



About GTTAC

The Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center (GTTAC) was created by Development Services Group, Inc., and our partner TraCCC of George Mason University to support our work for the U.S.

Department of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism (No. GS10F-0166K, 19AQQM18F2561). The

GTTAC Record of Incidents Database (GRID) collects and classifies opensource data on terrorism incidents globally and is used to support the development of the Annex of Statistical Information for the Country Reports on

Terrorism. Data used in this report are from the GRID.

Views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the United States government.

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What Is the Islamic Resistance in Iraq?

Origins

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq (IRI) emerged in October 2023 as an umbrella group for various Iranian-backed militias operating in Iraq and Syria. It first claimed responsibility for attacks targeting US forces in the region following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas conflict in October 2023. While individual militias existed before, the IRI signifies a shift towards coordinated action under a unified banner.

Ideology

The IRI's ideology aligns with the broader goals of Iranian foreign policy, including opposition to US presence in the region and support for Palestinian groups like Hamas. The group presents its actions as resistance against what it perceives as US imperialism and interference in the affairs of Middle Eastern nations.

Structure

The IRI is not a single, cohesive entity but rather a loose coalition of several well-established militias, including Kataib Hezbollah, Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, and Kataib Sayyid al-Shuhada. While details remain opaque, evidence suggests the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) plays a coordinating role in unifying these groups under the IRI brand.¹ Prior to the recent attacks on the US forces, the Iraqi armed groups were more eager to announce their individual identity and involvement in the incidents. However, the unity behind the recent attacks under the IRI brand suggests that there is now more coordination across the groups.

Activities

Since its emergence, the IRI has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks targeting US forces in Iraq and Syria, primarily utilizing drone strikes and missile launches. As of January 29, 2024, GTTAC data reports over 100 such attacks attributed to the IRI, resulting in at least 70 US casualties before the January 28th attack on Tower 22 Patrol and Operations Base in Jordan. This attack, which killed 3 US service members and injured 35 more, has significantly raised tensions in the region. In total, US forces have come under attack more than 190 times by Iran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria, causing at least 70 casualties prior to the January 28, 2024, attack. GTTAC has documented the Islamic Resistance incidents in Iraq and Syria see Figure 1.

What Is the Islamic Resistance in Iraq? (continued)

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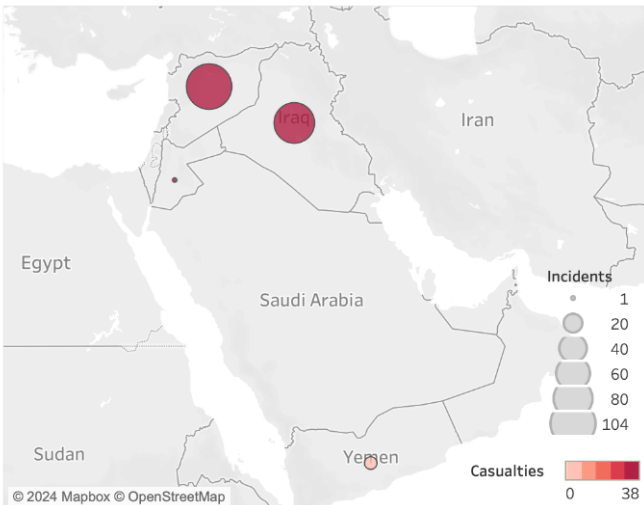
Our staff routinely cover topics currently in the news as well as topics likely to become headline news in the coming weeks and months.

International Relations

The IRI's actions have drawn condemnation from the US and its allies, who view the group as a terrorist organization linked to the Iranian government. Iran, on the other hand, maintains its support for the IRI's stated goals of resisting US presence in the region, further straining relations between Iran and the West.

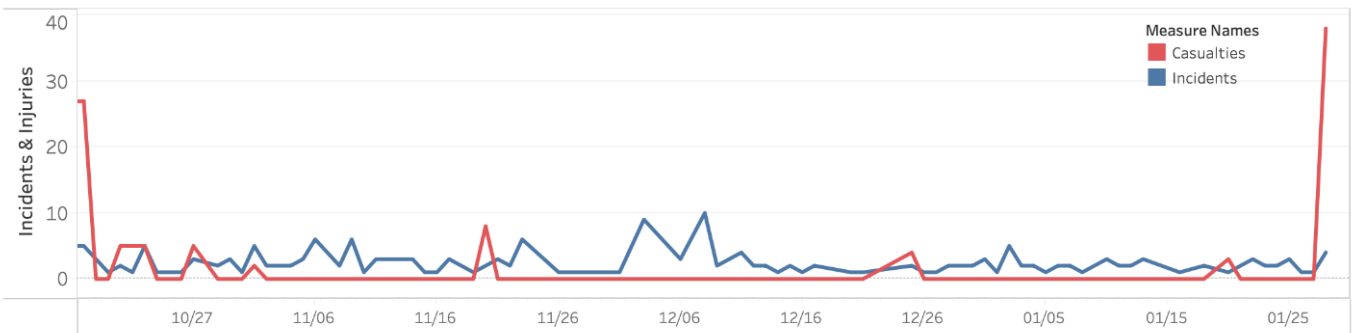
Figure 1

Attacks against U.S. Troops and Affiliated Targets following the October 7th Hamas Attack



Perpetrator..	Country	Weapons Used	Inciden..	Killings	Injured
Islamic Resistance	IRAQ	UAVs	62	0	16
		Rockets	15	0	8
		Rockets/missiles	2	0	8
		UAV/Rockets	1	0	0
		Shot down US drone	1	0	0
		Mortar shells	1	0	0
		IED	1	0	0
JORDAN	UAVs	1	3	35	
SYRIA	SYRIA	UAVs	60	0	27
		Rockets	35	0	5
		Missiles	2	0	0
		Attacks on Pipelines	2	0	0
		Unknown	1	0	0
		UAV/Rockets	1	0	0
Houthis	YEMEN	Missiles	4	0	0
		Missiles & UAVs	3	0	0
		UAVs	1	0	0
NO claimed	SYRIA	UAVs	2	0	0
Grand Total			196	3	99

Incidents by Date



¹ Hamdi Malik, Michael Knights, "Profile: The Islamic Resistance in Iraq," *The Washington Institute for Near East policy*.