



World Cup 2026 – Rolling Risk Brief

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Executive Snapshot

Key Shift Since Last Brief:

- The final week of the tournament will see just three matches across three cities – Atlanta, Miami and New York (match held in neighboring New Jersey).
- A heat advisory is in effect until the evening of 15 July across northeast New Jersey, southern Connecticut and southeast New York states. Extreme heat across gripped each of the aforementioned host cities across the last week, prompting warnings from authorities.
- The fatal shooting of a Mexican national on 7 July in Houston, and of a Colombian national on 13 July in Maine – both by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents – has prompted scrutiny from politicians and media and led to related protests.
- The US and Iran have continued to exchange strikes amid an escalation in hostilities that prompted US President Donald Trump to state that that the previous ceasefire had ended. The US has struck near 200 targets including air defense and storage facilities. Iran has launched attacks at regional neighbors and struck shipping vessels in the Strait of Hormuz. Despite the escalation, US authorities have reiterated that negotiations towards a peace deal would continue.

Highest Attention Cities (Next 7 Days):

- **Atlanta** – Atlanta will host a semifinal match between England and Argentina on July 15. Officials have determined to extend the city's Fan Festival operating hours an additional two hours on July 14 (13:00 to 22:30) and July 15 (12:00 to 22:30). The event has drawn more than 450,000 fans across the tournament and is likely to draw significant turnout for the final days.
- **Miami** – the last match hosted in Miami will take place on July 18, when France and the loser of the England and Argentina semi-final match play for the bronze medal. Law enforcement in Miami has seized more than 130 private drones across the tournament – nearly double the highest total seized at any other host city. The drones did not carry harmful material, but were operating in restricted airspace.
- **New York/New Jersey** – The tournament final will be held on July 19 at the "New York New Jersey Stadium" in East Rutherford, New Jersey. The tournament's crescendo will draw immense attention to the match and neighboring cities.





Analyst View

The final week of the tournament comes just as two relevant threat vectors take shape. The end of the ceasefire in the Middle East, despite ongoing peace negotiations, again raises the terrorism threat environment, and along with it, the risk that ideologically motivated groups or individuals target World Cup associated events. This scenario was specifically referenced in our April Insight Report as the highest risk scenario vis-à-vis the conflict in Iran's impact on the US terror threat environment – an end to the ceasefire during the tournament window. Yet, that this comes at the very close of the tournament is a mitigating factor.

Secondly, the fatal ICE shooting of Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston threatens to reawaken a fraught national discussion and generate unrest. In the days that followed, associated rallies in Houston drew hundreds of demonstrators, while smaller solidarity rallies took place in Austin, San Antonio and elsewhere. Houston lacks the precedent of large-scale social unrest seen in Minneapolis, where protesters were killed in interactions with ICE and Customs and Border Protection in January. Nonetheless, the return of immigration enforcement operations to the national dialogue, the likelihood of solidarity rallies in other cities and the seasonal weather conditions more conducive to outdoor mobilization than during the previous flare-up all suggest the issue warrants further monitoring for potential escalation. Meanwhile, details are still emerging about a 13 July incident in Biddeford, Maine, where a man was shot and killed by ICE agents, prompting related demonstrations nearby.

Yet the tournament has nearly passed without high-profile security incident. The concentration of World Cup matches and associated activities to three remaining host cities will permit law enforcement and supporting organizations to more easily focus resources and efforts. These watchpoints merit further monitoring and risk management, but authorities remain well placed to monitor, intercept and disrupt threats to the tournament's final week of operations.

Forward Look (Next 7 Days)

High-Attention Fixtures

- July 15: Semi-final match between England and Argentina in Atlanta.
- July 18: Bronze medal match between France and the loser of the match between Argentina and England in Miami.
- July 19: Tournament final between Spain and winner of the match between Argentina and England in New Jersey.

Methodology Note

This rolling brief applies the baseline risk and Fan Tension Index (FTI) methodology outlined in the World Cup 2026 Risk Outlook, updated to reflect current conditions and developments.

Emerging Watchpoints

- At the business end of the tournament, the stakes of each match and the associated intensity of fan emotion are raised considerably. The potential for disruptive behavior by fans during and after matches increases across the final fixtures.
- The end of the ceasefire in the Middle East raises the terror threat environment in the US, despite ongoing peace talks.
- The fatal shooting of a Mexican national by ICE agents in Houston holds potential to generate demonstrations and associated operational disruption.



City Spotlight – New Jersey/New York

Current Posture: Elevated

Key Pressure Points:

- East Rutherford, New Jersey hosts the final match of the tournament on July 19. Fan emotions and broader international attention will be at their highest levels since the tournament kicked off.
- Law enforcement agencies across New Jersey and New York have sustained high operational tempos throughout the tournament period, including most recently supporting security operations associated with the 250th anniversary of US independence.
- The Spanish national team as well as both potential finalists from the other side of the bracket in Argentina and England boast wide support. The finals match will draw significant attendance and attention to related fan events across the New York metropolitan area and elsewhere.

Implications:

- Fan events will draw wide attendance ahead of and during the match. The crowning of a champion will prompt celebratory gatherings and associated disruption across the city.
- The match and associated events will strain public transportation. For four hours before the match, New York Penn Station will close to NJ Transit's (rail) non ticket holders.

Implications for Organizations

- Reconfirm transportation plans and allow substantial buffer times for all airport, hotel, and stadium transfers; road closures, security checkpoints, and protest activity are likely to cause significant delays throughout the match day.
- Use vetted transport providers and confirm access arrangements before departure. Allow additional travel time, as vehicle access around New York New Jersey Stadium may be restricted, requiring pedestrians to walk from designated drop-off locations.
- Consult official sources regularly for updates on road closures, access points, security perimeters, and recommended routes to New York New Jersey Stadium and Fan Fest locations.
- Monitor developments related to planned protests and liaise with local contacts or support providers to identify affected locations, alternative routes, and emerging disruption hotspots.
- Avoid protests, demonstrations and security operations; leave the area immediately if tensions rise, confrontations appear imminent, or security forces begin deploying crowd-control measures, as bystanders may be affected.