

News story: DAC D'Orsi meets with representatives from cities affected by terrorism to share collective experience

Addressing policing and government officials from around the world at an event in London last week, DAC D'Orsi stressed the importance for the commercial sector to start factoring protective security measures into event planning and new infrastructure projects at the earliest possible stage.

She said:

Methodologies to protect our cities from the increasing terrorist threat are constantly evolving, to ensure that we are prepared to effectively respond and recover from attacks. We in policing will rightly lead on this vital work, but there is always a limit to what we can do and I believe that our colleagues in the private sector also have an important part to play.

DAC D'Orsi made the comments while co-chairing a 'Safer Cities' round table discussion alongside the Home Office. Taking place at the UK Security Expo at London Olympia on Wednesday 29 November, 'Safer Cities' was created in conjunction with the Cross-sector Safety and Security Communications (CSSC), and hosted officials from Melbourne, Barcelona, Brussels and Rotterdam.

The purpose was to bring together representatives from cities which have been recently affected by terrorism, to share our collective experience of dealing with attacks in the hope it can promote best practice and help keep the global public safer.

DAC D'Orsi used the platform to appeal to companies to make protective security key to their future events planning and building management.

She continued:

Terrorists are using low sophistication, high impact methodologies which are often planned and executed in a short time frame, minimising our ability to disrupt attacks before they occur. Protective security is therefore a key strand of our activity to reduce the impact of attacks.

The private sector has become more willing partners in recent years. Together we have developed communications packages like CSSC and have partnered with business under the Step Change initiative – but to do more to protect the public we need to deliver a more

fundamental shift of approach.

The police have a duty to protect the public from terrorist threats, but many responsible private sector entities are already asking how they, too, can contribute. By sharing this 'duty' more widely we can increase its reach, scope and efficacy even further.

Senior officers working for Counter Terrorism Policing are developing plans for how policing can better support the private sector in contributing to the UK's collective Protective Security measures. These include developing accredited private sector security advisory services, creating bespoke products and communications networks for specific sectors, such as entertainment venues or commercial buildings.

Specialist officers could also support testing and exercising across the country to ensure a national standard of security training across private sector workers, as well as developing develop protocols and systems which would allow for the police and government to recover the costs of the use of national assets to protect private events.

DAC D'Orsi added:

Private companies looking to host public events or begin new infrastructure projects must meet stringent targets to ensure they have valid fire safety certificates, and I see no reason why we can't do the same for Protective Security measures.

Similarly, commercial entities such as football clubs must contribute to the policing operations which protect their sites and their customers. So surely it is only right they do the same when utilising national protective security resources.

I know from speaking to private sector representatives that the vast majority of private companies are ready to work alongside police to make the UK safer place, and I believe we now have the blueprints to make that a reality by making our public spaces as hostile as possible for those looking to do us harm.