

Five teens arrested in raids in Narre Warren, Hallam, Hampton Park

Anti-terror chiefs say ISIS inspired plots

ONE teenager has been charged, three released and another remains in custody after police raids targeting an alleged Anzac Day terror plot in Melbourne. An estimated 200 Australian Federal Police and Victoria Police officers arrested the five men after seven raids across Melbourne's southeast before dawn today.

Police have charged 18-year-old Hallam teenager Sevdet Besim with "conspiracy to commit acts done in preparation for, or planning, terrorist acts", a Commonwealth offence. Mr Besim appeared for a 30-second hearing at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court where he was remanded in custody to reappear for a filing hearing on Friday.

Dressed in a black windcheater, the bearded Besim did not bow to magistrate Alan Spillane as he was taken to the holding cells below. Narre Warren man Lindim Sulejmani, 18, has been released and is expected to be charged on summons with prohibited weapons offences. The two other Narre Warren men, aged 18 and 19, have been released pending further enquiries. An 18-year-old Hampton Park man, also arrested in relation to terrorism-related offences, remains in custody.

Federal and state officers searched seven properties in Narre Warren, Hampton Park, Hallam and Eumemmering as part of Operation Rising from about 3.30am. Police said they had prevented a possible attack on serving police officers involving "associates" of the dead Melbourne terrorist Numan Haider. Australian Federal Police counterterrorism chief Neil Gaughan said it was alleged two of the men were preparing to target police officers in a terrorist attack at an Anzac Day event in Melbourne.

They are associates of Mr Haider, however, as that process is currently a coronial investigation I am not going to make any further comment on that at this time." Mr Haider was shot dead as he stabbed an injured counterterrorism officer at a Melbourne police station last year.

Authorities feared an "imminent" plot to attack police. Sevdet Besim was caught up in the anti-terror raids.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said security would be stepped up across the state. A man who answered the door at Mr Sulejmani's Narre Warren address said he was now home and sleeping. He told the Herald Sun Mr Sulejmani was shaken from the incident but declined to comment further, requesting for the family to be left alone. A front window was smashed at the property.

In a statement tonight, Victoria Police said: "Victoria has well tested, co-operative, counter terrorism and emergency management plans in place and constantly monitor and assess our preparedness to respond to a range of emergencies.

"The Melbourne Joint Counter Terrorism Team maintains strong links with the intelligence and other agencies that give us the best possible understanding of emergency issues." Arrested men were associates of Numan Haider

It said people should "continue to go about their daily business" and report suspicious activity to Triple 0, Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or the National Security Hotline on 1800 1234 00.

PM, VIC RESPOND TO 'ATROCIOUS' PLOT

SECURITY will be increased at Anzac Day commemorations across the state following this morning's terror raids. Prime Minister Tony Abbott urged Australians to turn out in force. "The best

thing you can do in the face of those who would do us harm is to live your life normally,” Mr Abbott said. He praised the professionalism of police conducting the raids and said there were no other specific threats to Anzac Day events in other cities. But Mr Abbott said there would be a strong police presence across Australia nonetheless.

Security at the Gallipoli ceremony was a matter for the Turkish government but Australia had been co-operating in the lead up to the event, he said. Four thousand Turkish police and security personnel would be deployed on the peninsula. “I want to assure people that everything authorities can do to keep you safe is being done,” Mr Abbott said.

In Melbourne, Acting Victoria Police Commissioner Tim Cartwright said the men arrested today were allegedly planning “atrocious acts” for Anzac Day. Premier Andrews said police operations would be increased beyond what had already been planned for this week following the raids.

“There will be a significant, increased, visible, police presence for Anzac Day,” Mr Andrews said. “That’s not just the march and activities at the Shrine, there will be appropriate operational decisions which I won’t go any further into, but there will be proper arrangements in place, extra resources applied in lots of different locations.”

Mr Andrews said Victoria Police had already had discussions over recent weeks with the RSL and AFL about security at major events, including the football, on the day.