

Protective Security Update



Introduction

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Current Threat Levels

For more information please see: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk>

Threat From	Threat Level	Meaning
The current threat for INTERNATIONAL terrorism.	SEVERE	An attack is highly likely.
The current threat level from Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Britain.	MODERATE	An attack is possible, but not likely.

CT Update – International Terrorism

The current UK threat from international terrorism remains ‘severe’, meaning **an attack is highly likely**;

- The threat comes principally from ISIL, Al Qaida and related networks, and those who are directed or inspired by them;
- The **level of threat is complex** and ranges from lone actors intent on carrying out crude and violent attacks to sophisticated networks pursuing ambitious and coordinated plots;
- This increased level of activity is matched by **increased action by the police and security services**, who are currently working on 600 active investigations and making an arrest a day;
- In the last 12 months **six attempts to carry out an attack have been thwarted** by the security services and police;
- Our **work with communities and local partners** to stop people getting involved in terrorism is **making a difference**, with 600 referrals a month and key interventions taking place to disrupt extremist activity;

How the threat is changing in key areas:

❖ It is **bigger** than previous years, with a 45% increase in investigations since the emergence of ISIL. The police and Security Service are currently running about 600 separate investigations.



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- ❖ The threat is **more uncertain**, with around half of the British foreign fighters who travelled to Syria being unknown to police.
- ❖ It is **faster** with the time between radicalisation and attack planning becoming far shorter. Recently convicted terrorist Brusthom Ziamani was caught on his way to murder a British soldier less than 19 weeks after first being radicalised.
- ❖ The threat is **more diffuse** with more young people and women and girls now being arrested and convicted, most recently a 15 year old boy from Lancashire who was convicted of encouraging a man in Australia to commit an act of terrorism at a national day of remembrance.
- ❖ The threat is **more varied** with terrorists' tactics ranging from well organised marauding firearms attacks with high powered weaponry against tourists and shoppers to crude knife attacks against soldiers and police officers.
- ❖ The threat is **more international** with increasing numbers of attacks around the world - France, Denmark, Australia, Tunisia - combined with failed states and ungoverned spaces providing a perfect base for terrorist planning. It is no wonder then that over a quarter of our investigations have an international link.

How the threat is changing in key areas:

There was a short Question and Answer Session during which Industry Sector Leads raised the following points:

- *Question: What is the UK's preparedness if an attack similar to 7/7 were to occur?*

Answer: We have made preparations for a Paris style attack as was highlighted during 'Operation Strong Tower' this summary. It would be foolish to say that an attack with automatic firearms on the scale of Paris was impossible but the UK has advantages over Europe in that gun control is that much more rigorous and access to illegal firearms is difficult. UK government and police have had 40 years in dealing with terrorism and mature structures are in place.

- *Question: What is the UK capability in relation to chemical and biological attack after cuts?*

Answer: There has been no major stepdown in CBRN capability. It is not the most likely form of attack but we must remain able to respond and a recent exercise in Kent has tested our police capability to deal with such an event.



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- *Question: Any comment on the regional differences on likelihood of terrorist attack?*

Answer: Whilst there are clusters of suspects across the country we cannot assume that where they live is the most likely attack site. The current threat assessment is "severe" for the whole country. Indeed, we only have to look at the Birmingham and Guildford bombings in the 1970s to see that terrorists will attack provincial cities and towns.

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