

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Issued by the Minister for Home Affairs

Criminal Code Act 1995

Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025

Legislative authority

Section 5 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* provides that the Governor-General may make regulations prescribing matters required or permitted by the Act to be prescribed, or necessary or convenient to be prescribed, for carrying out or giving effect to that Act.

The definition of ***state sponsor of terrorism*** in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code* provides that a state sponsor of terrorism is an entity that is specified by the regulations for the purposes of the definition.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025* (the Regulations) is to specify the entity known as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) for the purposes of the definition of ***state sponsor of terrorism*** in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code*).

The Regulations operate to specify the IRGC as a state sponsor of terrorism for the purposes of the offence provisions in Divisions 111-113 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code*.

Background

Subsection 110.3(3) of the *Criminal Code* provides that before the Governor-General makes regulations specifying an entity for the purposes of the definition of ***state sponsor of terrorism***, the ***AFP Minister*** (the Minister for Home Affairs) must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that:

- the entity is a foreign state entity; and
- and the entity, or a member of the entity has:
 - directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia; or
 - advocated the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia.

Subsection 110.3(4) of the *Criminal Code* makes clear that subsection 110.3(3) extends to conduct that took place prior to the commencement of that subsection.

The AFP Minister is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the entity, the IRGC, is a foreign state entity and has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia. In coming to the position that the IRGC meets the legislative requirements for specification, the Minister for Home Affairs has taken into consideration information prepared by relevant agencies.

Consultation

The decision that the IRGC is a foreign state entity and has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia was informed by classified and unclassified information provided by the relevant agencies.

Subsection 110.3(5) of the *Criminal Code* provides that before the Governor-General makes a regulation specifying an entity for the purposes of the definition of ***state sponsor of terrorism*** in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code*, the ***AFP Minister*** must:

- obtain the Foreign Affairs Minister's agreement in writing to the entity being specified for the purposes of that definition; and
- arrange for the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives to be briefed in relation to the proposed regulation.

The Minister for Home Affairs wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Leader of the Opposition, enclosing the unclassified information upon which he was satisfied that the IRGC meets the legislative requirements for the specification. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has provided written agreement to the specification of the IRGC. The Leader of the Opposition has been provided with the opportunity to be briefed in relation to the Regulations, consistent with the requirement in paragraph 110.3(5)(b) of the *Criminal Code*.

Impact and effect

The specification of the IRGC as a state sponsor of terrorism enlivens certain offences under the *Criminal Code*. Section 111.1 of the *Criminal Code* defines a ***state terrorist act*** as a terrorist act engaged in by a state sponsor of terrorism or a member of a state sponsor of terrorism.

Division 112 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code* sets out the following offences relating to dealings with state sponsors of terrorism:

- directing the activities of a state sponsor of terrorism;
- membership of a state sponsor of terrorism;
- recruiting for a state sponsor of terrorism;
- training involving a state sponsor of terrorism;
- getting funds to, from or for a state sponsor of terrorism;
- providing support to a state sponsor of terrorism; and
- associating with a state sponsor of terrorism.

Similarly, Division 111 and Division 113 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code* provide for criminal offences for state terrorist acts.

Detail and Operation

The Regulations are a legislative instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2003*.

The Regulations commence on the later of the day after they are registered on the Federal Register of Legislation and the day Schedule 1 to the *Criminal Code Amendment (State Sponsors of Terrorism) Act 2025* commences.

Further details of the Regulations are set out in [Attachment A](#).

A Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights has been completed in accordance with the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*. The overall assessment is that the Regulations are compatible with human rights. A copy of this Statement is at [Attachment B](#).

The Statement of Reasons is set out at [Attachment C](#).

Paragraph 54(2)(b) of the *Legislation Act 2003* (Legislation Act) has the effect that if a legislative instrument is prescribed by regulation for the purposes of that paragraph, then the instrument is exempt from the operation of sunseting under Part 4 of the Legislation Act.

The Regulations are exempt from the default 10-year sunseting period established under the Legislation Act. Item 18D of the table under section 12 of the *Legislation (Exemptions and Other Matters) Regulation 2015*, prescribes regulations made solely for the purposes of the definition of **state sponsor of terrorism** in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code* as exempt from sunseting for the purposes of paragraph 54(2)(b) of the Legislation Act.

The exemption was inserted by the *Criminal Code Amendment (State Sponsors of Terrorism) Act 2025*. The exemption reflects the enduring and serious nature of national security threats posed by state sponsors of terrorism and ensures continuity in the proscription of such entities to accurately reflect the current threat landscape. The Regulations, which specify a state sponsor of terrorism, continue in effect unless ceased through a proactive decision and action by the AFP Minister under subsection 110.5(1) of the *Criminal Code*. The Regulations remain subject to parliamentary oversight, including review by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS), which may examine the specification and make recommendations regarding its continuation or repeal. Pursuant to subsection 110.7(2) of the *Criminal Code*, the PCJIS may review the Regulations at any time and report its comments and recommendations to each House of the Parliament.

Details of the proposed *Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025*

Section 1 - Name

This section provides that the title of the Regulations is the *Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025*.

Section 2 - Commencement

This section provides for the commencement of each provision in the Regulations as set out in the table.

Subsection 2(1) provides that each provision in the Regulations, as specified in column 1 of the table, commences in accordance with column 2 of the table, and that any other statement in column 2 has effect according to its terms. Columns 1 and 2 provide that the Regulations commence in their entirety on the later of the day after the Regulations are registered on the Federal Register of Legislation and the day Schedule 1 to the *Criminal Code Amendment (State Sponsors of Terrorism) Act 2025* commences. However, the provisions do not commence at all if the commencement of Schedule 1 to the *Criminal Code Amendment (State Sponsors of Terrorism) Act 2025* does not occur.

The note below subsection 2(1) clarifies that the table only relates to the provisions of the Regulations as originally made, and will not be amended to deal with any subsequent amendments of the instrument

Subsection 2(2) provides that the information in column 3 of the table is not part of the Regulations. Information may be inserted in this column, or information in it may be edited, in any published version of the Regulations.

Section 3 - Authority

This section provides that the proposed Regulations be made under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

Section 4 - State sponsor of terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

Subsection 4(1) provides that, for the purposes of the definition of ***state sponsor of terrorism*** in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code*, the entity known as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is specified.

The specification of the IRGC as a state sponsor of terrorism extends to all its constituted elements, including the Quds Force and the Basij, as part of the entity.

The effect of specifying the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a state sponsor of terrorism is to ensure that offences in Divisions 111-113 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code* that relate to

state sponsors of terrorism can operate, where the appropriate elements are satisfied, in relation to conduct in connection with the IRGC.

Subsection 4(2) provides a lists of aliases by which the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is also known:

- IRG (paragraph (a));
- IRGC (paragraph (b));
- Islamic Revolutionary Corps (paragraph (c));
- Islamic Revolutionary Guard (paragraph (d));
- Pasdaran (paragraph (e));
- Pasdaran-e Enghelab (paragraph (f));
- Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami (paragraph (g));
- Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami (Pasdaran) (paragraph (h));
- Revolutionary Guards (paragraph (i));
- Sepah (paragraph (j));
- Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami (paragraph (k));
- Sepah Pasdaran (paragraph (l));
- the Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (paragraph (m)); and
- the Iranian Revolutionary Guards (paragraph (n)).

Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights

Prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011

Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025

This Disallowable Instrument is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*.

Overview of the Disallowable Legislative Instrument

The *Criminal Code (State Sponsor of Terrorism—Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) Regulations 2025* (the Regulations) specify the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) for the purposes of the definition of state sponsor of terrorism in subsection 110.3(1) of the *Criminal Code*.

The object of the Regulations is to specify that the IRGC is a state sponsor of terrorism under Australian law and put the organisation and members of the public on notice of that fact. Notification is important to help people avoid engaging in activities which might constitute an offence under Divisions 111-113 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code* in relation to the IRGC.

The Regulations, which are part of Australia's state sponsor of terrorism specification regime, support the application of the offences in Divisions 111-113 of Part 5.3A of the *Criminal Code*, the object of which is to protect national security, public safety and the rights and freedoms of persons within and outside of Australia. Division 111 offences criminalise conduct including engaging in, supporting, or otherwise aiding in the preparation of a state-sponsored terrorist act. Division 112 offences criminalise dealings including being a member of, associating with, directing the activities of, recruiting for, funding, providing support to, and training with state sponsor of terrorism. Division 113 makes it an offence to finance state-sponsored terrorist acts directed at Australia.

State sponsors of terrorism present a threat to the security of Australia and often seek to harm Australians and our democratic institutions. Subsection 110.3(3) of the *Criminal Code* requires, before the Governor-General makes a regulation specifying an entity for the purposes of the definition of state sponsor of terrorism, the AFP Minister to be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the entity has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia or, advocated the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia. In relation to the IRGC, the AFP Minister is satisfied that the entity has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia. In coming to this position, the AFP Minister took into consideration unclassified information provided by the relevant agencies.

Human rights implications

The Regulations promote the following human rights contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):

- the inherent right to life in Article 6

The Regulations limit the following human rights contained in the ICCPR:

- the right to freedom of expression in Article 19, and
- the right to freedom of association in Article 22.

The inherent right to life in Article 6

Article 6 of the ICCPR provides that every human being has the inherent right to life that must be protected by law. Countries have a duty to take appropriate steps to protect the inherent right to life by law. The Regulations, and the state sponsors of terrorism specification regime more broadly, ensure that the offence provisions in Divisions 111-113 of Part 5.3A of the Criminal Code apply to certain conduct in relation to state sponsors of terrorism. These offence provisions operate to penalise conduct that presents a significant risk to life, both in Australia and overseas, and, in conjunction with the state sponsors of terrorism specification regime, also act as a deterrent to that conduct. Deterring the conduct, and thereby preventing the risk to life, promotes the inherent right to life expressed in Article 6 of the ICCPR.

The right to freedom of expression in Article 19

Article 19(2) of the ICCPR provides that everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression. However, Article 19(3) provides that freedom of expression may be subject to certain restrictions where provided by law and necessary in respect of the rights or reputations of others, or for the protection of national security, public order or public health or morals. The Regulations, and the state sponsors of terrorism specification regime more broadly, limit the right to freedom of expression to the extent that persons are prohibited from directing the activities of, recruiting for, providing support to or associating with terrorist organisations, including the IRGC. The restrictions on freedom of expression are justified on the basis that such conduct could jeopardise the security of Australia, the personal safety of its population, its national interests, and the public order. Any restrictions are reasonable, necessary and proportionate to the objective of protecting Australia's national security.

The right to freedom of association in Article 22

Article 22 of the ICCPR provides the right to freedom of association with others. Article 22(2) provides that this right may be restricted where such restrictions are prescribed by law and necessary in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. The Regulations, and the state sponsors of terrorism specification regime more broadly, limit the right of freedom of association to prevent people engaging with and participating in terrorist organisations, in this instance the IRGC.

The offence of associating with a state sponsor of terrorism in section 112.7 of the Criminal Code is limited in its application to an organisation that is a specified state sponsor of terrorism under the definition of *state sponsor of terrorism* in paragraph 110.3(1) of the Criminal Code.

The offence does not apply if the association is with a close family member and relates to a matter of family or domestic concern, or takes place in the course of practicing a religion in a place used for public religious worship, or the association is only for the purpose of providing humanitarian aid or only for the purpose of providing legal advice or legal representation. Given the exemptions, the Regulations are not considered to limit the right to freedom of religion.

Due to the severity of the danger posed by terrorist organisations, it is reasonable, necessary and proportionate to limit the right of individuals who, by their association with a terrorist organisation, pose a threat to Australians.

General safeguards and accountability mechanisms

Whilst the Regulations may limit the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of association with the IRGC, the Regulations are subject to the safeguards outlined below. The limits on these rights are reasonable, necessary and proportionate, and are in the interests of public safety and national security, after taking into consideration the direct and indirect terrorist activities of the organisation, which threaten human life.

The Criminal Code provides safeguards and accountability mechanisms requiring prior consultation and enabling review of the Regulations, including the following:

- under paragraph 110.3(5)(b) of the Criminal Code the AFP Minister must arrange for the Leader of the Opposition to be briefed in relation to the proposed Regulations;
- under paragraph 110.3(5)(a) of the Criminal Code the AFP Minister must obtain the agreement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs in relation to the proposed Regulations;
- the Regulations may be reviewed at any time by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security under section 110.7(2) of the Criminal Code; and
- both Houses of Parliament may disallow the Regulations within 15 sitting days after the Regulations are laid before that House, as provided for in section 42 of the Legislation Act 2003 and noting that this period may be extended by operation of subsection 102.1A(4) of the Criminal Code if the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security reviews the Regulations.

Conclusion

The Regulations are compatible with human rights because they promote the protection of human rights. To the extent that the Regulations may limit human rights, those limitations are for a legitimate purpose and are reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

**The Hon Tony Burke MP
Minister for Home Affairs**

Statement of Reasons

Listing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a state sponsor of terrorism under Division 110 of the *Criminal Code*

This Statement of Reasons is based on publicly available information about the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The information included in this statement of reasons is not the only information considered by the Australian Government when deciding to specify the IRGC as a state sponsor of terrorism. To the Australian Government's knowledge, the information included in the public statement of reasons is accurate, reliable and has been corroborated by classified information where available.

Name of the foreign state entity

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

Known aliases

IRGC, Islamic Revolutionary Guard (IRG), Islamic Revolutionary Corps, Pasdaran, Pasdaran-e Enghelab, Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami, Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami (Pasdaran), Revolutionary Guards, Sepah, Sepah Pasdaran, Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami, the Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

Legislative basis for listing a state sponsor of terrorism

Subsection 110.3(3) of the Criminal Code states that for a foreign state entity to be listed as a state sponsor of terrorism, the AFP Minister must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the entity:

- is a foreign state entity; and
- the entity or a member of the entity;
 - has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia; or
 - advocated the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia.

Per subsection 110.3(5) of the Criminal Code, the AFP Minister must also obtain the Foreign Affairs Minister's agreement in writing to the entity being specified as a state sponsor of terrorism and arrange for the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives to be briefed in relation to the proposed regulation.

Background to the listing

The Australian Government has not previously listed the IRGC as a terrorist organisation under the Criminal Code. On 26 August 2025, the Prime Minister announced that the Iranian Government, through the IRGC, directed at least two antisemitic attacks in Australia.

The IRGC has been subject to Australian targeted financial sanctions under the *Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011* Iran framework since 7 March 2012.

Details of the foreign state entity

In 1979, the IRGC was established by decree of former Iranian Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution. The IRGC is responsible for preserving and exporting the ideals of the 1979 revolution and protecting Iran's Islamic Republic system of government.

The IRGC is an officially recognised entity in Iran's security apparatus and formally recognised in Article 150 of the Iranian constitution which states that the IRGC must be maintained to 'continue in its role of guarding the Revolution and its achievements.' The Constitution of the Revolutionary Guards, outlines the IRGC's core goal and mission 'to protect Iran's Islamic Revolution and its achievements' (Article 1), and 'struggle with agents and currents which aim to sabotage or destroy the Islamic Republican system or act against the Iranian Islamic Revolution' (Article 2).

The IRGC is a hybrid military-security institution, which maintains its own armed forces that mirrors the structure of Iran's conventional armed forces, but operates independently and reports directly to the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The IRGC is involved in both internal security operations and overseas activities.

The IRGC comprises the following main elements:

- **Quds (Qods) Force:** the Quds Force is the expeditionary arm of the IRGC, which operates as the de facto external affairs branch of the IRGC to further Iran's strategic objectives abroad. The Quds Force are responsible for military campaigns abroad and managing proxy forces located in countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and Syria, including providing them with trainings, weapons, money and military expertise. The Quds Force collects military intelligence and conducts foreign asymmetric operations against Iran's enemies. This branch of the IRGC is subject to targeted financial sanctions under Australia's autonomous sanctions framework (Iran criteria).
- **Basij Resistance Force (Basij):** the Basij is a paramilitary volunteer militia tasked with combating internal dissent, protests, surveillance and indoctrinating Iranian citizens. The Basij have been instrumental in suppressing domestic protests, particularly during the 2009 Green Movement protests and the 2022-23 protests following the death of Mahsa (Jina) Amini. Methods of suppression include street patrols, infiltrating protests to identify activists, and use of force. The Basij is also extensively present in schools and universities across Iran, relying on security elements and a vast network of informers to monitor the conduct of students and professors. The Basij is also known to form or be involved in religious, social, and community clubs in academic institutions. This branch of the IRGC is subject to targeted financial sanctions under Australia's autonomous sanctions framework (Human Rights criteria).
- **Ground Forces:** the IRGC Ground Forces, though a smaller force, is structured to mirror the Iranian Army Ground Forces, and are capable of being deployed abroad or used to combat internal dissent. The Ground Forces have been deployed to Syria in recent years in support of pro-Bashar al Assad fighters and have been deployed alongside the Basij to suppress internal protests.
- **Aerospace Force:** the IRGC Aerospace Force was formed in 2009 following the merging of the IRGC Air Force, strategic missile command, and nascent space program, the Aerospace Force is responsible for the research, development, production, and operation of the IRGC's aircraft, ballistic missiles, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), and anti-aircraft combat systems. The Aerospace Forces is known to provide UAVs to the Russian Federation for use in the war against Ukraine. This branch of the IRGC is subject to targeted financial sanctions under Australia's autonomous sanctions framework (Iran criteria).
- **Naval Force:** the IRGC Naval Force is charged with protecting Iranian shores and composed of smaller and more agile vessels than the Iranian Navy. It specialises in asymmetric and unconventional hit-and-run tactics. This branch of the IRGC is subject to targeted financial sanctions under Australia's autonomous sanctions framework (Iran criteria).

- **Intelligence Organization:** the Intelligence Organization is a domestic and international unit operating independently from Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and primarily focused on domestic threat. The Intelligence Organization targets journalists, activities and individuals who oppose the regime. It houses the Cyber Defence Command, which monitors websites, e-mails and online activities of individuals deemed to be political opponents and works with IRGC-affiliated businesses to distribute propaganda.
- **Intelligence Protection Organization:** this unit is focused on counter-intelligence and security within the ranks of the IRGC and maintain its internal security, including combating external spying operations and securing sensitive locations, assets, and senior officials.

The IRGC maintains highly offensive cyber capabilities. IRGC-affiliated cyber actors actively target a broad range of entities within Australia to exploit vulnerabilities for ransom operations, including disk encryption and extortion efforts. These actors often operate under the auspices of Najee Technology Hooshmand Fater LLC, based in Karaj, Iran, and Afkar System Yazd Company, based in Yazd, Iran.

In 2022, the Five Eyes Cybersecurity Advisory, consisting of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, the National Security Agency, U.S. Cyber Command Cyber National Mission Force, US Department of the Treasury, the Australian Signals Directorate's Australian Cyber Security Centre, the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, and the United Kingdom's National Cyber Security Centre, issued a joint advisory warning about continued malicious cyber activity by advanced persistent threat actors affiliated with the IRGC.

The IRGC's power and influence in the Iranian government and society has steadily increased since its inception, beginning with an expanding role during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). After the Iran-Iraq War, the IRGC was key in rebuilding Iranian infrastructure which resulted in IRGC control over large segments of the economy and positioned it as a dominant force in Iranian society. The IRGC controls a vast business empire across Iran's economy, including in the oil, construction, manufacturing, aviation and retail sectors. The IRGC exerts its control through an extensive network of front companies and the Bonyad Taavon Basij. Lack of market transparency can make it difficult to ascertain the extent to which the IRGC, or agents thereof, may be involved in or benefit from commercial transactions.

The IRGC maintains influence and control over Iran's political environment, including IRGC leaders being appointed to senior political positions, and positions as provincial governors. In the 2020 election, only IRGC affiliates were permitted to run, and 200 of the 209 seats were won by members aligned with the IRGC ideology.

The IRGC is affiliated with a number of universities and research institutions located in Iran. These include:

- the Imam Hossein Comprehensive University, established by the IRGC in 1986 with a student body of around 6,000 people. This is the largest IRGC university, and plays a key role in developing and shaping the IRGC's ideological and technological development;
- the Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences, which operates as the IRGC's medical institution alongside affiliated hospitals and research centres; and
- the IRGC University of Command and Staff, the IRGC's staff college which teaches the IRGC's military doctrine, and operational and tactical planning.
- the Amir Al-Momenin University of Military Science and Technology, an IRGC staff military college established in Isfahan, Iran in 2006, which provides paramilitary, artillery and special operations training.

As noted, the IRGC's Basij is extensively present in schools and universities across Iran, relying on security elements and a vast network of informers to monitor the conduct of students and professors. The Basij is also known to form or be involved in religious, social, and community clubs in academic institutions.

The IRGC also has affiliations with several cultural and social institutions, including the Supreme Think-Tank, Tasnim News Agency, and Javan Newspaper. The IRGC also maintains the IRGC Political Bureau which manages political matters and guides IRGC personnel.

The Australian Government has already listed the IRGC for targeted financial sanctions under the *Iran criteria of the Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011*. Individuals with links to the IRGC have also been sanctioned due to their connection to the Quds Force, their engagement in terrorist acts, and actions related to the IRGC's support to Russian activities in the Ukraine. The autonomous sanctions listings impose targeted financial sanctions in the form of an asset freeze and a travel ban on persons and targeted financial sanctions on entities.

The Autonomous Sanctions Regulations impose an arms embargo on Iran, as well as a ban on exporting certain goods specified by the Foreign Minister. The supply of various services in connection with banned exports to Iran is also banned. It is an offence to provide assets to, or deal with the assets of, a sanctioned person or entity, to provide sanctioned goods or services to Iran, or to procure sanctioned goods from Iran, without a permit.

Leadership

As Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ultimately controls and appoints the heads of the IRGC. Khamenei was previously the third president of Iran, serving between 1981 and 1989, before he became the second supreme leader of Iran following the death of his predecessor, Ruhollah Khomeini. Before serving as President of Iran, Khamenei acted briefly as the commander of the IRGC between 1979 and 1980.

The current commander and Brigadier-General of the IRGC is Mohammad Pakpur assumed leadership of the IRGC on 13 June 2025, after the former commander Hossein Salami was killed in Israeli airstrikes. Pakpur was previously Commander in Chief of the IRGC Ground Forces from March 2010. Pakpur was first designated under the *Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011* on 2 March 2012.

Membership

The IRGC maintains more than 190,000 personnel under its command, with around half being conscripts. Separate to Iran's ordinary armed forces, the IRGC commands 150,000 ground forces troops, around 100,000 naval personnel with 20,000 active-duty sailors, and 15,000 air force personnel. The Basij paramilitary force claims it can mobilise around 600,000 volunteers, and the Quds Force maintain between 5,000 and 15,000 personnel.

Recruitment and funding

The IRGC recruits from a variety of sources, including local Iranian citizens and residents, and Shia populations abroad. For recruitment, the IRGC particularly targets individuals who are ideologically inclined, or those in need of financial support.

The Basij is notable for its recruitment of teenage children and volunteers. The Basij was sanctioned by the United States in 2018 for its recruitment and training of child soldiers.

The Shia Liberation Army (SLA) is a foreign legion made up of non-Iranians serving under the control of Tehran, led by Quds Force commander Esmail Qaani. The SLA has divisions from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, and many recruits join for economic reasons.

The IRGC receives a significant share of Iran's budget. Iran's 2025 budget laws indicates the IRGC has been allocated over (USD)\$6 billion, nearly twice the budget allocation for Iran's conventional armed forces. The IRGC also infrequently receives additional funds during periods of heightened tensions, including when Tehran provided around (USD)\$225 million after the assassination of Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani in 2020.

In addition to receiving funding from the Iranian state, the IRGC generates funds through commercial activities and is heavily involved in manufacturing, transportation, construction, energy and

telecommunication sectors, both domestically and internationally. The IRGC controlled company, Khatam al-Anbiya, was established as the IRGC's arm in the construction sector, and controls 812 officially registered Iranian companies which have a total of 1,700 government contracts. The company is involved in the construction of critical infrastructure, including railways, streets, highways, tunnels, water and agricultural projects, pipelines, and oil and gas refineries. The US Department of Treasury has noted that the IRGC uses profits from Khatam-an-Anbiya to fund illicit activities, including nuclear proliferation and support for terrorism in the region.

While the opaque nature of the IRGC's connection to the private sector makes precise figures difficult to ascertain, the extent of Iran's economy controlled by the IRGC is estimated to be around one to two thirds of Iran's GDP.

Links to other groups

The IRGC provides financial and other material support, training, technology, advanced conventional weapons, guidance, and direction to a broad range of terrorist organisations, including Hizballah, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. These groups are listed as terrorist organisations in Australia under Division 102 of the Criminal Code and are subject to counter-terrorism financing sanctions.

The IRGC has consistently provided weapons, technology, training, and technical assistance to Ansar Allah (the Houthis) in its ongoing conflict with the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. Notably the IRGC Quds Force has provided the Houthis with parts for missiles and drones that have repeatedly been used to target several cities and oil refineries in Saudi Arabia. In March 2022, Houthi drone and missile attacks on Saudi Arabia took place, striking Aramco facilities in Jeddah. The Houthis also attacked the United Arab Emirates on 17 January 2022, launching missile and drone strikes that blew up several fuel tankers in Abu Dhabi, killing three people. Most recently in September 2025, the Houthis conducted a series of drone attacks directed at Israel, one of which struck near Ramon International Airport, as well as an additional strike which disintegrated over Saudi Arabia. The group also claimed responsibility for a missile attack on a tanker in the Red Sea. Since October 2023, the group has been accountable for attacks on over 100 ships in the Red Sea. Ansar Allah is a listed terrorist organisation under Division 102 of Part 5.3 of the Criminal Code.

The Quds Force also has long standing ties with a range of Iraqi Shiite Muslim militia groups, most notably the Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF), who were led by commanders in the Quds Force during the U.S. occupation. Factions of the PMF are listed as terrorist organisations by Australian partners, including Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, and most notably Kata'ib Hezbollah, who is responsible for a drone attack which killed 3 U.S. service members in February 2024.

Similarly to the Quds Force, the PMF is a registered faction of the Iraqi Armed Forces and is recognised as an important component of the state's national security, receiving an annual government budget of US\$3.6 billion.

Terrorist activity

Has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia

Between October 2024 and February 2025, a number of Jewish religious institutions, and businesses, residences and vehicles linked to Jewish individuals were targets of arson and/or vandalism across Australia, particularly in Sydney and Melbourne. Following investigative effort and the development of classified holdings, ASIO assessed that the IRGC directed, assisted and fostered the doing of two attacks within this time period in Australia. ASIO assesses that these attacks were fostered by the IRGC through a complex scheme of proxies, in an attempt to conceal IRGC involvement in the attacks. Specifically, ASIO assesses that:

- The IRGC was responsible for directing an attack against the Adass Israel Synagogue in Melbourne, Australia, which occurred on 6 December 2024.

- The IRGC was responsible for directing an arson attack on a kosher deli, the Lewis' Continental Kitchen, in Sydney, Australia, which occurred on 20 October 2024.

ASIO assesses the IRGC sought to create the perception of a greater groundswell of anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli activity in Australia to generate a political response. ASIO further assesses that the attacks aimed to stoke fear and tensions within the Australian community and to harm the Jewish and Israeli community specifically.

The Australian Government is also aware of further details about these attacks, including:

- On 6 December 2024, an arson attack was conducted at the Orthodox Addas Israel Synagogue in Melbourne, Australia. Two masked individuals were witnessed spreading accelerant at the synagogue, where people were inside for morning prayer, before the fire. At least one person was injured and the fire caused extensive property damage.
- On 20 October 2024, an arson attack was conducted on the Lewis' Continental Kitchen in Sydney, Australia. An assailant broke into the Lewis' Continental Kitchen at approximately 2:30am and used petrol to set fire to the kitchen. No one was injured in the attack which is estimated to have caused \$1million AUD in damage.

Other considerations

Listing and actions by likeminded countries

In March 2025, the UK announced that it will place the whole Iranian state, including the IRGC on its Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. Additionally, in May 2025, the then Home Secretary Yvette Cooper stated the UK Government intends to introduce legislation "to allow the Government to put appropriately targeted proscription-style restrictions on the operations of state-linked organisations such as the IRGC."

On 19 June 2024, Canada listed the IRGC as a terrorist entity under *Anti-Terrorism Act 2001*.

In January and July 2023, the European Parliament passed a non-binding resolution to designate the IRGC as a terrorist organisation.

On 15 April 2019, the US designated the IRGC as a 'Foreign Terrorist Organisation' under Section 219 of its *Immigration and Nationality Act 1952*. Separately, the US added Iran to its 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' framework on 19 January 1984.

Conclusion

The Australian Government assesses that the organisation known as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is a foreign state entity and the entity or a member of the entity has directly or indirectly engaged in, prepared, planned, assisted in or fostered the doing of a terrorist act that was targeted at Australia.