

UNCLASSIFIED//NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

BRIC Homeland Security Bulletin

Sweden Axe Attack

BRIC



BOSTON REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER

The materials contained herein are produced by the Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC) and may contain information about significant law enforcement, public safety, or security matters involving the City of Boston as well as the Metropolitan Boston Region. The information contained herein is provided to assist in the collective efforts to ensure public safety and security in the Region. All information should be handled in accordance with BRIC labeling displayed on each document, and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law and BRIC policy. Inappropriate or unauthorized disclosure and handling of certain information may result in a violation of Massachusetts General Law or BPD / BRIC policy.

(U//NP) OVERVIEW

(U//NP) On 3 March 2021, a lone attacker armed with an axe injured 7 people, none fatally, during a roving attack on a small city in Southern Sweden. The attacker, who has yet to be identified, was shot by police before being taken into custody. Police are investigating whether the attack was an act of terrorism.

(U//NP) TACTICS & TARGET SELECTION

(U//NP) *The below assessment is based on current reporting as of late Thursday local time in Vetlanda.*

(U//NP) At approximately 3:00 PM local time yesterday afternoon, the attacker stabbed seven random people at 5 different locations in a commercial area of Vetlanda, a town of just under 15,000 people. Police arrived on scene within ten minutes and shot the suspect in the leg, effectively ending the attack. Local authorities have since divulged that the suspect is 22 years old and a citizen of Afghanistan. His motivations are not clear at this time, though the investigation continues to unfold.

[Source](#)

(U//NP) ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

(U//NP) There have been more than a dozen edged weapon attacks across Europe over the past several years tied to Islamic extremism, though none in Sweden to date. The most notable terrorist attack in Sweden was a 2017 vehicle ramming attack in Stockholm that killed five.

(U//NP) OUTLOOK

(U//NP) The BRIC has no information indicating a direct and credible threat to the MBHSR. That said, an attack of this nature is among the most serious threats to the homeland. Jihadist propaganda for the past several years has urged followers to take advantage of available weaponry, specifically knives. Attacks across Europe show that such messaging continues to resonate.

(U//NP) Please continue to report all suspicious activity to the BRIC – timely reporting may help bring criminal or terrorist activity to the attention of law enforcement before an attack takes place.

REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES TO THE BRIC AT 617-343-4328 OR BRIC@PD.BOSTON.GOV

(U//NP) SOURCES

(U//NP) "[Sweden attack: Seven hurt in Vetlanda stabbing attack](#)" *BBC*. 4 March 2021.

(U//NP) "[Sweden axe attack: Police still investigating possible terrorist motive after seven injured](#)" *EuroNews*. 4 March 2021.

UNCLASSIFIED//NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

This document does not contain CORI sensitive information, and may include information that is not meant for public disclosure; its distribution is limited to authorized recipients and must be handled in accordance with BPD / BRIC policy and guidelines. Unauthorized disclosure or improper handling of this information may result in a violation of Massachusetts General Laws or BRIC Policy which could result in the termination of one's authorization to receive BRIC information.