist training to professionally respond to, assess, record and triage antisemitic and other security incidents, and provide specific security and incident advice to victims and witnesses. CSG respects the wishes and needs of incident victims, including victim confidentiality and liaison with law enforcement.

CSG encourages members of the Australian Jewish Community to report incidents through the CSG Alert application or hotline as preferred reporting methods.

Under-reporting of antisemitic incidents is not confined to the Australian public, with a 2019 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights finding that '80% of surveyed young Jewish Europeans who experienced an incident of antisemitic harassment, and 51% of those who experienced an incident of antisemitic violence in the year prior to the survey, did not report it to an authority.[2]

Methods of Reporting to CSG

Email (55.3%)   CSG Control Room (13.8%)   CSG Hotline (12.4%)   Telephone (11.5%)

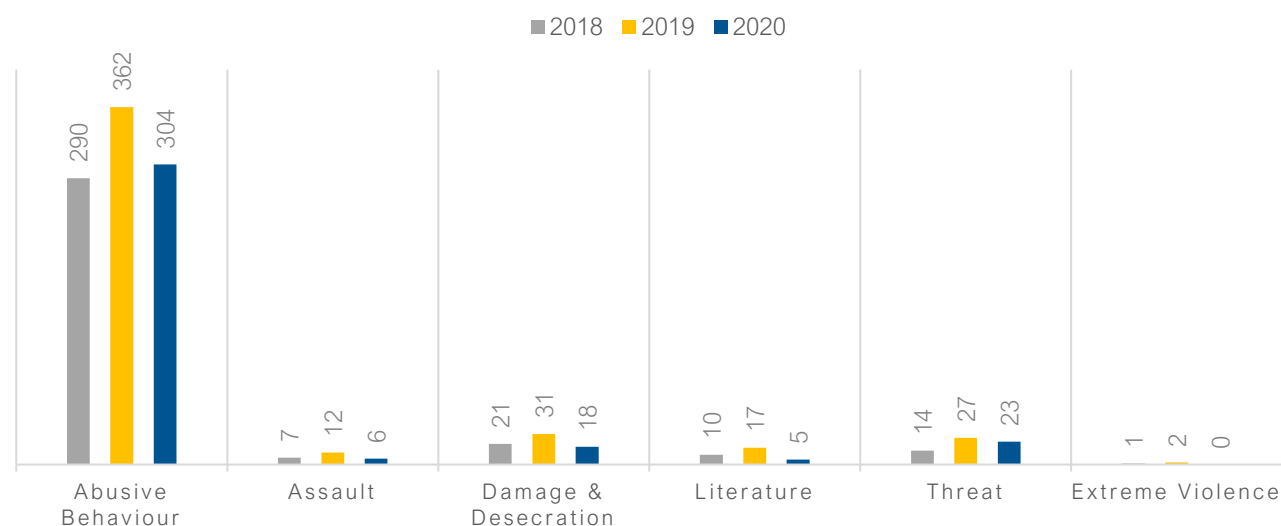Verbally to CSG personnel (2.8%)   CSG Website (2.5%)   CSG Alert (1.7%)

---

[2] https://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/FRA-JPR_-_Young_Jewish_Europeans_-_perceptions_and_experiences_of_antisemitism_.pdf (page 21).

INCIDENT CATEGORIES

Antisemitic incidents are classified into six categories: extreme violence, assault, threat, damage and desecration, abusive behaviour and literature.[3]

Antisemitic Incident By Category: 2018-2020

■2018 ■2019 ■2020

Category	2018	2019	2020
Abusive Behaviour	290	362	304
Assault	7	12	6
Damage & Desecration	21	31	18
Literature	10	17	5
Threat	14	27	23
Extreme Violence	1	2	0

EXTREME VIOLENCE

Extreme violence is considered the most severe category of antisemitic incident and is defined as any attack potentially causing loss of life or grievous bodily harm.

There were no recorded acts of extreme violence in Australia in 2020, compared to 2 incidents in 2019 and 1 incident in 2018.

---

[3] 'Antisemitic Incidents Report 2020' CST, 2021, page 22. These are categories adopted by the CST in their classification of antisemitic incidents in the United Kingdom.
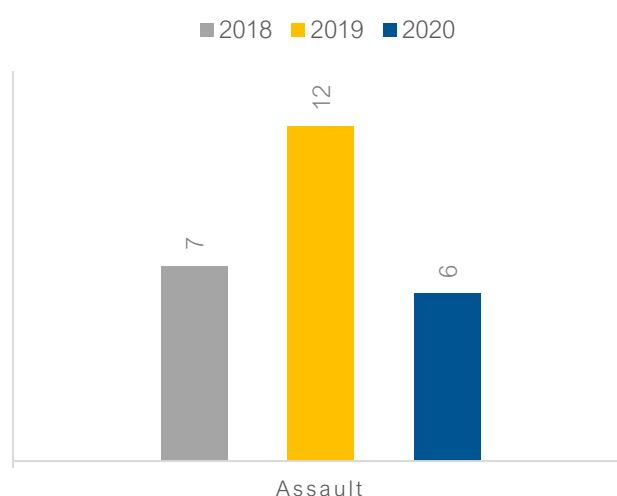
ASSAULT

Assault is defined as any actual or attempted physical attack against a person that constitutes actual bodily harm or common assault. This includes violent use of force, chasing a target with a perceived intention to cause harm and projectiles, even when the target is missed.

Six assaults were reported to CSG in 2020, a 50% decrease to the 12 assaults reported in 2019. This also compares to the 7 assaults reported in 2018. Four of the 6 assaults reported targeted identifiably Jewish individuals, whilst 2 of the 6 assaults targeted Jewish persons walking to or from Synagogue; 1 assault involved security personnel. Similar to 2019, most assaults occurred in Victoria (3), whilst 1 assault each occurred in NSW, ACT and Western Australia. In 3 of the 6 assaults reported, victims were or included minors. Assaults included physical violence and projectiles.

Examples:

- A Jewish family was verbally abused and had an object thrown at them by a group of men sitting in a vehicle near a Jewish school (Perth, 15 May 2020).

- A minor approached a Jewish facility and began verbally abusing Jewish Community members, calling them 'stupid Jews' and saying that she was going to 'blow this place up'. She proceeded to throw rocks at the entrance of the facility, breaking four windows, before approaching security personnel, spitting at them and threatening them with a stick. She stated that she was here because she 'hate[d] f-cking Jews' (Melbourne, 2 July 2020).

- A student sprayed an aerosol can in the face of a Jewish student, aged 14, at an ACT independent school and said, 'I am gassing you', 'gas the Jews' and 'I want to gas you all', after having said, 'My great-grandfather was in the SS'. The incident was witnessed by approximately 20 other students (Canberra, 28 October 2020).

- A Jewish student, aged 14, was called a 'dirty Jew', spat on and pushed at a Victorian public school. The perpetrators spat on his locker and 'jingle[d] money in their pockets when they passed him'; they had also stated that if 'money was left at the end of the running track, the Jewish boy would run faster'. On a separate occasion, the Jewish student received a number of threats made by telephone and through the social media platform Snapchat. In March 2020, two of the perpetrators entered the classroom where the Jewish boy was studying and 'smacked' him on the head multiple times, before pushing his belongings off his desk. In April 2020, the Jewish student was attacked and robbed by five of the perpetrators outside of school hours. Note, this incident is in addition to the incident(s) which were reported at the same Victorian public school in 2019 (Melbourne, 2020).

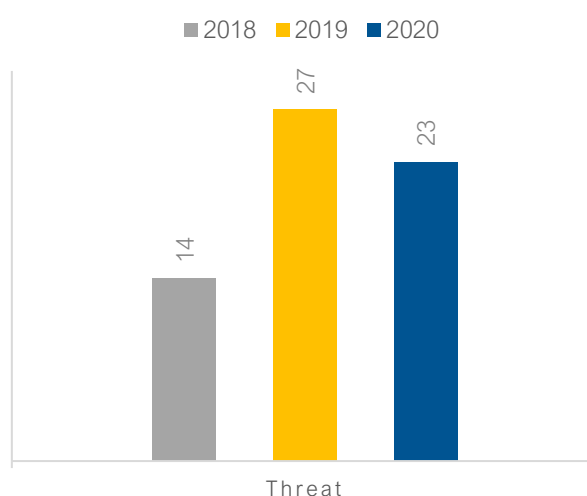### Assaults: 2018-2020

■2018 ■2019 ■2020

THREAT

Threats are defined as any directly communicated intent to inflict a violent or hostile action. A threat may be verbal, written or physical, including hoax improvised explosive devices (IEDs) where the item does not actually contain any dangerous or hazardous material. A threat is distinct from general abuse in that there is a direct insinuation of future violent or hostile action towards people and/or property.

Twenty-three threats were reported to CSG in 2020, constituting a 15% decrease of this type of incident compared to 2019. Three threats targeted identifiably Jewish individuals, whilst 1 threat was directed towards security personnel standing outside Jewish communal sites. Ten threats occurred in a public place, 5 at a Synagogue, 4 at a Jewish organisation, 3 at a Jewish private residence, business or property and 1 at private property. Six threats involved extreme right discourse, whilst 4 threats involved Islamist discourse.

Examples:

- A driver on a public street yelled 'f-cking Jew' towards an identifiably Jewish individual, before showing his middle finger and gesturing to slit his throat. The driver then opened the boot of the vehicle and pointed to a medium-sized silver box, before saying 'kill all the Jews' (Melbourne, 28 February 2020).

- A threat to conduct a mass shooting at a Synagogue and livestream the incident was made on an online social media platform (Sydney, 7 March 2020).

- Three specific and separate threats to conduct a mass shooting at specific Synagogue(s) and/or commit a violent attack were sent via email to two Rabbis and a prominent Jewish individual (Sydney, 27 April 2020).

- A woman approached security personnel outside of a Synagogue and threatened to spit on them, 'slap [them] across the jaw' and 'take [their] gun' (Sydney, 6 June 2020).

- A man on a tram yelled 'You f-cking Jews, we're coming to gas you' and 'Do you want a punch up? Come here for a punch up' at two identifiably Jewish individuals (Melbourne, 27 June 2020).

- A student, aged approximately 16, repeatedly asked teachers at a NSW public school if they were Jewish, and that if they were, 'he was going to kill them because he is a Nazi' (NSW, 9 July 2020).

- A man yelled at a Jewish father and son walking on a public street, shouting 'What are you looking at Jew dogs? Stop staring at me c-nts. If you keep looking at me, I'm gonna smash your f-cking faces in you Jew dogs [sic]' (Melbourne, August 2020).

- An individual made death threats whilst verbally abusing a group of congregants leaving a Synagogue (Perth, 4 December 2020).

Threats: 2018-2020

■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020

14   27   23

Threat

DAMAGE AND DESCERATION TO JEWISH PROPERTY

Damage and desecration is defined as any adverse material act against Jewish-owned property or property perceived to be associated with Jews. The act must be directed against property, with no potential harm to people. This category includes antisemitic graffiti, vandalism, postering and hacking.

Eighteen incidents of damage and desecration were reported to CSG in 2020. This represents a 42% decrease from the 31 incidents recorded in 2019, close in range to the 21 incidents of this type recorded in 2018. Incidents included 1 act of arson, 9 acts of vandalism, 5 acts of stickering and 3 acts of graffiti. Vandalism included defacing of Jewish symbology at a Synagogue as well as intentional damage to CCTV cameras and other security infrastructure. Eight incidents targeted a Synagogue, whilst 5 targeted a Jewish private residence, business or property, 3 targeted a Jewish school, 1 occurred at private property and 1 occurred in a public place.

Fifty percent of all incidents of damage and desecration involved extreme right discourse, similar to the 45% recorded in 2019. This included 6 swastikas spray-painted, carved, burned or materially placed on Jewish property and 3 stickers promoting neo-Nazi ideology or groups. Incidents were geographically spread, with 6 occurring in Victoria, 5 in NSW, 4 in Western Australia, 2 in Queensland and 1 in Tasmania.

Examples:

- Graffiti including a swastika and the words 'Sig Heil' were found inside of a Jewish school (Melbourne, 21 January 2020).
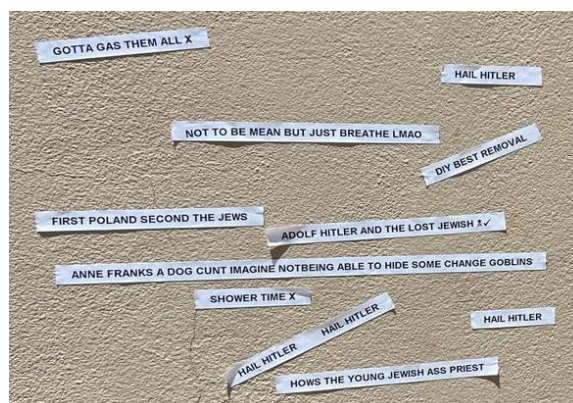

- A Star of David located on the gates of a Synagogue was defaced (Launceston, 18 January 2020).

- Vandalism which included swastikas and other offensive content occurred at a predominantly Jewish golf club (Melbourne, 19 May 2020).

- A large black swastika was painted on the footpath directly outside of a Synagogue (Sydney, 24 May 2020).

- A neo-Nazi sticker was placed on the front gate of a Synagogue; on a separate occasion, a neo-Nazi sticker was placed on a pole in front of the same Synagogue (Brisbane, 14 June 2020 & 16 August 2020).

- Four minors yelled 'F-ck you' and indecipherable abuse towards a Jewish school, before attempting to gain entry to the premises and intentionally damaging a sign on a gate (Sydney, 5 September 2020).

- A Jewish art installation constructed for the festival of Succot was damaged and vandalised with the phrase, 'Is this were they practiced blood libel on kidnapped children?' (Melbourne, 24 November 2020).

- A number of stickers were placed on the wall of a Synagogue which included 'Gotta gas them all x', 'Hail Hitler', 'Shower time x' and 'Anne Franks a dog c-unt imagine notbeing able to hide some change goblins [sic]'. One of the minors also performed a 'Sieg Heil' gesture during the interaction (Sydney, 29 November 2020).

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Abusive behaviour is defined as insulting or offensive antisemitic activity. The behaviour may be directed towards a victim or be broadly offensive and may include verbal or written abuse and antisemitic gestures.

Abusive behaviour constituted the largest category of reported antisemitic incidents in 2020, similar to 2018 and 2019. CSG recorded 304 reports of abusive behaviour, comprising 85% of all antisemitic incidents. This represents a 16% decrease in incidents of abusive behaviour since 2019. Whilst a lower number of incidents was recorded, the proportion of incidents of this type comprising the total antisemitic incident tally was similar to 2019 (80%), demonstrating that incidents of abusive behaviour continue to constitute the vast majority of antisemitic incidents.

Once again, verbal abuse constituted the largest type of abuse, with 76 incidents reported, comprising 25% of all incidents of abuse. Thirty-two (40%) of these reports targeted uniformed security personnel standing outside of Jewish communal sites, most of which occurred in NSW (81%), whilst 25 incidents of verbal abuse targeted identifiably Jewish individuals (33%). Seven incidents of abuse targeted Jewish persons walking to and from a Synagogue or Jewish event (9%). Further, 24 incidents (32%) of verbal abuse involved extreme right discourse, which included phrases shouted at Jewish persons including 'Heil Hitler', whilst four incidents involved Islamist discourse, which included rhetoric such as 'Allahu Akbar' directed towards security personnel standing outside of Jewish communal sites. All incidents of verbal abuse which involved Islamist discourse occurred in NSW, whilst 11 of the 20 (55%) incidents of verbal abuse reported in Victoria contained extreme right discourse.

In addition to verbal abuse, there were a reported 54 incidents of antisemitic graffiti, 44 incidents of abuse on social media, 21 antisemitic emails, 19 incidents of antisemitic gestures, 18 incidents of antisemitic stickering, 13 antisemitic letters, 11 antisemitic phone calls, 5 incidents of antisemitic vandalism and 3 antisemitic web enquiries.

Fifty-three incidents of abuse occurred on the Jewish Sabbath and/or during a Jewish festival period, constituting 17%. Forty-six incidents (15.1%) targeted a Synagogue, 60 incidents (19.7%) targeted a Jewish organisation, 21 incidents (6.9%) targeted Jewish schools and 17 incidents (5.6%) targeted a Jewish private residence, business or property. One hundred and forty-seven incidents (48.4%) occurred in a public place and 13 incidents (4.3%) occurred on private property.

One hundred and seventy-two (57%) incidents of abuse involved extreme right discourse. This figure is higher than the 145 incidents which involved extreme right discourse in 2019, notwithstanding the decrease in incidents of abuse reported in 2020. Notably, 18 of the 21 (86%) incidents of abuse reported in Queensland involved extreme right discourse. Across Australia, 11 incidents of abuse involved Islamist discourse.

Most incidents of abuse occurred in NSW, with 193 incidents reported, whilst 72 occurred in Victoria, 21 in Queensland, 12 in Western Australia, 3 in South Australia, 2 in the ACT and 1 in Tasmania.

Abusive Behaviour 2020

| Verbal Abuse 76 incidents | Antisemitic Graffiti 54 incidents | Abuse via Social Media 44 incidents | Antisemitic Emails 21 incidents | Antisemitic Gestures 19 incidents |

| Antisemitic Stickering 18 incidents | Antisemitic Letters 13 incidents | Antisemitic Phone Calls 11 incidents | Antisemitic Vandalism 5 incidents | Antisemitic Web Enquires 3 incidents |

Examples:

- A man spat on the door of a Jewish museum and yelled, 'F-cking Jews, f-cking c-nts' (Sydney, 7 January 2020).

- Two swastikas were spray-painted in green and red in a suburb with a substantial Jewish population (Sydney, 2 February 2020).
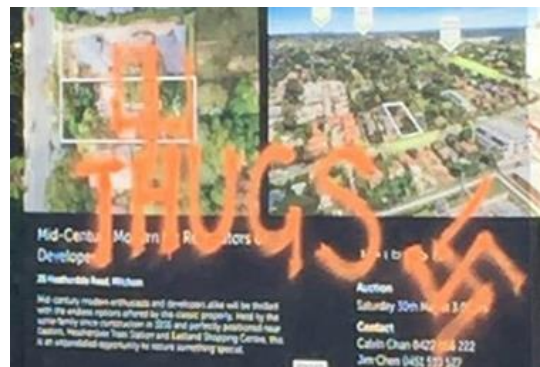

- Two individuals walking past a Synagogue performed 'Sieg Heil' salutes. They were heard speaking about 'Jewish money and world control' and attempted to enter the premises (Brisbane, 17 March 2020).

- Graffiti which included a swastika and the words, 'Hitler still lives in our hearts', was etched into a footpath (Sydney, 22 March 2020).

- A non-Jewish individual received a call from an unknown individual asking if he wanted to 'execute some Jews' (Melbourne, 23 May 2020).

- A female was observed with large purple swastikas drawn on her cheeks. She was observed at the same location on a separate occasion performing a 'Sieg Heil' gesture towards oncoming traffic. In another instance, she approached volunteer Jewish paramedics, most of whom were identifiably Jewish, and called them 'pigs' (Sydney, May-June 2020).

- Antisemitic graffiti was spray-painted on a public street (Melbourne, 10 June 2020).

- A social media user posted a comment on a Jewish organisation's social media page, 'yes i would luv to see them Jews … publicly HUNG so we can spit on this jewish filth [sic]' (Sydney, 19 June 2020).

- A Jewish organisation received a letter which contained antisemitic discourse such as 'Wats up u queer kikes so do u suck balls on the court or the gas chamber [sic]' and 'Oops that's a double burn u hooked nose bagel eating queer k-kes [sic]' (Melbourne, 10 August 2020).

- A Jewish business received a number of phone calls from an individual who said 'die Jews' and 'go to the gas chambers at Auschwitz' (Melbourne, 6 September 2020).

- Antisemitic graffiti reading, 'Kill the Jews', was found at a number of locations in suburbs with substantial Jewish populations (Sydney, 2020 – see below).
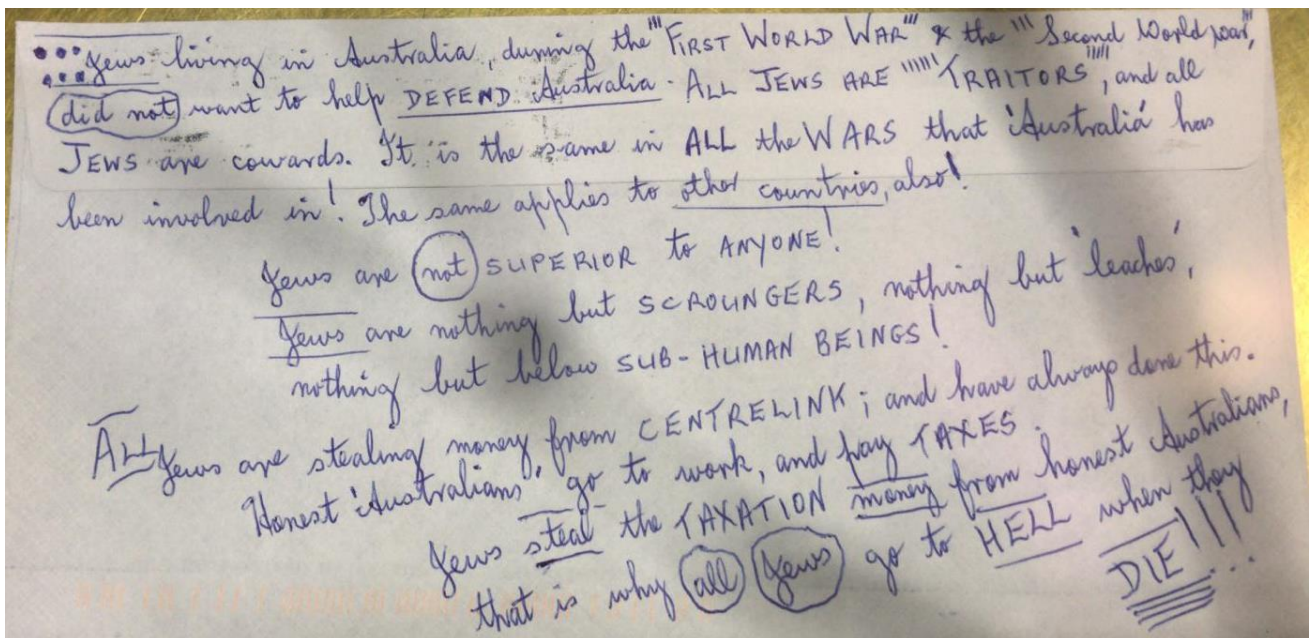
LITERATURE

Literature is defined as antisemitic literature that is distributed in multiple quantities, with each piece identical in content. It is often applicable in incidents of mass produced antisemitic posters and stickers that are widely distributed over a geographic area, or identical antisemitic emails or letters sent to multiple recipients. A distribution, therefore, is counted as one incident to reflect that it is one act by one offender or group. This also prevents inflating statistics.

Five incidents of literature were reported in 2020, reflecting a 71% decrease from the number of this type of incident reported in 2019. Three of the 5 incidents of literature involved extreme right discourse. Similar to 2019, most incidents of literature were mass dissemination of antisemitic emails. The proliferation of emails, as a modus operandi for spreading viral antisemitism, provides some indication of the nature and scope of global antisemitic sentiment, as a large proportion of these emails emanate from outside of Australia.

Example:

- A kosher supermarket received multiple letters which said, 'all Jews are traitors', 'all Jews are cowards' and 'all Jews go to hell when they die' (Sydney, July – August 2020).

ANALYSIS

INCIDENT VICTIMS

Antisemitic incidents in 2020 targeted a large cross-section of the Jewish Community in Australia, including Jewish people, sites, events and property.

Thirty-six incidents were directed at identifiably Jewish individuals and 44 incidents targeted uniformed security personnel immediately outside Jewish communal sites. The majority of these incidents involved antisemitic verbal abuse – 69% of incidents targeting identifiably Jewish individuals and 73% of incidents targeting uniformed security personnel standing outside of Jewish communal sites were that of verbal abuse. Other common types of incidents involving these victims included antisemitic gestures and threats. Nine incidents were reported by congregants walking to or from a Synagogue, although it is likely the actual number is higher due to under-reporting.

Examples:

- A man approached security personnel standing outside of a Jewish museum and said 'Heil Hitler', 'Jew security', before performing a 'Sieg Heil' salute and repeating 'Heil Hitler' and 'F-ck you' (Sydney, 25 February 2020).

- Two individuals approached security personnel standing outside of a Synagogue and imitated discharging a firearm, before yelling 'Hitler' (Sydney, 18 July 2020).

- A man verbally abused an identifiably Jewish ride-share driver, saying 'I don't like Jews, I'm not going to ride with a Jew, you Jewish scumbag, f-cking Jewish dog. I'd rather walk, f-cking dog' (Melbourne, 25 August 2020).

- A man approached security personnel during a Jewish festival and said, 'move on you f-cking Jews … you bunch of f-cking cowards (Sydney, 19 September 2020).

- A group of individuals inside a residence yelled 'Heil Hitler' towards an identifiably Jewish minor walking home from Synagogue (Melbourne, 12 December 2020).

Fifteen incidents targeted school students, 9 of which occurred at a Jewish school. Four of the 15 incidents occurred at a non-Jewish School, whilst 1 occurred in an 'other public area' and 1 occurred in out of school sport.

Examples:

- A man, who attempted to gain entry to a Synagogue, verbally abused and harassed students and Rabbis at a Jewish school on multiple occasions. Abuse included approaching a Rabbi, spitting on his vehicle and shouting, 'You are evil people, Jewish are pigs' (Sydney, January-February 2020).

- Two minors driving past a Jewish school shouted 'Heil Hitler' at a group of Jewish students from the school (Perth, 28 May 2020).

- The driver of a passing vehicle yelled 'f-cking Jews' towards parents and children at a Jewish school (Sydney, 4 June 2020).

- A Jewish student, aged 15, was subject to repeated antisemitic abuse at a public school, which included discussion about 'dissecting Jews' and classmates performing 'Sieg Heil' salutes (NSW, 9 July 2020).

- The occupants of a passing vehicle yelled 'F-cking Jews' towards security personnel and school children standing outside of a Jewish school (Sydney, 22 July 2020).

- A vehicle was observed circling a Jewish school, before the driver of the vehicle yelled 'F-cking Jews' towards staff members at the school (Sydney, 13 August 2020).

- A group of Jewish school students standing outside of a Jewish school were verbally abused by the occupants of a passing vehicle who yelled 'f-cking Jews' (Melbourne, 16 October 2020).
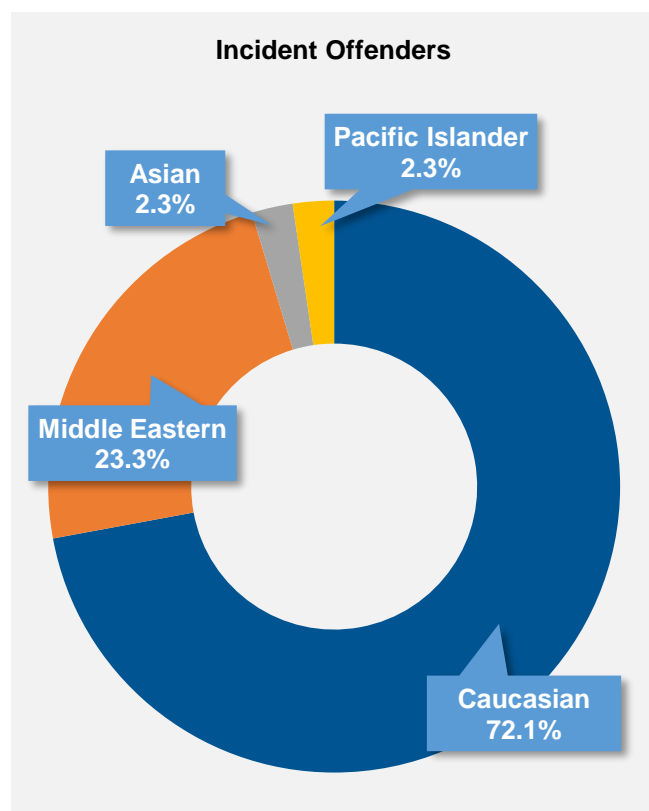
INCIDENT OFFENDERS

Where possible, CSG has recorded the age, gender and appearance of incident offenders. In 30% of incidents, the offender provided either their name, self-presented a unique identifier such as a social media profile or were already known. In 113 of the 356 incidents reported (32%), the approximate age of offenders was reported; offenders were described as minors in 11 incidents and both adults and minors in 2 incidents. Incidents involving offenders who were minors increased by more than 100% in 2020, consistent with recent findings that minors are increasingly engaging in antisemitic activity. Offenders were described as adults in 100 incidents.
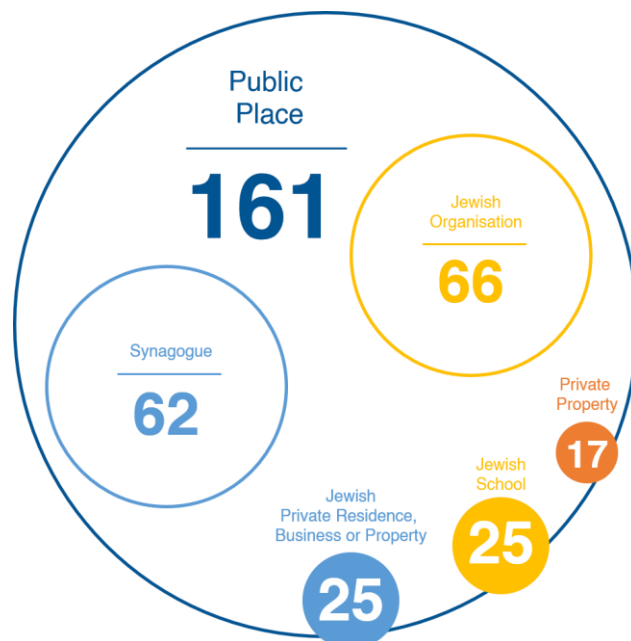
A physical description of the offender was obtained in 86 incidents (24%), with offenders described as 'Caucasian' appearance in 62 of these incidents (72.1%), 'Middle Eastern' appearance in 20 incidents (23.3%), 'Asian' in 2 incidents (2.3%) and 'Pacific Islander' in 2 incidents (2.3%).

These proportions have fluctuated very little from 2019 and 2018 and are broadly typical of a period without a significant trigger event from the Middle East.

In the 113 incidents where an offender description was obtained, 39 involved multiple offenders or groups of offenders (35%).
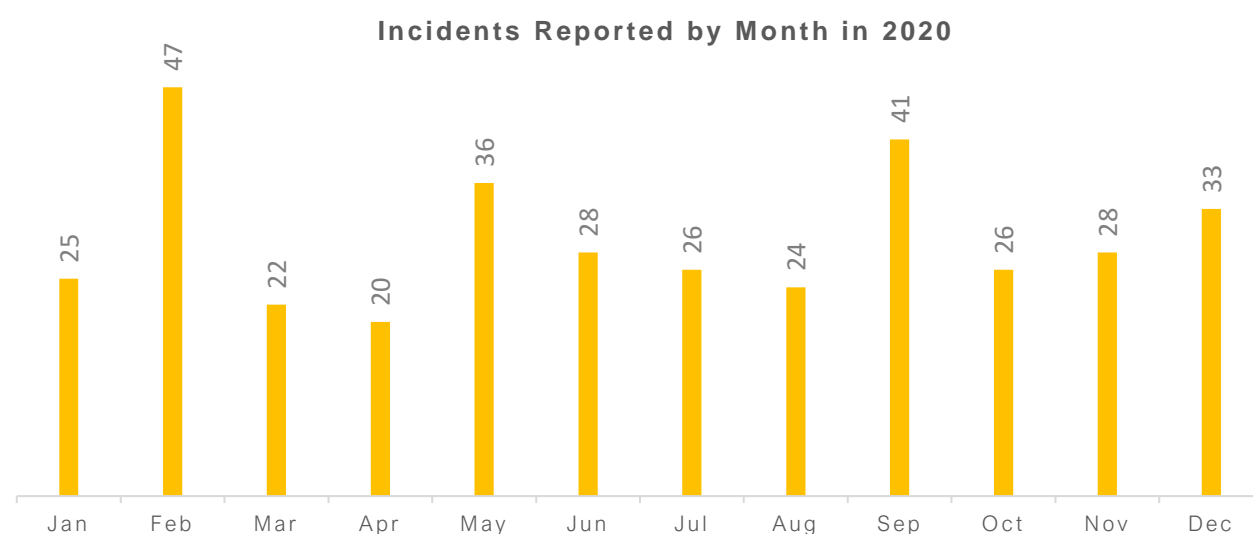
Sites Targeted

SITES TARGETED

The highest recorded target location of antisemitic incidents was public places, with 161 incidents reported (45%). This represents an 8% increase in the number of incidents in public places, notwithstanding the 21% decrease in antisemitic incidents in 2020. Such an increase is likely due to the substantial decrease in activity at Jewish communal sites during periods of government restrictions and 'lockdowns' throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in NSW and Victoria and specifically at 'places of worship', requiring hostile actors to engage in antisemitic activity elsewhere, mostly in public. This is reinforced by the decrease in antisemitic incidents specifically at Jewish communal sites.

Sixty-six incidents were reported at a Jewish organisation, representing a 28% decrease, whilst 62 incidents were reported at a Synagogue, constituting a 38% decrease. Further, 25 incidents were reported at a Jewish private residence, business or property, representing a 38% decrease. Twenty-five incidents were reported at a Jewish school, representing a 3.9% decrease and 17 incidents were reported at private property, constituting a 50% decrease.

Incident Offenders

MONTHLY BREAKDOWN

An average of 30 incidents occurred each month in 2020. The largest tallies occurred in February (47) and September (41), whilst the lowest occurred in March (22) and April (20). The spike in incidents in February is typical of that month and has been recorded previously. Notably, 57% of all antisemitic incidents which occurred in February involved extreme right discourse. This may be due to heightened extreme right rhetoric and activity in the lead up to the one-year anniversary of the Christchurch Mosque massacres. Such an increase in activity is also reflected by the arrest of two far-right men on the NSW South Coast for planning a terror attack.[4] The spike in incidents in September is likely due to increased Jewish communal activity during the High Holy Day period. By contrast, the significant fall in incidents in March and April, represented by a standard deviation of 7.8, is attributed to significantly reduced Jewish communal activity due to government restrictions and 'lockdowns' as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Incidents Reported by Month in 2020

SOCIAL MEDIA

Incidents of online antisemitism, particularly on social media, have maintained a steady composition of overall antisemitic incidents. In 2020, 52 incidents reported involved social media, comprising 15% of all incidents. Note, this figure excludes other non-physical antisemitic incidents, including antisemitic emails and phone calls. Forty-three incidents constituted abusive behaviour, whilst 8 comprised a threat. **Threats made on social media increased by 22% in 2020.**

Note, these figures only represent a marginal composition of the volume and scope of antisemitism on social media. A large amount of antisemitic content is frequently posted indiscriminately and anonymously by diverse social media users worldwide. CSG only statistically records formally reported antisemitic online activity where the victim and/or the offender is located in Australia. Proactively located antisemitic material hosted online is also excluded unless it specifically targets a Jewish site or person in Australia.

DISCOURSE

Extreme right discourse was reported in 192 incidents, constituting 54% of all antisemitic incidents reported to CSG. This is 13% higher than the 170 incidents reported with extreme right discourse in 2019, despite the fact that CSG recorded a 21% decrease in antisemitic incidents in 2020. This is further to the 140% increase reported between 2018 and 2019. Extreme right discourse includes neo-Nazi discourse or symbology, such as Sieg Heil gestures and swastika graffiti. Islamist discourse was reported in 15 incidents, representing 4% of all antisemitic incidents.

---

[4] https://www.afp.gov.au/news-media/media-releases/nsw-south-coast-man-charged-terrorism-offences.

GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

The highest number of reported antisemitic incidents occurred in NSW at 220, comprising 61.8% of all incidents. This also represents a similar proportion of incidents recorded in 2019. Eighty-six incidents were reported in Victoria (24.2%), 24 in Queensland (6.7%), 18 in Western Australia (5.1%), 3 in the ACT (0.8%), 3 in South Australia (0.8%), 2 in Tasmania (0.6%) and none in the Northern Territory.
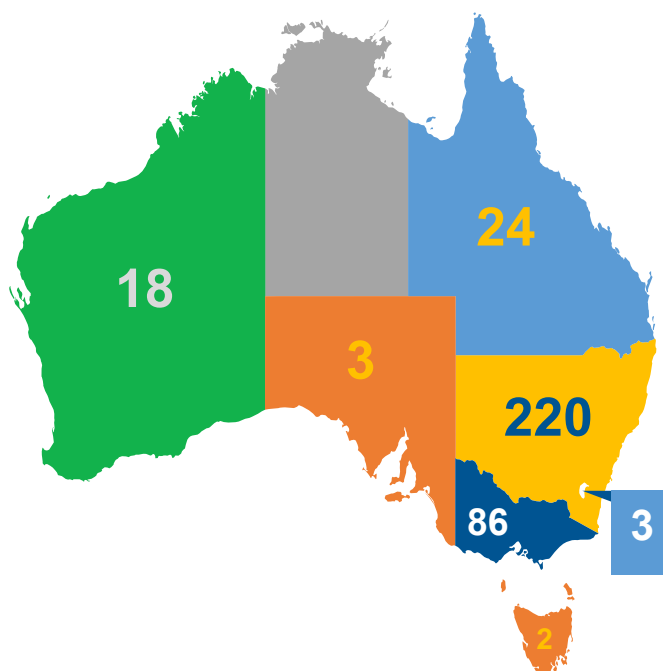
Eighty-six percent of the incidents reported in 2020 occurred in NSW and Victoria, a figure consistent with previous years. This figure closely mirrors the proportion of Jewish populations residing around Australia as 87% of the Australian Jewish Community resides in NSW and Victoria. Reported incidents per state may also be indicative of the size, dominion and reach of the CSG workforce and other representative organisations. Incidents were generally concentrated in suburbs with the highest Jewish populations.

Geographical Location of Incidents

In NSW, 108 incidents occurred in the 'Eastern Suburbs'[5], amounting to 49% of all incidents in NSW, which proportionally represents a 19% increase from 2019. This includes 40 incidents in the Bondi hub (Bondi, North Bondi, Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction). An additional 15 incidents occurred in Darlinghurst, 83% of which occurred at the Sydney Jewish Museum and organisations located at the adjoining Jewish War Memorial Building, considered Sydney's Jewish communal organisational hub. Further, 15 incidents occurred in Queens Park – all but one of these incidents occurred at one Jewish school, whilst 12 incidents occurred in St Ives, another Jewish communal hub. Ten incidents were each reported in Maroubra and Sydney CBD, mostly directed to two specific Synagogues and a school.

In Victoria, 36 incidents occurred in the combined suburbs of Balaclava, Bentleigh, Caulfield, Elsternwick, Elwood, Malvern and St Kilda East, comprising 42% of all incidents reported in Victoria. In Queensland, 13 incidents occurred in Brisbane (54%) and 8 incidents occurred on the Gold Coast (33%). In Western Australia, 56% of incidents occurred in Dianella.

The concentration of the Australian Jewish population in Australia has also meant that antisemitic incidents are generally confined to a select number of police jurisdictions. In NSW, 73% of incidents occurred in 6 Police Area Commands (PAC), with 89 incidents reported in Eastern Suburbs PAC (40%), 25 in Kings Cross PAC, 19 in Eastern Beaches PAC, 14 in Ku-Rin-Gai PAC, 9 in Sydney City PAC and 5 in North Shore PAC. In Victoria, 45% of all incidents occurred in just 3 police jurisdictions, with 28 incidents reported in Caulfield (33%) and 11 reported in St Kilda. In Western Australia, 56% of incidents occurred in the Morley Police Station area.

---

[5] The Eastern Suburbs district refers to the area allocated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics: 'Sydney – Eastern Suburbs (SA4) (118)'.
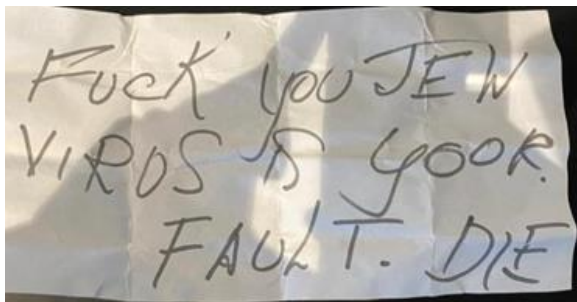
COVID-19

In 2020, CSG recorded a number of antisemitic incidents which appear directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Authorities worldwide have recorded an increase in extremist rhetoric and antisemitism, particularly online, during the COVID-19 pandemic.[6] Global crises, whether financial or health-related, historically garner heightened levels of bias attitudes towards the government and minority groups. Crises typically increase these sentiments due to disillusionment and alienation experienced amongst the general populace, as well as financial hardship and instability. This has been further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic due to prolonged periods of social isolation and disconnectedness as well as increased activity online.
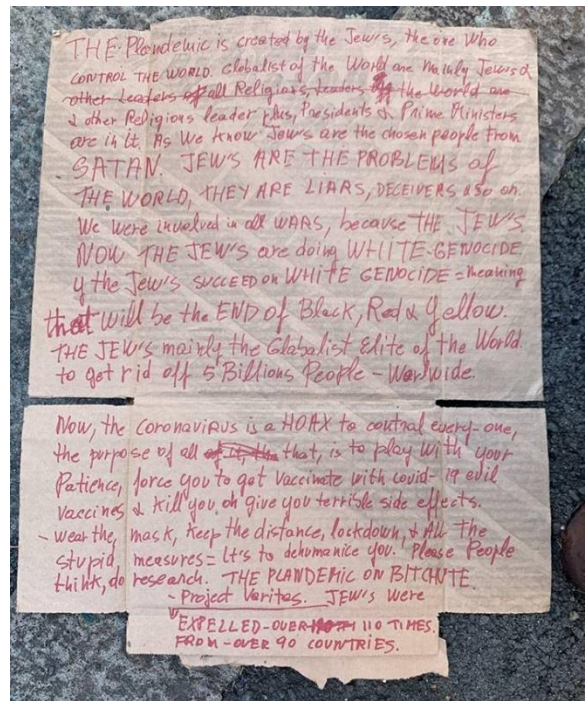
Examples:

- A female yelled abuse at members of the public, including identifiably Jewish individuals, saying 'Coronavirus is a Jewish virus … made by the wealthy', 'Coronavirus is a Zionist plot' and 'people must be warned about the Jews' (Sydney, 23 March 2020).

- An individual gained unauthorised access to a Zoom meeting hosted by Jewish individuals and yelled antisemitic, extreme right abuse, before posting pornography depicting sexual assault and other graphic content (Sydney, 1 April 2020).

- An individual gained unauthorised access to a Zoom meeting hosted by a Rabbi and shouted 'You should have been gassed, 'You should kill yourself', 'Go shave your beard' and 'Is it weird that it makes me horny when I think of Hitler killing Jews?' (Melbourne, 5 May 2020).

- A Jewish individual received a note in their mailbox saying, 'F-ck you JEW VIROS is yoor FAULT. DIE [sic]' (Melbourne, 26 May 2020).

- An individual gained unauthorised access to a Zoom meeting hosted by a Jewish advocacy group, drew swastikas on their screens and shouted 'Kill all Jews', 'Heil Hitler' and 'F-ck n-ggers' (Melbourne, 5 June 2020).

- Two individuals gained unauthorised access to a Zoom video call hosted by several Synagogues and Jewish organisations, and yelled 'F-ck Jews' (Sydney, Sunday 21 June 2020).

- A poster containing antisemitic, extreme right rhetoric which blamed 'Jews' for the COVID-19 pandemic was found on a street corner immediately nearby a Jewish museum (Sydney, 30 August 2020).

- Graffiti was spray-painted on a road reading 'stop Dan Andrews' with the letter 'A' and 'S' replaced with a Star of David and swastika respectively (Melbourne, 8 September 2020).

---

[6] https://interactives.lowyinstitute.org/features/covid19/issues/extremism/

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION

An offender was charged in 4 of the 356 (1.1%) antisemitic incidents recorded by CSG. This figure is consistent with statistics recorded previously as a significant amount of antisemitic activity does not qualify as criminal offences and not all antisemitic incidents are reported to law enforcement. All 4 incidents occurred in NSW, all offenders were adults and 3 of the 4 offenders were male. Two offenders were charged in relation to threats and 2 offenders were charged in relation to abuse.

In each representative state, CSG works closely with government and law enforcement agencies to ensure oversight of each Jewish community's security and emergency management programs and policies. Police were notified of 182 incidents (51%). Separately, CSG was notified of 43 incidents by various Australian law enforcement bodies, 14 of which were not previously reported. Bias-motivated and hate crime statistics are actively recorded by law enforcement in Australia. NSW Police recorded a total of 40 antisemitic incidents with 'hate crime involvement', of which 28 were reported by CSG NSW to NSW Police.[7]
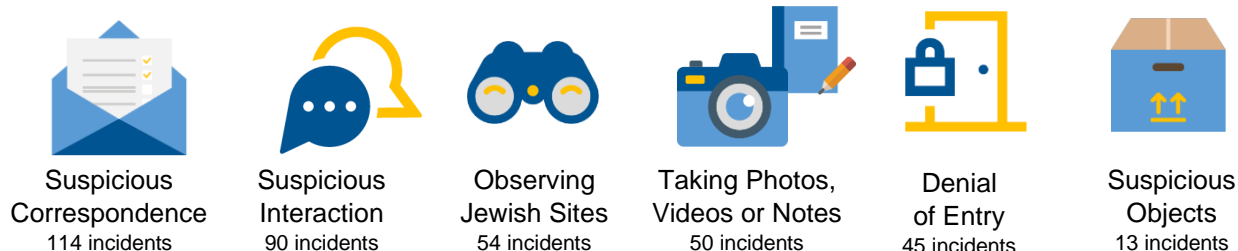
SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTS

A critical function of CSG is to identify, respond to and assess incidents of suspicious activity. This forms a vital part of CSG's role in overseeing the specialised and specific security needs of the Australian Jewish Community. Detecting and reporting potential hostile reconnaissance is critical in thwarting violent and/or planned terror activity. Individuals or groups seeking to perpetrate harm will often visit their target prior to carrying out their intended action.

Incidents in 2020, both local and worldwide, demonstrate that the threat of terrorism and violent attacks fuelled by anti-Jewish hatred remain significant to Jewish sites and persons. Seventy antisemitic terror attacks are publicly reported as planned and/or perpetrated against Jewish targets worldwide since 2012. Three hundred and sixty-six incidents of suspicious activity were reported to CSG in 2020. Whilst this figure is lower than 2019, the proportion of suspicious activity reports as a composition of all reports made to CSG is comparable – 45% of reports made to CSG in 2019 were suspicious activity reports, whilst they comprised 42% of reports in 2020.

Of the 366 reports of suspicious activity in 2020, 114 were reports of suspicious correspondence, 90 were reports of suspicious interactions, 54 were reports of persons observing Jewish sites or people, 50 were reports of persons taking photos, videos or notes, 45 were reports of persons denied entry to Jewish communal sites and 13 were reports of suspicious objects. These figures categorically represent a decrease in suspicious activity reports compared to 2019, attributed to both to a decrease in general and Jewish communal activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and variances in reporting methodology state-by-state in which reports of this nature are not always formally recorded. In total, CSG recorded, processed and assessed 880 incidents around Australia in the 2020 calendar year.

The CSG workforce has undergone specialist training in identifying suspicious indicators, enacting emergency procedures and response, collecting and assessing threat intelligence, and providing law enforcement with specific detail and evidence to assist in their identification and investigation, including closed-circuit-television (CCTV). CSG encourages communal awareness and resilience and provides training to staff at Jewish sites to recognise and report suspicious activity to CSG and law enforcement.

Suspicious Activity Categories

| Suspicious Correspondence | Suspicious Interaction | Observing Jewish Sites | Taking Photos, Videos or Notes | Denial of Entry | Suspicious Objects |
| 114 incidents | 90 incidents | 54 incidents | 50 incidents | 45 incidents | 13 incidents |

---

[7] NSW Police have not validated the data contained in this publication nor CSG's interpretation of the data.

CONCLUSION

The 356 antisemitic incidents recorded by CSG in 2020 perpetuate a consistent pattern of an historically significant number of antisemitic incidents. The 21% decrease recorded in 2020 is attributed to the significant reduction in Jewish communal activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic during which government restrictions and 'lockdowns', particularly in NSW and Victoria, limited activity at Synagogues, Jewish schools and other communal facilities for a substantial portion of the year. Affiliate groups around the world have recorded similar decreases amidst a backdrop of rising antisemitism more broadly, whilst authorities and research institutes have recorded a general increase in extremist and antisemitic sentiment throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly online. Analysis of the latter trend by CSG in this report is limited due to the fact that CSG only records incidents which are reported to them, excluding antisemitic discourse and activity that is proactively located.

Given that physical activity around Australia, particularly in NSW and Victoria, was severely restricted due to government restrictions and 'lockdowns', a 21% decrease is viewed as relatively minimal. Notwithstanding the recorded decrease, a number of figures did not decrease by the same proportion and some even increased nominally. These include recorded figures of threats and extreme-right discourse respectively, demonstrating that the composition and nature of antisemitism in modern day Australia continues to evolve.

Whilst reporting of antisemitic incidents is improving, it is expected that under-reporting persists, akin to comparable trends in the reporting of hate crime. This is particularly the case where victims are minors; where the incident is considered of 'lesser' impact by the victim; and for incidents which take place on social media. As such, the statistics and analysis contained in this report should be regarded as indicative of general trends, rather than absolute measures of the number of incidents that actually take place.

New South Wales
Phone 02 9353 1600
Email csg@csgnsw.org.au
Website www.csgnsw.org.au
App CSG Alert

Facebook
Community Security Group
NSW

Victoria
Phone 03 9519 8600
Email info@csgvic.com.au
Website thecsg.org.au/vic
App JEAP

Facebook
Community Security Group
Victoria – CSG

Queensland
Phone 0466 595 592
Email csgops@qjbd.org

Western Australia
Phone 0416 756 764
Email csg@csgwa.com.au
Website www.csgwa.com.au
App CSG Alert

Facebook
Community Security Group
WA

National 24 hour emergency response, incident reporting, advice and assistance

1300 000 CSG (1300 000 274)