The kidnapping and beheading of foreigners by ISIS are tactics of asymmetric warfare that penetrate our moral, mental and physical boundaries of conflict. An event involving an Australian would have inspirational value for home-grown terrorism and present serious political consequences for Australia’s foreign policy. Given Australia’s active participation in areas influenced by this group, there is a risk that an Australian national could become a victim. With a high number of Australian nationals deployed in areas under the influence of these tactics and numerous programs funded by the Australian government, care must be taken to ensure moral, ethical and legal responsibilities are discharged, and that programs and organisations are aligned for the best outcomes.
Gavin Briggs

Gavin Briggs is a lecturer in national security and international relations at Curtin University’s Department of Social Sciences and International Studies. He has 15-years’ experience working in Commonwealth and State Government departments, including adviser roles in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of the Premier and Cabinet (WA) and as an Intelligence Analyst with a federal law enforcement agency. As a public affairs officer in the Air Force Reserve, with the current serving rank of Squadron Leader, he has been on deployments in the Middle East Area of Operations and Southern Indian Ocean. He holds a Master of Strategic Affairs from ANU, Postgraduate Diploma of Arts (Political Science) from UWA and a Graduate Certificate in Criminal Intelligence from Charles Sturt University. He is presently a PhD candidate with Curtin University.

Jason Thomas

Jason Thomas is a private consultant specialising in field-based human terrain assessments that inform the design of stability frameworks to neutralise security threats within complex operating environments. He has worked with the US military counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan where he negotiated with Taliban Commanders in Ghazni, Wardak and Logar. Jason has negotiated with LTTE commanders in the civil war area in Sri Lanka, and the Ronderos in northern Peru. He has completed human terrain assessments for cross-border operations in northern Iraq and north-east Syria, Jordan and southern Syria. Last year Jason completed the only field assessment for the proposed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, traveling almost the entire route. He has also worked in southern Mindanao Philippines and South. Jason is PhD candidate at Curtin University, using Col. John Boyd’s OODA loop to analyse how to neutralise threats from salafi-jihadi inspired homegrown terrorism. He also teaches abduction management for companies working in high risk environments.

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