

The four Ps - Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare

The Home Office counter-terrorism strategy is divided into four strands - Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare.

Countering the terrorist threat

Our counter-terrorism strategy sets out a comprehensive plan for dealing with the terrorist threat.

It involves the work of thousands of people:

- police and intelligence officers
- the emergency services
- local authorities
- businesses
- voluntary and community organisations
- governments and other partners – across the UK and the world.

The strategy has four key elements:

- Pursue - to stop terrorist attacks
- Prevent – to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism
- Protect – to strengthen our protection against terror attack
- Prepare – where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact

These four areas of work complement and reinforce each another to reduce the terrorist threat to the UK and our overseas interests.

PURSUE terrorists wherever they are and stop terrorist attacks

- Our top priority is to disrupt terrorists' activities and stop them from carrying out attacks that threaten the lives of people in the UK
- Dedicated police officers work closely with the security and intelligence services to investigate terrorist activities, stop their plans and bring those responsible to justice

As a result, many terrorists who planned to kill UK citizens are behind bars, and terrorist plots that could have caused hundreds of deaths have been prevented

Plots that have been stopped include two in 2004 in which conspirators considered using radiological materials in a 'dirty bomb', other plots uncovered featured 2005 plans by a London-based terrorist cell to buy machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades, and a plot in early 2007 to kidnap and kill a British soldier.

PREVENT people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism

- Increasing our resilience to attacks and successfully disrupting terrorist plots will not alone stop terrorism. We need to prevent people supporting violent extremism or becoming terrorists in the first place.

Part of this work involves challenging those who support violence. But we also want to actively promote the shared values (including democracy and the rule of law) on which our society and the cohesion of our communities depend.

From our experience and research, we now know more than ever before how some British citizens are drawn into terrorism. We are using this understanding with partners to divert people away from this path.

We work directly with people in their communities to:

- challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices
- disrupt those who promote violent extremism
- support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment, or have already been recruited by violent extremists
- increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism
- address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting

Protecting vulnerable individuals who might be attracted to the ideology of violence is not just a job for the police, but also for local government, schools and universities, local communities and all of us who come into contact with them.

The Government has published guidance for [local partners on delivering the Prevent strategy](#). This guidance builds on The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners, published in June 2008.

The OSCT has published [Safeguarding online – explaining the risk posed by violent extremism](#) to raise awareness of the risks posed by the internet of inciting terrorism and radicalisation. The document provides practical guidance to those with responsibility for vulnerable individuals on how to protect them from the online threats of violent extremism.

PROTECT the UK by strengthening our defences against terrorism

Terrorists aim to attack high profile targets, where they can have maximum impact and cause the most casualties.

We have developed comprehensive plans to protect these targets:

- [critical national infrastructure \(new window\)](#) - we have significantly improved protection of essential services such as emergency services, power, water, IT, telecoms and transport
- crowded places - we have provided security advice to sports venues and shopping centres and expanded and enhanced protective programmes for air, sea and rail travel to provide proportionate and sustainable and efficient security for passengers
- border security - our borders are stronger as a result of new technology such as biometric visa and travel tracking programmes.

The National Identity Register and identity cards will make it harder for terrorists to use multiple identities.

PREPARE to respond to an attack to lessen its impact

The attempted terrorist attack in Exeter in 2008 showed that we need to be prepared throughout the country to deal with a terrorist incident.

We have studied every attack and plot against the UK to learn everything we can about how to improve our resilience.

Thousands of emergency services workers and key officials have been trained and equipped to deal with an incident, including attacks with [chemical, biological and radiological weapons](#).

Every region in the country has plans to deal with an attack and ensure a return to normal as soon as possible.

Training goes beyond officials to store, pub and club managers and security guards, who all work in crowded places that might be targeted by terrorists. This means that:

- police in London have spoken to every pub and nightclub operator about terrorist threats and their plans for dealing with the issue
- every shopping centre in the UK has received advice