

Review of government counter-terror strategy to tackle threats

The government will carry out a wholesale refresh of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, to protect its citizens from new, emerging and persistent threats.

In the UK and overseas, there has been a shift towards self-initiated terrorists operating independently from organised groups with increasingly personal ideologies, warped views used to justify violence.

The tactics and methodologies used by terrorists are diversifying and becoming increasingly fragmented.

To meet those threats, the counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) will be updated to reflect these new challenges. This will involve seeking a diverse range of views and engaging security experts from across the UK and overseas, so that CONTEST continues to robustly protect the British public from terrorist threats.

Security Minister, Tom Tugendhat, said:

Terrorists seek to divide us and sow hatred. We will not let them. Our commitment to the values we cherish is too strong.

But as the nature of terrorism continues to evolve and endure, so must we.

We will ensure that our response to the terror threat continues to be world-leading and ensure we have a strategy that allows people to go about their lives freely and with confidence.

The update will take into account a series of important reviews, including the second volume of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, set to be published next week.

In addition, the findings from the Independent Review of Prevent, led by William Shawcross, will strengthen the government's ability to stop individuals being drawn into terrorism in the first place.

The government will do everything possible to strengthen the UK's protection against terrorist attacks.

This includes a renewed commitment to introduce the Protect Duty, which will enhance the safety of public venues while avoiding placing additional burden on small businesses.

The UK counter-terror system already encompasses the efforts of more than 20

government departments and agencies.

Since 2017 alone, more than 200 recommendations have been implemented in response to terrorist attacks, including the creation of the world's first multi-organisational Counter Terrorism Operations Centre, in London in June 2021.

Head of Counter Terrorism Policing, Matt Jukes said:

Since its launch in 2003, CONTEST has proved to be an enduring and effective strategic framework for the UK's counter terrorism response, but it shouldn't stand still.

Today's threat is dominated by increasingly fragmented ideologies, self-initiated terrorism, and the reach of hateful online ideologies into the lives of the young people.

It is vital that any future strategy reflects these learnings and also looks forward to the collaborations we will need in the future to keep people safe.

Counter Terrorism Policing, uniquely, has made an evolving contribution to all four pillars of the CONTEST strategy and will continue to be at the heart of our preparedness for the terrible moments when attacks happen.

The government expects to publish an updated and enhanced version of CONTEST next year. In the meantime, it will continue to deliver a counter-terror strategy to keep the public safe.