



## Developing

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### **USA Alert: Two armed individuals linked to QAnon conspiracy arrested near Philadelphia's Convention Center, one arrested in LA for mass shooting threats on November 5-6; threat of unrest to persist regardless of results**

#### **Please be advised**

- Reports indicate that prosecutors have charged two men from Virginia with weapons violations after they were arrested on November 5 near the Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA, where the presidential election vote count process is currently ongoing.
- Police said the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Virginia received a tip on November 5 about an armed group traveling to Philadelphia and alerted the Philadelphia police. Officers stopped the detainees a block away from where their car was discovered. The men were armed with loaded guns. The detainees claimed that they intended to do surveillance of the area.
- Authorities also discovered a third weapon and ammunition in the suspects' vehicle and a hat bearing an insignia for the far-right QAnon conspiracy movement. The window of the car had stickers associated with QAnon, including a "Q" and "WWG1WGA," which stands for the movement's slogan "where we go one, we go all." However, authorities stated that there was no indication that anyone else was involved or that the detainees were members of an extremist group.
- One of the detainees was a former co-founder of the grassroots group Vets for Trump. Social media accounts of the second detainee show numerous posts showing support for the QAnon conspiracy theory.
- In a separate incident, an individual from Los Angeles, CA was arrested on November 6 for threatening on social media to carry out a mass shooting if Democratic candidate Joe Biden wins the presidential election.
- Protesters have been observed outside vote-counting sites in several cities since the election day amid protests questioning the legitimacy of the vote count process. Several demonstrators have expressed conspiracy theories alleging widespread fraud. Conspiracy theories promoted by QAnon have been endorsed or credited by at least 24 congressional candidates in the current election.

#### **Assessments & Forecst**

1. The series of demonstrations outside vote count stations and incidents involving armed individuals continue to highlight the persistent threat of violent unrest as the race continues to remain tightly-contested. As such, the risk of violent unrest persists over the coming days, regardless of results.
2. While it remains unconfirmed if the detainees in Philadelphia were part of a known far-right group, the stickers found on their car and one of the detainees' social media activity indicates that they were, indeed, supporters of QAnon. The detainee's former association with a pro-Trump group

highlights the impact of far-right conspiracies in radicalizing right-wing individuals from via social media.

3. The already heightened polarization observed prior to the election has likely been reinforced by the recent political rhetoric alleging electoral fraud. **FORECAST:** As the race continues to be tight in key states, especially with Biden leading the vote count as per the current estimates, increased activity by far-right groups and supporters can be expected in the vicinity of vote count stations. While it remains unconfirmed if the Philadelphia detainees intended to attack the convention center, there nonetheless remains a threat of armed extremists attempting to carry out attacks to disrupt the vote count process, as well as targeting Democratic activists and supporters. This is heightened by Democratic and anti-Trump groups reportedly beginning to and hold further celebratory events should Joe Biden be declared the winner.
4. Although several social media platforms have banned conspiracy theory groups in recent days to prevent the escalation of unrest, a prominent social media platform reportedly observed an influx of warnings and complaints for violence overnight on November 6. **FORECAST:** With this, there remains a heightened likelihood of extremist groups continuing to propagate conspiracies and calling for attacks and demonstrations on social media and messaging applications amid the increasing uncertainty over the electoral outcomes. Extremist groups are liable to attend events and post on groups organized by right-wing groups in order to identify individuals who may be inclined towards more radical views.
5. As observed across the country, the increasing rhetoric of fraud has prompted unrest among Democratic supporters over concerns of Trump refusing to accept a Biden victory. **FORECAST:** With this, left-wing groups are likely to continue organizing demonstrations across the country demanding a peaceful transition of power, potentially leading to clashes involving opposing protesters and police. Regardless of the electoral outcome, the unrest is liable to persist even after the completion of the vote count nationwide, particularly in tightly-contested states such as Arizona, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.
6. That said, the fact that the aforementioned detainees were preemptively arrested before carrying out attacks is indicative of bolstered security, including surveillance operations by the FBI. **FORECAST:** With this, any activity deemed a threat is likely to be flagged, with authorities undertaking prompt actions to prevent potential escalation of unrest or the conducting of attacks.

## Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in the USA are advised to maintain heightened vigilance amid rising tensions surrounding the upcoming elections and the corresponding elevated risk of militancy.
2. Avoid nonessential travel in the vicinity of all political gatherings in the coming weeks due to the heightened potential for violence.
3. Allot for disruptions in major cities over the coming days due to such gatherings manifesting with little to no prior notice.
4. For more information on the election possibilities and the security situation please contact [intel@max-security.com](mailto:intel@max-security.com).