

## JOINT REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER

BULLETIN

19 February 2021



## (U//FOUO) No Credible Threats Associated with 4 March 2021 Events in the JRIC AOR

*(U) Scope Note: This document summarizes key threat actors and issues of concern as of 18 February 2021 in the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) area of responsibility (AOR), to provide authorized law enforcement and/or public safety personnel designated to protect facilities, personnel, and the public from imminent threats of violent and/or criminal activity with timely information. The JRIC does not monitor, collect, or maintain information on US persons engaged in activities protected by the First Amendment.*

### (U) BOTTOM LINE

(U//FOUO) **As of 18 February 2021, the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) is not aware of any current, specific, credible violent or criminal threats to its six-county AOR related to the 2020 US Presidential elections and associated conspiracy theories that claim former US President Donald Trump<sup>USPER</sup> will be inaugurated on 4 March 2021. The JRIC assesses a low probability of significant violent or criminal activity related to electoral issues in the very near term, based upon a pattern of low-frequency, largely peaceful protest activity associated with these issues in the JRIC AOR.** However, the JRIC cannot rule out potential violence due to a heightened threat environment created by the 6 January 2021 riot at the US Capitol Building, subsequent arrests of associated individuals in the AOR, and escalating rhetoric advocating for civil unrest and armed resistance. Malign lone actors and small groups are difficult to detect and interdict, and the migration of threat actors to encrypted and dark web communication platforms limits assessment and intervention opportunities.

### (U) KEY FINDINGS

(U//FOUO) **Following the 6 January 2021 US Capitol riot, calls for additional violent or criminal activity on 20 January 2021 during the US Presidential Inauguration did not result in violence; some online promoters cancelled events, while others shifted their calls to 4 March 2021—the date on which US Presidential Inaugurations were held prior to 1933.** Some online calls for action on 4 March incorporate elements of sovereign citizen extremist (SCE) ideology and conspiracy theories. While promotion or advocacy of political resistance or fringe belief systems, including those viewed as conspiracy theories, generally fall within First Amendment-protected activity, some of this rhetoric has been cited by nefarious actors as motivating factors to conduct violent or criminal activities. **The JRIC assesses a low probability of criminal or violent activity in the AOR related to political concerns in the very near term, based upon several factors:**

- (U//FOUO) **Negative Threat Checks** | Threat checks related to possible violent or criminal activities on 4 March 2021 were negative, as of 18 February 2021.
- (U//FOUO) **Low Historic Activity** | Physical activity in the AOR related to the 2020 US Presidential Election and related conspiracy theories has been limited to small, peaceful protests, including car caravan protests. Some activity has produced minor injuries due to conflicts between protestors and counterprotestors.
- (U//FOUO) **Limited Regional Impact of Sovereign Citizen Concepts and Activity** | Some elements of current political conspiracies reflect concepts first propagated by SCEs to refute the legitimacy of US government and leadership. Historically, SCE activity in the JRIC AOR has not been associated with violence. Tax, licensing, and property disputes, spurious legal filings and lawsuits, and harassment of public officials are the most common SCE activities in the region.
- (U//FOUO) **Correlating Assessments** | Recent assessments by federal and local partners and research organizations conclude a low probability of real-world targeting or violence associated with online rhetoric.

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However, online activity—via social media platforms, community discussion boards, and encrypted messaging apps—continues, and could increase as actors attempt to maintain momentum for physical activism. Violent opportunists (VOs) are likely to increase attempts to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize individuals to act.

- (U//FOUO) **Contrary Factor** | Several individuals in the JRIC AOR have been charged in association with the 6 January 2021 US Capitol riot, and a recent study found a significant number of participants criminally charged traveled from locales in which their political views represented the minority of voters, choosing to act in Washington D.C., not locally.

### (U//FOUO) **CONSPIRACY THEORY TIED TO HISTORICAL CHANGES IN US ELECTORAL PROCESSES**

(U//FOUO) Individuals and groups seeking to contest the outcome of the 2020 US general election have called for action on key dates in the US electoral process, including 6 January 2021, the date Congress certifies the Presidential vote; 20 January 2021, the US Presidential Inauguration; and 4 March, the date on which US Presidents were inaugurated, prior to the passage of the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1933.

(U//FOUO) Some individuals have been promoting the 4 March calls for action using elements of sovereign citizen extremist (SCE) ideology that claims a secret law, passed in 1871, turned the United States and its leadership into a corporation, rendering illegitimate every US government and President since that time. According to this theory, on 4 March 2021, former US President Donald Trump<sup>USPER</sup> will be sworn in as the 19<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.

### (U//FOUO) **POTENTIAL THREATS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, PUBLIC FIGURES**

(U//FOUO) **The JRIC is not aware of any current, credible violent or criminal threats related to publically announced 4 March 2021 events, but voter doubts about the legitimacy of the outcome could prompt civil unrest, furthering violent opportunist efforts to exploit divisions and incite violence.** Domestic actors are mounting disinformation campaigns, leveraging conspiracy theories and growing political polarization to incite unrest and advocate for violence.

(U//FOUO) **The 12 September 2020 ambush shooting of two LASD Deputies underscores persistent targeting of law enforcement personnel by individuals with personal grievances, adherents of various extremist ideologies, or associated with organized criminal groups.** Social media threats against officers are common in the JRIC AOR. Doxing of specific public safety personnel, connected to officer-involved shootings, and non-specific threats against law enforcement continue to surface online.

- (U//FOUO) Law enforcement officer vehicle information and home addresses have been posted on social media accounts. Protestors in 2020 visited the personal residences of at least one doxed officer in the JRIC AOR. Unidentified actors have identified and followed law enforcement officers by exploiting displays of law enforcement affiliation or support, including “thin blue line” or “blue lives matter”-type flags, “Baker to Vegas” license plate frames, and vehicle decals.
- (U//FOUO) Numerous instances of graffiti and acts of vandalism against law enforcement vehicles and buildings have occurred. On 7 June 2020, a staked severed pig’s head was discovered amid protests in front of LAPD Rampart Division.

### (U//FOUO) **POTENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DISRUPTION**

(U//FOUO) **Government, law enforcement, healthcare, and military facilities, commercial venues, and transportation sectors remain attractive as potential targets.** Unaffiliated lone offenders, VOs, and homegrown violent extremists (HVEs) may engage in sabotage, tampering, or vandalism as part of an attack to gain access to restricted areas/materials, or provoke and observe security responses.

- (U//FOUO) UAS sightings are regularly reported in the JRIC AOR, but have not thus far significantly disrupted routine aviation or infrastructure operations. However, UAS flights have compromised public safety agency

response to active fire and rescue operations in California, including the JRIC AOR. While most UAS incidents are non-malicious, there is a growing body of events in which UAS have been used for nefarious purposes by lone offenders, violent extremists, criminals, and terrorist organizations for smuggling, aerial logistics, messaging, and attacks. Reporting of UAS-related activity in the JRIC AOR usually involves potential surveillance and reconnaissance near critical infrastructure, especially refineries, transportation facilities, chemical storage yards, and prisons and police stations.