



House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee

Project CONTEST: The Government's Counter- Terrorism Strategy

Ninth Report of Session 2008–09

*Report, together with formal minutes, oral and
written evidence*

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The Home Affairs Committee

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The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom. A list of Reports of the Committee since Session 2005–06 is at the back of this volume.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Eliot Barrass (Second Clerk), Elisabeth Bates (Committee Specialist), Sarah Harrison (Committee Specialist), Darren Hackett (Senior Committee Assistant), Ameet Chudasama (Committee Assistant), Sheryl Dinsdale (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Select Committee Media Officer).

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Summary

The Government first created a coordinated counter-terrorism strategy in 2003. This was revised during 2008 and early 2009, during the course of our inquiry, and the 'refresh' of CONTEST was published in March 2009.

CONTEST has four 'strands': Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare. The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), part of the Home Office, is responsible for CONTEST and is the Government's lead unit on counter-terrorism. We have been impressed by the work which OSCT does, and by the dedication and professionalism of its staff. We also welcome the full and open nature of the latest iteration of CONTEST, and its determination to place as much information as possible in the public domain; however, we would urge the Government to make more of its many successes in countering terrorism. While we understand the constraints of the *sub judice* convention, we are concerned that the Government is imposing too strict a self-denying ordinance on itself and could be more open about the extent to which it is winning the battle against terrorism.

One of the UK's key points of vulnerability is clearly the Transport for London network. We are satisfied that lessons have been learned from the attacks of July 2005, and we accept that airport-style security will never be compatible with the demands of a mass transit system on the scale of the London Underground. However, the network remains extremely vulnerable and there is no room for complacency; the protection of the millions of passengers who use the Transport for London network every day must remain a high priority.

The London 2012 Olympics will also be another critical area of vulnerability. We welcome the decision to move the Metropolitan Police's Olympic Security Directorate to OSCT and we are reassured that the issue is being treated with appropriate gravity and priority. Engineering a successful and, moreover, safe and secure Games will be a litmus test for the Government's counter-terrorism strategy.

The UK continues to face a sustained and extremely grave threat from terrorism. After a slow start, the Government has done a great deal to improve its counter-terrorism structures and now has an impressive approach to the issue. However, more work remains to be done. The threats have not lessened significantly, nor do we expect them to do so in the immediate future. It has been said that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty". We agree.

Introduction

1. The Government developed its first comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST, in early 2003. Initially a slender document, it was an attempt to coordinate the pan-Governmental response to the emerging terrorist threat in the aftermath of the attacks on New York and Washington, DC, in September 2001.

2. The revised version of CONTEST was published on Tuesday 24 March 2009. It was a significantly larger document than its predecessor, in line with the Government's stated desire to be as open as possible on counter-terrorism and security matters and to put as much information as possible into the public domain.¹ In addition to the publication of a very full document, the Home Office is planning a series of events across the country to engage with and explain the strategy to groups, organisations and agencies who will be involved in its delivery.

3. On 25 November 2008, the Home Affairs Committee decided to appoint a sub-committee to examine the Government's existing counter-terrorism strategy, from policy to delivery, and the ongoing work to 'refresh' the strategy and produce what was colloquially known as 'CONTEST 2'.

4. During our inquiry, we held three evidence sessions. The first session, concentrating on threats to London's transport infrastructure, was with Tim O'Toole, Managing Director of London Underground, and Nick Agnew, Safety and Contingency Planning Manager, Transport for London.² We then took evidence from Assistant Commissioner Robert Quick, Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations, Metropolitan Police Service. Part of each of these evidence sessions was held in private, to allow us to explore issues of operational sensitivity. Finally, we held a wholly private evidence session with Charles Farr, Director-General, and Gillian McGregor, Head of Operational Support and Knowledge Management, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism. We then agreed with the Home Office a redacted version of the transcript from the evidence session which we have published.

5. In addition to the oral evidence sessions, we visited Transport for London's Network Operation Centre and the British Transport Police's Force Response Centre London at St James's Park, and the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism at the Home Office. We would like to thank everyone who helped with this inquiry.

¹ HC Deb, 24 March 2009, col 170

² Mr O'Toole announced in February 2009 that he would step down as Managing Director of London Underground at the end of April.

1 The UK's Approach to Counter-Terrorism

Machinery of Government

Background

6. The UK's approach to intelligence, security and counter-terrorism has traditionally been based on a division between internal and external threats. Beginning in 1909 and developing especially during and after the Second World War, the intelligence apparatus was founded on the twin pillars of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, colloquially known as MI6) dealing with threats from without the United Kingdom, and the Security Service (generally referred to as MI5) tackling domestic terrorism. However, since the 1950s, the Cabinet Office has played a coordinating role in some respects; the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) has been based there since 1957 and provides the Cabinet with advice on defence, security and intelligence-related matters.

7. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC, several countries re-examined and substantially re-ordered their intelligence and security apparatus. The United States, in particular, adopted a strongly centralising approach. Only a month after the attacks, President George W. Bush created an Office of Homeland Security, under former Governor of Pennsylvania Tom Ridge, which, the following year, became the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS consolidated 22 separate agencies of the federal government, including the Coast Guard, the US Border Patrol, the Transportation Security Administration and the Secret Service. However, it should be noted that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were, after some debate, excluded from DHS.

8. The US also carried out a degree of centralisation within its intelligence and security agencies. Prior to 2004, the senior figure in the US intelligence community was the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), who was also concurrently Director of the CIA. However, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act of 2004 created the post of Director of National Intelligence (DNI) to act as the President's principal adviser on intelligence matters, to oversee and direct the National Intelligence Program, and to head the sixteen-member Intelligence Community.³

The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

9. The UK has not pursued the same agenda as the US. However, in March 2007, various elements of the Government's counter-terrorism apparatus were consolidated in the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT). This organisation was created to provide advice to ministers and develop policy and security measures to combat the threat of terrorism, and was placed under the control of the Home Secretary, to whom the Director-General of OSCT reports.

³ The US Intelligence Community consists of the following agencies; the CIA, the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency, Army Military Intelligence, the Defense Intelligence Agency, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, the National Security Agency, the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Office of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Coast Guard Intelligence, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence.

10. According to its website, OSCT currently has responsibility for:

- exercising the UK's response to a terrorist incident;
- developing legislation on terrorism here and overseas;
- providing security measures and protection packages for public figures;
- ensuring that the UK's critical national infrastructure is protected from attack (including electronic attack);
- ensuring the UK is prepared to deal with a chemical, biological, or nuclear release, and
- liaising with government and emergency services during terrorist incidents or counter-terrorism operations.

11. In addition, OSCT is responsible for overseeing the administration of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), the Security Service Acts 1989 and 1996, and Home Office-related elements of the Intelligence Services Act 1994.

12. OSCT is divided into six directorates. These are as follows:

- i. Prevent & RICU (the Research, Information and Communications Unit) is responsible for implementing strategies to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism; and for the strategic communications to support this;
- ii. Strategy, Planning & Change is responsible for: setting strategic direction; programme and project management services; corporate services; strategic oversight of Police CT capability; and OSCT's Secretariat capability;
- iii. Prepare, Protect, & CBRNE (the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Unit) is responsible for implementing strategies on the Protect and Prepare work-strands, as well as ensuring that science supports the delivery of counter-terrorism;
- iv. Law, Security and International is responsible for: Pursue policy and delivery; OSCT's international engagement; interception and surveillance policy and casework; and oversight of the Security Service;
- v. Interception Modernisation Programme (IMP) is a mission-critical, large-scale cross-government programme being delivered out of OSCT. IMP aims to maintain the UK's lawful Interception and Communications Data capability; and
- vi. OSCT Olympic Safety and Security is responsible for producing an integrated security strategy and costed plan with the police, London 2012 organisers and other security providers, which will deliver a safe, secure, and resilient Olympics in 2012.⁴

⁴ Ev 63

13. As part of wider changes to the machinery of government in the first half of 2007, the Home Office transferred many of its responsibilities, including prisons, probation and HM Courts Service, to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, which was recast as the Ministry of Justice. This left the Home Office more tightly focused on policing, security and counter-terrorism.

14. We asked the Director-General of OSCT, Mr Charles Farr OBE, whether the UK should pursue further integration of its intelligence and security agencies. While he accepted that the argument could be made, his response was unequivocal:

I would say definitely no because I think what we have at the moment is the best of both worlds. We have synergy—we could probably get more of it, by the way, but we have synergy, we have “jointery”, we have shared operations, we have technical capabilities. If you push it much further than that, you create enormous organisations which become bureaucratically unwieldy and are trying to do too much in a way that is unsustainable [...] by the way, as well you do not save money; you actually end up spending even more than you started by.⁵

15. **As part of our inquiry, we visited OSCT and saw the range of work which the organisation undertakes. We were extremely impressed by the professionalism, dedication, esprit de corps and creativity of OSCT and its employees. It must, by necessity, do much of its work in the dark, and most of what we were told was on a confidential basis. We would like to affirm that it is work of the highest importance and quality, and OSCT deserves every support and praise.**

16. **We accept that the UK Government’s intelligence and security apparatus can at first seem fragmented and confusing. Responsibility seems to be diffuse and there is no single, controlling figurehead. The Prime Minister is personally responsible for matters of intelligence and security, and the UK has no senior, dedicated, cross-departmental homeland security minister. We were initially unconvinced that the Government was following the most logical and coordinated approach to these matters which are so vital to our national interest. However, based on the evidence we have taken both in public and in private, and the briefings we have received, we are satisfied that the UK’s counter-terrorism apparatus is first-class, effective and as ‘joined-up’ as any system of government can expect. We have considerable confidence in OSCT and in its liaison with other departments and agencies.**

Operations on the ground

17. While the OSCT is responsible for policy formulation with regard to counter-terrorism, day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The MPS is responsible for counter-terrorist operations within Greater London but also has a coordination and leadership role in these matters nationally. The prime responsibility within the MPS lies with the Specialist Operations directorate, headed by Assistant Commissioner John Yates QPM.

⁵ Q 138

18. Specialist Operations is divided into three Commands:

- Protection Command, comprising Specialist Protection (SO1) and Royalty Protection (SO14)
- Protective Security Command (SO2)
- Counter Terrorism Command (SO15)

Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) was created in October 2006, partly in response to the terrorist attacks of July 2005, from the merger of the Anti-Terrorist Branch (SO13) and the Special Branch, to create “a new bespoke, multi-faceted, single counter-terrorism command – not restricted in design or look by existing structures, with a better capability and capacity to meet ongoing and future threats”.⁶

Other departments and agencies

19. While OSCT and the Security Service, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police, take the lead on counter-terrorism, a number of other, related departments and agencies are involved. The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) is a multi-agency unit, based in the Security Service, staffed by personnel from the Security Service, SIS, GCHQ, the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) and representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Home Office, the police and other relevant Government departments. It sets threat levels and issues timely threat warnings (relating to international terrorism) as well as providing more in-depth reports on trends, terrorist networks and capabilities. The Head of JTAC reports to the Director-General of the Security Service, who in turns answers for JTAC’s performance to the JIC.

20. In addition, the Cabinet Office has, since 2008, housed the National Security Secretariat, which reports to the Prime Minister and is responsible for strategy, especially the implementation of the National Security Strategy, and crisis management. It is responsible for COBR (Cabinet Office Briefing Room), the associated facilities, and the smooth running of Government crisis response, which could range from terrorist incidents to civil emergencies.

CONTEST: The Government’s counter-terrorism strategy

Creating and refining the strategy

21. The Government’s counter-terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST, is divided into four ‘strands’ or workstreams: Pursue; Prevent; Protect; and Prepare. The essence of these strands is defined by the Government as:

- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks;
- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism;

⁶ www.met.police.uk/so/counter-terrorism

- Protect: to strengthen our protection against terrorist attacks, and
- Prepare: where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact.⁷

22. In March 2008, the Government published the UK's first National Security Strategy (NSS), subtitled *Security in an interdependent world*.⁸ The purpose of the NSS was stated as being “to set out how we will address and manage this diverse though interconnected set of security challenges and underlying drivers, both immediately and in the longer term, to safeguard the nation, its citizens, our prosperity and our way of life”.⁹

23. In the light of the publication of the NSS, the Government announced its intention to ‘refresh’ CONTEST to reflect the changing security situation at home and abroad. Admiral Lord West of Spithead, appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State and Minister for Security at the Home Office in the summer of 2007, told a homeland security conference in July 2008 that:

Since its inception in 2003, CONTEST has evolved, in keeping with the changing threat. However, the events of August 2006 [the alleged airline plot] precipitated a recognition by ministers and professionals alike that we needed to raise our game, break out of specialist ‘silos’, avoid being London-centric and ensure that lessons learned were being incorporated via a stronger central hub which would manage the development and delivery of a reinvigorated CONTEST.¹⁰

24. The new iteration of CONTEST was published in March 2009.¹¹ It was deliberately conceived as a different kind of document from its predecessor. OSCT stressed to us that it contained as much material that could be left unclassified as possible; and also included historical analysis, in order to provide context for readers.¹²

25. One area in which we were keen to see openness was in recording and publicising the successes of the UK's intelligence and security agencies. However, Mr Farr explained that the *sub judice* convention, by which no public comment is made on cases awaiting judgement in the courts, was a very serious impediment to discussing openly the work and successes of OSCT and the intelligence services.¹³ However, he also conceded that this was an area in which the Government had underperformed, and expressed a willingness to re-examine the issue where possible.

26. We were particularly keen to establish how OSCT measures the success (or otherwise) of CONTEST. The new iteration of the strategy notes that “for the first time, counter-terrorism work has a Public Service Agreement (PSA) intended to set targets and monitor progress [...] the PSA is based around nine intended outcomes across the four main

⁷ The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering International Terrorism, Cm 7547, March 2009, p 11 (hereafter NSS 2009)

⁸ The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Security in an interdependent world, Cm 7291, March 2008

⁹ *ibid.*, p3

¹⁰ <http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/Speeches/speech-by-lord-west-govnet>

¹¹ Cm 7547

¹² Q 145

¹³ Q 146

CONTEST workstreams”.¹⁴ We questioned the Director-General of OSCT on this matter, and he explained the various mechanisms for measuring the success of CONTEST, highlighting in particular the Prevent strand.

It is difficult to quantify it but I do not think it is impossible to do it [...] I think there are two ways that you can do it. One is to look at the risk of radicalisation in certain environments in this country [...] secondly, you can look at attitudes. It is not difficult to look at attitudes [...] I would be very unhappy, and I know the Treasury would, if we had a key strand of our counter-terrorism strategy, £100 million or so this year, which we could not measure, and we do believe we can.¹⁵

“Prevent”

27. In some ways, the Prevent strand of CONTEST is the most important, as it aims to strike at the taproot of extremism. However, Mr Farr was at pains to point out in his evidence to us that ‘prevention’—that is, stopping people from supporting or embracing violent extremism of whatever kind—is not solely a function of a counter-terrorism strategy, but in fact must be regarded as part of a much wider approach to attitudes and attitudinal change.

This is about promoting the values on which this society depends, whichever government is in power, and there is more about that than counter-terrorism [...] it can so easily get lost in the wash.¹⁶

28. A critical part of the Prevent strand is the information war. The Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU) within OSCT produces strategic communications to analyse and combat the spread of violent extremism; OSCT also draws on the resources of the Defence Academy’s Advanced Research and Assessment Group (ARAG).¹⁷ RICU is a cross-government agency drawing on personnel and resources from the Home Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Communities and Local Government, and is responsible for “advising the rest of government but actually, not just government, officialdom, from a brigade commander in Helmand province through to a chief constable in Yorkshire, about how they may wish to characterise the threat we face”.¹⁸ Mr Farr also acknowledged that radicalisation was the product of a number of different factors. “We look at radicalisation under the three headings—political, psychological, behavioural.”¹⁹

29. We welcome the Government’s latest iteration of its counter-terrorism strategy. We believe that, within the recognised and understandable constraints of security, the maximum degree of openness is a beneficial factor in the fight against terrorism. The Government should do all it can to publicise its successes; while we understand the constraints of sub judice, we are concerned that the Government is imposing too strict

¹⁴ NSS 2009, p16

¹⁵ Qq 152-53

¹⁶ Qq 156-57

¹⁷ Q 178

¹⁸ Q 128

¹⁹ Q 179

a self-denying ordinance on itself, and could be more open, albeit in very general terms, about the extent to which it is winning the battle against terrorism.

30. We are encouraged by the proactive attitude of the Government towards the information war, as this is a central part of countering radicalisation. The work of RICU is of enormous value and impressed us greatly. The Government should continue to support the organisation and engage fully in the intellectual arguments surrounding radicalisation and violent extremism, lest it be left fighting the symptoms rather than the causes of the challenges facing the United Kingdom.

31. We note that a decision has been taken to review the use of powers to stop and search under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 for counter-terrorism purposes in the light of an assessment of their effectiveness and impact on the community. This demonstrates a welcome flexibility in the Government's approach to the use of counter-terrorism powers.

2 Transport infrastructure

Background

32. Events of recent years have demonstrated that the transport infrastructure of major cities is a focal point for terrorism. Mass transit systems have proved particularly tempting targets for terrorist groups. In March 1995, members of the Japanese religious movement Aum Shinrikyo released sarin gas on several lines of the Tokyo Metro, killing 12 people and injuring over 1,000. In February 2004, an Islamic militant detonated a suicide bomb on a train on the Moscow Metro, killing 41 others and injuring 250. Perhaps most famously, in March 2004, an al-Qa'eda-inspired terrorist cell carried out a coordinated series of bomb attacks on the commuter train system in Madrid, the *Cercanías*, causing 191 deaths and leaving 1,800 people injured. The attacks occurred just three days before Spain's general election and are widely believed to have made a significant contribution to the defeat of the then Prime Minister, José María Aznar, and the victory of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, which had opposed Spain's involvement in the war in Iraq.

Transport for London

33. Its size, scale and importance has inevitably made the transport system in London a prime target for terrorists. Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for implementing the transport strategy and managing transport services across London. It was created in 2000 as part of the Greater London Authority under the Greater London Authority Act 1999, gaining most of its functions from London Regional Transport. In 2003, it assumed responsibility for London Underground after the agreement of a public-private partnership (PPP) contract for maintenance.

34. TfL is divided into three principal directorates:

- London Underground is responsible for running the Tube and managing the provision of maintenance services by the private sector;
- London Rail is responsible for London Overground, the Docklands Light Railway, London Trams, and coordination with the operators that provide National Rail services within London;
- Surface Transport is responsible for other services such as London Buses, London Dial-A-Ride, London River Services and the Public Carriage Office.

35. In its memorandum to the Sub-Committee, TfL explained that the public transport system in London currently carries a record number of passengers: in 2007/08, there were over a billion journeys on the Tube, over two billion journeys on the bus network and more than 125 million journeys on London Rail.²⁰ Moreover, there is an inherent vulnerability in the very nature of the system:

One has only to buy a ticket to secure largely unrestricted access to the public areas of the rail network — 500 trains, 270 stations on the LU [London Underground]

²⁰ Ev 36

network, and 115 vehicle sets and 129 stations/stops on the London Rail networks — along with millions of fellow passengers.²¹

The July 2005 terrorist attacks

36. This vulnerability was shown most starkly in July 2005, when 56 people (including the four suicide bombers) died in a coordinated series of bomb attacks on the transport network (three on the Underground and one on a bus); later that month there was another concerted attempt on the network with three bombs placed on Tube trains and a fourth on a bus, none of which exploded as intended. There were no serious casualties as a result of this second series of attacks.

37. The bomb attacks on the London transport network in July 2005 were the deadliest attack on the capital since March 1945, when a German V2 rocket landed in Stepney and killed 131. TfL’s memorandum maintained that its investment and management of risk allowed it to “withstand and very rapidly recover from the attacks of 7 July 2005”. It pointed to the multi-agency planning put in place by the Government after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC, in September 2001, and to the training and refreshers received by all TfL staff. “The Underground’s ability on 7 July to evacuate around a quarter of a million people from the Tube network within an hour, without injury, is testimony to that, as was the restoration of 85% of services by the following morning.”²²

38. In 2007, the Prime Minister announced that the Security Minister, Admiral Lord West of Spithead, would conduct a review of how the UK protected crowded places, transport infrastructure and critical national infrastructure from terrorist attack. The review was not published but the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Jacqui Smith MP, summarised its findings in a written statement to the House of Commons, to which TfL’s memorandum drew attention. On the subject of transport infrastructure, the Home Secretary recounted that Lord West had concluded:

The review has acknowledged the effectiveness of the security programme that has already been implemented across the transport sector. This focuses on delivering security measures that help protect the travelling public and transport staff and facilities from terrorism threats, without impacting disproportionately on how the industry operates.²³

39. The London Assembly also conducted an investigation into the events of 7 July 2005. Its 7 July Review Committee, chaired by Richard Barnes AM, reported nearly a year later, in June 2006, and came to some conclusions which were critical of the performance of TfL. For example, it concluded:

The plans, systems and processes that are intended to provide a framework for the response to major incidents in London must be revised and improved. Communications within and between the emergency services did not stand up on 7

²¹ Ev 37

²² Ev 37

²³ HC Deb, 14 November 2007, col 46WS

July. As a result, individual emergency service personnel at the affected Tube stations and at Tavistock Square could not communicate effectively, in some cases with each other, and in other cases with their control rooms.²⁴

40. The lack of adequate communications equipment was considered all the more damning since the need had been identified after the investigation into the fire at King's Cross Station in 1988. It was the view of the Committee that "It is unacceptable that the emergency services, with the exception of the British Transport Police, are still not able to communicate by radio when they are underground, 18 years after the official inquiry into the King's Cross fire recommended action to address this problem."²⁵

41. We took evidence from Mr Tim O'Toole, the Managing Director of London Underground. He accepted that the Underground network would always be a prime target for terrorism "because it is such an iconic institution. It is so much a part of this country's identity that I think in that respect it will never drop off the radar."²⁶ However, he argued that the intensity of the threat was not necessarily inevitable.

Speaking only for myself, I believe this madness will burn itself out. It has always done so in the past and we will confront other things in the future. The only thing that is different about this madness is the lethality, but I do not believe suicide is a sustainable business practice.²⁷

42. Mr O'Toole also maintained that TfL had responded well to the attacks of July 2005. He pointed to the evacuation of 250,000 passengers within an hour on 7 July, and suggested that this level of efficiency was due to fundamental "competence": "only by people being trained to follow certain patterns of behaviour can you rely on the appropriate response".²⁸ Mr Nick Agnew, TfL's Safety and Contingency Planning Manager, reinforced the point. "London did not come to a stop and the process of recovery brought us back into a position where we were maintaining the network."²⁹

43. However, despite the heroism of many members of its staff, and the efficiency and orderliness of some parts of its operation, it is clear that there had been some failings in TfL's response to the terrorist attacks. A central issue was the inadequacy of communications. This took two forms. Firstly, there was a technological issue: in July 2005 there was no comprehensive and reliable system of underground communication for London Underground staff and the emergency services. Mr O'Toole concurred that the British Transport Police

were just using the old, somewhat unreliable system we [London Underground] have on our stations [...] it was replaced because actually it was a radio system that was in

²⁴ Report of the 7 July Review Committee, London Assembly, June 2006, p. 120

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Q 2

²⁷ Q 3

²⁸ Q 10

²⁹ Q 12

parts all over the network, it was very unreliable, very spotty and we wanted to go to a modern system that was expandable.³⁰

44. In addition, he acknowledged that there had been failures to disseminate information properly and consistently on 7 July 2005. In part due to an inadequate technological solution, members of staff were not as well informed as they should have been of what was happening during those fateful minutes and hours; some were deriving their information only from the news media and this led to an unacceptable level of confusion. “When you have drivers in depots who are sitting there waiting to take their turn and there is a television on reporting something and they are not getting information directly [...] you create problems for yourself.”³¹

45. Another criticism levelled at the Underground system was inadequate provision of emergency equipment. TfL had considered extending the provision of such equipment but had concluded that “emergency equipment on trains will continue to be provided for staff use only. To publicise its availability to passengers would be likely to result in theft and misuse.”³² However, Mr O’Toole argued that the lack of space on most Tube trains made widespread provision impossible; moreover, he pointed out, the removal of wooden components from many trains meant that fires were extremely unlikely on much of the system.³³

Preparation for the future

46. Given the continuing vulnerability of the Underground to terrorist attack, we were keen to know what preparations and planning were being undertaken by TfL, both routinely and in the light of the attacks, both successful and foiled, of July 2005. Clearly, one major step forward has been the introduction of the Airwave underground communication system. Designed to provide secure digital encrypted network for voice and data transmission, it is able to operate even in the deepest parts of the Underground system, some 35 metres below sea level. Airwave ‘piggy-backs’ on London Underground’s Connect digital radio network and removes the need for police officers to carry two radios, one for the surface and one for below-ground. Connect also allows better communications between control centres, trains, stations and depots. The management and dissemination of information has also been addressed in the light of the July 2005 attacks. We heard of a “cascading of information” to front-line TfL staff in the event of a future emergency to avoid any response being “slowed by the indecision of, ‘Have I been told everything?’”³⁴

47. TfL is also continually engaged in a programme of exercises, both virtual and ‘real time’. These range from drills involving only London Underground or TfL staff to major exercises staged with the involvement of a number of agencies. Mr O’Toole stressed that, perhaps counter-intuitively, live exercises can be of limited value. He pointed in particular to Exercise Osiris II, a major multi-agency exercise organised by the London Resilience

³⁰ Qq 18-19

³¹ Q 11

³² Ev 39

³³ Qq 33-34

³⁴ Q 11

Team and staged at Bank Underground Station and University College Hospital in September 2003.

It is an awful lot of expense for an amount of learning, from our perspective, that we think we get more effectively through the table top because we can posit so many different variations and, thereby, increase people's thinking. It, for us, was largely not as effective.³⁵

48. In addition to these efforts, TfL also maintains strong relationships with mass transit systems in other parts of the world. Best practice is widely shared, and there is a committee of representatives of European mass transit systems which fosters cooperation and dialogue.³⁶ Mr Agnew was particularly complimentary about the measures implemented by Singapore's Mass Rapid Transit, though he cautioned that it benefited from much newer infrastructure than London Underground.³⁷

49. It is clear to us that the men and women who work for Transport for London responded admirably and, in many cases, heroically to the challenges of July 2005. While the loss of life on 7 July was tragic, we are in no doubt that the actions of TfL staff prevented the death toll from being significantly higher, and we pay tribute to their dedication and professionalism. Without question, the attacks exposed some weaknesses in the procedures and preparations of TfL. However, we are satisfied that these have been identified and accepted, and are in the process of being addressed.

50. No mass transit system in a large city can ever be without vulnerabilities. The London Underground network will always be a high-profile and iconic target for would-be terrorists, as is the case with similar networks in other countries vulnerable to terrorism. The demands of a mass transit system on the scale of the London Underground will always be incompatible with airport-style security. We would, nevertheless, seek to reassure the House and the public that a great deal of work has been done, both overtly and behind the scenes, to protect the millions of passengers who use the Transport for London network every day. However, there is no room for complacency, and this work must remain a high priority.

³⁵ Q 56

³⁶ Q 61

³⁷ Q 63

3 The Games of the XXX Olympiad

Background

51. Another key vulnerability for the UK in the years ahead will be the Games of the XXX Olympiad, to be held in London in July and August 2012. There will be 202 competing nations, with around 20,000 athletes in London, as well as 30 heads of state visiting at various times. As well as the main games in London, there will be events within the jurisdiction of Essex, Dorset, Hertfordshire and Thames Valley Police. It is anticipated that 7.7 million tickets will be sold for the Games, in addition to 1.5 million for the Paralympic Games. The 2012 Games will, therefore, be a massive security challenge in terms of transport infrastructure, high-profile guests and venues, and the sheer number of visitors.

52. The lead body for coordinating the Games is the Government Olympic Executive (GOE), a unit within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, headed by its Director-General, Mr Jeremy Beeton. Responsibility for overseeing the staging of the Games lies with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG), chaired by Lord Coe, while the construction of the venues and infrastructure is the responsibility of the Olympic Delivery Authority, chaired by Mr John Armit.

53. In October 2007, the Metropolitan Police created an Olympic Security Directorate (OSD) to coordinate an integrated approach to security and resilience at the Games. The OSD brought together 23 different agencies, including the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence and the emergency services, as well as police forces outside London. In December 2008, the decision was taken to move the OSD from the Metropolitan Police to OSCT. Mr Farr noted that the directorate was simply absorbed into OSCT *en masse*: “We have got five directorates. We simply added a sixth, and that was fine.”³⁸

54. Assistant Commissioner Robert Quick, then head of Specialist Operations, told us:

I might just offer the comment from a policing perspective that, in my role, I am much reassured by recent changes. I think putting the security planning into the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism was a wise move because I think there is a substantial resource base there and a framework within which to conduct security planning for the Olympics more effectively, so I am reassured by that, but I am not complacent and I recognise that there is still a lot of work to be done and still many issues yet to resolve.³⁹

The Olympic challenge

55. Hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be a major logistical and public order challenge across the spectrum. Mr Farr identified four primary threats to the Games: terrorism; public disorder; serious crime; and non-malicious hazards. The sheer mass of people in London for the Games will be a huge challenge, representing crowds 20 times the size of a football World Cup.

³⁸ Q 190

³⁹ Q 120

56. OSCT was able to reassure us that the basic resources were in place to deal with security and public order issues arising from the Games. The budget for security of the Games is currently £600 million.⁴⁰ Mr Farr was also confident that the various police forces involved would be able to cope; there will be a joint Metropolitan Police/ACPO appointee responsible for nationwide delivery of policing programmes.⁴¹

57. OSCT has clearly identified the 2012 Olympic Games as a major challenge for the Government in terms of security, public order and logistics. We welcome the decision to give OSCT overall responsibility for the security of the XXX Olympiad, and are reassured that the issue is being treated with the appropriate gravity and priority. Engineering a successful, and, moreover, safe and secure Games, will be a litmus test for the Government's counter-terrorism strategy.

⁴⁰ Q 192

⁴¹ Q 198

4 Conclusion

58. The events of 11 September 2001 changed the landscape of security and counter-terrorism for many countries, not least for the United Kingdom. We have seen a fundamental reordering of our perception of the world and the threats it poses us, and the UK now faces a sustained and considerable terrorist threat. This has, inevitably and rightly, informed our security and counter-terrorism policies for the best part of a decade, and will continue to do so for the immediate future.

59. **We believe the UK is properly cognisant of and prepared for the threats it faces, insofar as they are foreseeable. Already, we have been tested as a nation, most notably on 7 July 2005 but on many other occasions before and after, and, while many lessons have been learned from each incident, we have not been found wanting. Moreover, we are satisfied that the departments and agencies with direct involvement in matters of security, intelligence and resilience are developing very satisfactorily.**

60. **The Government's counter-terrorism strategy is an important component of efforts to make the UK safer, and we welcome its latest iteration as a vital part of an overall security strategy. Co-ordination across government in these issues is very difficult to achieve, and different countries have approached it in different ways. After a slow start, much has been done to improve the UK's counter-terrorism structure, most notably the workings of OSCT and the Counter-Terrorism Units. This is impressive. We note that there is still much work to be done in these areas to make the UK's arrangements more efficient and effective.**

We are under no illusions that the threats facing us have lessened significantly, nor that they will lessen in the immediate future. It has been said that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty". We agree.

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 29 June 2009

Members present:

Mr Keith Vaz, in the Chair

Tom Brake
Ms Karen Buck
Mrs Ann Cryer
David T.C. Davies

Patrick Mercer
Gwyn Prosser
Gary Streeter
Mr David Winnick

Report from the Sub-committee (*Project CONTEST: The Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy*), brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Report from the Sub-committee be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 61 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Ninth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for placing in the Library and Parliamentary Archives.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 7 July at 10.15 am]

Witnesses

Thursday 29 January 2009

Page

Tim O'Toole, Managing Director, London Underground, and **Nick Agnew**, Safety and Contingency Planning Manager, Transport for London

Ev 1

Thursday 12 February 2009

Assistant Commissioner Robert Quick QPM, Specialist Operations, Metropolitan Police Service and Chair. ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area

Ev 11

Thursday 26 February 2009

Charles Farr, OBE, Director-General, **Gillian McGregor**, Head of Operational Support and Knowledge Management, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, Home Office

Ev 20

List of written evidence

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5	John Archibald	Ev 42
6	Correspondence from the Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (ACPO) to the Chairman of the Committee	Ev 44
7	Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)	Ev 44
8	Amnesty International	Ev 48
9	Unisys	Ev 52
10	Merseytravel	Ev 54
11	British Transport Police	Ev 58
12	Home Office	Ev 62

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2008–09

First Report	Monitoring of the UK Border Agency	HC 77 (HC 381)
Second Report	The Police and the Media	HC 75
Third Report	The Work of the Committee 2007–08	HC 76
Fourth Report	Policing Process of Home Office Leaks Inquiry	HC 157
Fifth Report	Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Bill [HL]	HC 425
Sixth Report	Human Trafficking	HC 23–I
Seventh Report	Knife Crime	HC 217
Eighth Report	Policing of the G20 Protests	HC 418

Session 2007–08

First Report	The Government's Counter-Terrorism Proposals	HC 43
Second Report	Bulgarian and Romanian Accession to the EU: Twelve months on	HC 59
Third Report	Security Industry Authority	HC 144
Fourth Report	Work of the Committee in 2007	HC 226
Fifth Report	A Surveillance Society?	HC 58 (HC 1124)
Sixth Report	Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage and "Honour"-Based Violence	HC 263 (HC 1165)
Seventh Report	Policing in the 21 st Century	HC 364
Special Report	Unauthorised Disclosure of Draft Report	HC 196

Session 2006–07

First Report	Work of the Committee in 2005–06	HC 296
Second Report	Young Black People and the Criminal Justice System	HC 181 (Cm 7217)
Third Report	Justice and Home Affairs Issues at European Union Level	HC 76 (HC 1021)
Fourth Report	Police Funding	HC 553 (HC 1092)

Session 2005–06

First Report	Draft Corporate Manslaughter Bill (First Joint Report with Work and Pensions Committee)	HC 540 (Cm 6755)
Second Report	Draft Sentencing Guideline: Robbery	HC 947
Third Report	Draft Sentencing Guidelines— <i>Overarching Principles: Domestic Violence and Breach of a Protective Order</i>	HC 1231
Fourth Report	Terrorism Detention Powers	HC 910 (Cm 6906)
Fifth Report	Immigration Control	HC 947 (Cm 6910)
Sixth Report	Draft Sentencing Guideline: Sexual Offences Act 2003	HC 1582

Oral evidence

Taken before the Home Affairs Committee (Home Affairs Sub-Committee) on Thursday 29 January 2009

Members present

Patrick Mercer, in the Chair

David T C Davies

Martin Salter

Witnesses: **Mr Tim O'Toole**, Managing Director, London Underground, and **Mr Nick Agnew**, Safety and Contingency Planning Manager, Transport for London, gave evidence.

Chairman: Good morning, everybody. Can I welcome Mr O'Toole and Mr Agnew to the first meeting of the Home Affairs Sub-Committee on Counter-terrorism. We are most grateful to you both for your time and your co-operation in being here. Can I ask the Members to declare any interests, starting with Mr Davies.

David Davies: I would like to declare that I am a Special Constable with the British Transport Police.

Martin Salter: I have no relevant interests to declare.

Q1 Chairman: Similarly, and we are likely to be joined by Ms Karen Buck who is detained on another appointment at the moment. I do not want to concentrate too much on the Underground but inevitably there will be quite a lot of focus just on the Underground, but a more general series of questions first, please, if I may. Can you tell me how you see the current threat to the transport system and how you think it might evolve in the medium to long-term?

Mr O'Toole: Speaking for the Underground, of course the threat has not officially changed. We look to the Government to advise us as to the threat. We do not have access to the intelligence to make that determination. However, I would say that I believe, and this is my personal view, the performance of the Underground in bringing the service back following 7/7 makes us more secure because if you do not reward these people with the chaos they are looking for, they go and they look elsewhere. I like to believe—and it is a rally drive with our employees—that their very professional and effective service in some respects and some unquantified way has reduced the threat to us.

Q2 Chairman: Yet we know from open sources they are still intensely interested and there have been at least two more failed attacks on the Tube since the 2005 attacks.

Mr O'Toole: People will always be interested in the Tube because it is such an iconic institution. It is so much a part of this country's identity that I think in that respect it will never drop off the radar.

Q3 Chairman: Can I iterate a second point of my question, how do you see the threat evolving? We have obviously endured suicide attacks and a

number of other attempted attacks and foiled attacks, if you were able to gaze into a crystal ball, what would it reveal?

Mr O'Toole: Again, I caveat my remarks by saying I take my guidance from the professionals, the people who are trained and have the information sources to express that judgment in a useful way. Speaking only for myself, I believe this madness will burn itself out. It has always done so in the past and we will confront other things in the future. The only thing that is different about this madness is the lethality, but I do not believe suicide is a sustainable business practice. Baader-Meinhoff went away, the IRA went away, this will go away, but we will always confront the number one challenge, which I believe is what we are confronting in society. It is not some clash of civilisations, it is the fact that there is a massive transfer of power from institutions to individuals largely made possible by the internet and I do not think society has figured out a way to deal with this. You can have a single person, Nick Leeson, take down a bank which has been there 250 years, Matt Drudge had more power over presidential politics than any 20 American newspapers and you can have a few lone people with box cutters who can turn a plane into a cruise missile and it is that phenomenon which in the long-term society has to somehow deal with.

Q4 David Davies: Mr O'Toole, Mr Agnew, good morning. Can you tell us insofar as you can what measures in terms of equipment and training you have put in place to prevent further outrage?

Mr O'Toole: We changed a number of things but the most important thing we have not changed and we are just continuing to perfect is the professionalism and attitude of our staff. I have always said you have to invest in technology but do not rely on it, but you should invest in your staff and you can always rely on them. We have continued our training with them, we have continued tabletop exercises, we have had multi-agency training going on and our own staff will continue with the discipline which every station staff member has to be involved in in an evacuation or a drill every seven months. It is something we continue to work on with the fire department. In addition to that, we have added to our reserves technically with the expansion of our CCTV

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programme. We had 6,000 all analogue cameras, we are now up to 8,500, a new digital system, and we will have 12,000 by the time we rebuild all the stations. We have delivered the Connect and Airwave radio systems and they are working very well. We were able to deliver the Airwave on the contract to the Home Office five months early. Working with the NHS, we have improved the medical supplies which would be available. In some 170 stations we have mass casualty kits, which were not there before, and on 30 stations we have these emergency dressing packs, very much larger packs for the NHS, these special pods, they have been put in place. I think it is this combination of trying to make ourselves a little bit better positioned to deal with situations, adding to our intelligence by putting in a more sophisticated CCTV system, and finally putting in a terrestrial trunk radio system, a modern system, which will allow us to have better communication should we face a multi-site attack, which was what was so unusual about 7/7.

Mr Agnew: In the wider context of other transport modes, we recognise, as, indeed, London Underground do, that it is easy to focus on the technical side of the operation. What we have focused on more recently is the benefits of the wider partnership which we have access to in developing things like training, techniques for our staff, communication and messaging about threats in particular. If I use buses as an example, we have in the London operation a wide range of separate bus contractors that come together under the TfL banner to provide the bus service. That in itself brings issues about the way in which we, as TfL, with our contractors go about the process of ensuring we give adequate training and guidance to the operators. There is a very close working relationship with them. You may have been aware recently of the public campaign which appeared just before Christmas on warning and informing about threats, in this case using the example of unattended bags. We use a similar approach when briefing our operators. We explain to them the background to the campaign, we have the ability to get right down through them to driver level so that individual members of staff, as with the Underground, are fully aware of what is taking place and the reasons for it. We also monitor to make sure we see that things like, in the case, again, of buses, checks of the vehicles and the destination of the individual bus are carried out as we wish.

Q5 David Davies: What sort of criminal record checks are carried out on members of staff?

Mr O'Toole: We do a criminal record check on staff based on their position. If you look at the Stephen Boys Smith review, we were named as the one that has model practice which other transport companies should follow. Our approach to reviewing staff background has now been adopted by the Infracos and some other companies, so I was quite pleased that the review of what we do was greeted so approvingly in that report.

Q6 David Davies: Do you take extra measures where somebody has come to this country within the last five years from a country where there might be a prevalence of terrorist related activities?

Mr O'Toole: It is a problem which as yet, to my knowledge, is unresolved because of the lack of reliable databases and it is something which we do not have a solution for yet. It seems like a logical thing to do but the ability to actually do it effectively, you need a source of intelligence and database you can rely on.

Q7 David Davies: If I may, Mr O'Toole, it is not a personal criticism, of course, but there are some people who say if you had lived in Britain all of your life, it is relatively easy to check your criminal background, so the first question is do you do a full criminal record check? The second point of the question is if you have come here from a country like—I hesitate to make an example because in no way am I suggesting that all people from any country or even any more than a small minority might be involved in terrorism—Somalia or areas of Pakistan, there is a possibility that slightly more people might be involved or know people involved in terrorism than in the UK. We have to be very careful, of course, and we must never ever stereotype, but one might expect that London Underground or any organisation might want to do stronger checks on people who come from areas like that. You are not able to do it, is that correct?

Mr O'Toole: It is correct, we do not have the facility to do it if that is what you are looking for me to say but I will say, firstly, we do criminal record checks but, secondly, two points would have to be made. One, of course, criminal record checks would not have helped with any of the incidents we have experienced, so in some respects it is a red herring; two, the mayhem we have experienced has not come from our employees, you only have to buy a ticket.

Q8 Martin Salter: At the risk of injecting an element of dissention amongst my colleagues here, I do not think it is our role to cast aspersions on the work of your employees, in fact many of whom were heroes during the 7/7 attacks which tragically involved one of my constituents, so I want to put that on the record. However, moving on from what David was saying, the terrorist threat evolves, so the threats we were dealing with two years ago, a year ago can become more sophisticated next year and the year after. What mechanisms have you got to liaise with counter-terrorist officers, Special Branch and others to ensure you are as ahead of the game as you can be in your preparedness for threats we may yet face, whether it is dirty bombs, more sophisticated explosive devices or the use of bacteriological weapons?

Mr O'Toole: First of all, we have a staff of professionals in the security area who liaise very closely with the British Transport Police and we really rely on their guidance, insight, connections and involvement in the various areas you have just named. That is the primary way we do it. We are also obviously a very active member in the London

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Resilience Team, so we have the benefit of that working and study of how we as a society need to prepare ourselves, whether we are a utility, the Underground, a train operating company, et cetera. I would say with regard to that, trying to anticipate the next move, it is our security professionals working with the British Transport Police.

Q9 Martin Salter: Mr O'Toole, are you happy with the level of liaison and professionalism that your people are witnessing and are part of? As Members of Parliament we get the impression that it is a pretty impressive job and operation, but we do not know, and we would like to hear it from the consumer end, my God you are a consumer in this field.

Mr O'Toole: It is a bit presumptuous of me to say this, and I would, would I not, but I think the Underground particularly has the best and closest relationship with the British Transport Police of any institution. We work very, very closely together. Our operation centres are literally cheek by jowl, they are separated by a single wall. There is this natural evolution of teamwork which has gone on, so we feel very well represented by them. Here is the really important point, you can have a lot of discussions about security, you can dream up lots of scenarios to frighten yourself, but you need a partner who understands how the machine works and the British Transport Police does understand it. They understand that certain measures can cause greater threats elsewhere; if you stop trains here, there are other trains stuck in tunnels. They understand how the machine works and so they know how to bring proportionate solutions to us.

Q10 Chairman: I would echo Mr Salter's point about the heroics of a huge number of your employees, but if we put that to one side for a moment, and we can never forget it, how would you characterise the performance of Transport for London during both the bombings of 7 July and then the failed bombings of 21 July 2005?

Mr O'Toole: Putting myself aside, I think the rest of the organisation performed magnificently. There were some people who behaved heroically, that is true, but you cannot rely on heroism, you have to rely on competence. Competence is the real solution here because it is only by people being trained to follow certain patterns of behaviour can you rely on the appropriate response. The one thing about 7 July which I think is truly stunning and testifies to this point I am making is once we went to Code Amber at 9:15 that morning, we took almost a quarter of a million people off of this network without a single injury. Chairman, I know you are trained in military matters, you know what it means to move that many people in a short space of time and that happened within an hour. You can only do that if you have trained people who are professionals who are competent because management cannot intervene. Management plays no role at that point, it is people following their training and doing the right thing. The fact that they were able to do that further

reassures Londoners that they have trained people down there who can look after them if something happens.

Q11 Chairman: Did you identify any training gaps amongst your staff as a result of this which you have since ameliorated?

Mr O'Toole: The concern they had was getting information, they were as concerned as the public. Because we did not have an effective radio system at that time, there was the natural concern of, "Is management making the right decision? Why is this happening?" When you have drivers in depots who are sitting there waiting to take their turn and there is a television on reporting something and they are not getting information directly which gives them better information than what they are getting from the BBC or Sky, you create problems for yourself. One of the things we have created since then, which happened on the 21st is a much more effective and thoughtful cascading of information immediately to our frontline people so they are not slowed by the indecision of, "Have I been told everything?"

Q12 Chairman: May I put the same question to you, Mr Agnew, before I bring in Mr Salter.

Mr Agnew: Indeed. I would say for the rest of the transport sector, and I go beyond Transport for London in saying that, for example to our colleagues in the National Rail network, it was, indeed, a magnificent response and I think it brought home some of the benefits of the partnerships. I am very conscious that "partnership" can be an overused word, but from the very early days we have built up a cohesive approach to the way we assist each other in times of crisis. On 7 July in particular I think we saw that very graphically in enabling people in the evening rush hour to return home without the Tube network being in place. The National Rail colleagues stepped forward immediately and offered every assistance combined, it must be said, by assistance from other authorities, for example local authorities who obviously had a concern about volumes of people who may have seen themselves as displaced, concerned or frightened. The way in which that operation was completed right through to the close of the day was very impressive. The other thing was in terms of the operation and the role of the individuals, the bus drivers, train drivers and the station staff of the National Rail network, it would have been an understandable concern if they questioned themselves and their managers as to whether they should continue working after what had happened to the Tube that morning. The fact that we saw the bus network recover, outside the area of damage, of course, in Central London and the National Rail network continue to operate was a tribute to all the individuals involved and for me this said a lot about the relationship, for example, between managers and staff. Managers were out with the staff reassuring them, dealing with concerns, whether they were theirs or the public, and by the close of that terrible day we had got people away from London and home.

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Q13 Chairman: I am asking you to speculate now, but supposing the 21 July attacks had been successful and there had been a similar or higher level of casualties, do you think there would still have been the same level of confidence in the staff after a second wave of attacks?

Mr Agnew: Undoubtedly I think there would have been a reoccurrence of the questions which were perhaps largely in people's minds on the 7th; they may have been more vocal on the 21st had those attacks been successful. It is difficult to speculate quite what would have happened, but during my career in transport we have lived through the previous era with the IRA campaigns which did show evidence, not just of repeated attacks but in at least one case a fatality involving a member of the transport staff, a train driver. Again, without overusing the word, the "resilience" of the transport community was such that concerns were addressed and they were dealt with. London did not come to a stop and the process of recovery brought us back into a position where we were maintaining the network. Again, that brings back this word "partnership" where in more recent years we have seen the undeniable benefit of the wider partnership, our colleagues in the emergency services, London Resilience, the group which has been set up for reinforcing resilience in London, right down to the voluntary sector. We are very engaged with all those groups now on this whole process of addressing not just the incident but the recovery from it, including the human factor side.

Chairman: Thank you.

Q14 Martin Salter: Mr O'Toole, you mentioned the Airwave network and there was some criticism after 7/7 about the extent of reach of the Airwave network. I understand it was implemented for the police in January of this year, so this month, but it is still not fully issued to the London Ambulance personnel. There has also been speculation in the media that the 2012 Olympics could put an undue burden on the system which could lead to it crashing. I believe very little of what is written in the media most of the time, with due respect to our colleagues, but perhaps you can confirm for us how far advanced the roll-out of Airwave is and if some of this speculation has got any basis or fact?

Mr O'Toole: The actual roll-out to other blue light beyond the police is not something we are really involved in and that is a contractual matter.

Q15 Martin Salter: But you would know about it.

Mr O'Toole: I do not know the status of that. I do know that fire and ambulance all have access to radios via us if they come on to our system, so that is not an issue for us. With regard to the system "crashing" from overload, I think that is a bit of a misunderstanding of how the system works because the system and the priority of calls is controlled by software. There are a number of channels available and the software designs a priority for taking calls. It takes the most important calls first, depending on how the talk groups are designed, and if there is not a channel available for you, you are simply queued

up and then the call goes through when the channel is open. Also I think there is some exaggeration with regard to this phenomenon because there seems to be this resonant assumption that you want a system where everyone is talking to everyone, which, of course, you do not, what you want is very controlled channels of communication. I do not want my people talking to the policeman around the bend in a tunnel because these people have to know where they are getting their information from and then it carries a certain imprimatur with them. You have to have very disciplined ways of communicating where it is policemen to their control point and then over to their counterpart in the Underground and then us back to our people, so the actual need for many, many, many channels is sometimes exaggerated.

Q16 Martin Salter: That is very helpful. Mr Agnew, have you got anything to add on this point?

Mr Agnew: Only the point about 2012. In our planning, which clearly in some areas is at a very early stage, we recognise the critical importance of communications and Airwave is part of that philosophy in terms of our planning programme to make sure we do have recognition of the fact that we need capacity in 2012, not just to deal with the situation we have now.

Martin Salter: Chairman, rather than pursue this, because certainly both Mr Agnew and Mr O'Toole have been very helpful, can I suggest in the course of our inquiry we return to probe a little deeper with other agencies the robustness of not just the Airwave system but the communication system in general?

Chairman: That is a very fair point. Thank you.

Q17 David Davies: On the Airwave point while we are discussing it, as you will be aware, Mr O'Toole, British Transport Police officers working on the Underground have until recently been carrying two radios, one Airwave and one on the Underground system. I have noticed that although the Airwave radio appears to be working, at least in some parts of the Underground, there still does not seem to be the confidence that it is working everywhere because I have noticed that most BTP officers are still carrying two radios.

Mr O'Toole: I cannot respond to the anecdote but I can assure you it works everywhere. It worked very well on New Year's Eve and we have had no reports of gaps or failures in the system.

David Davies: I shall take my second radio off immediately and let you know how I get on!

Chairman: Just out of interest, the British Transport Police have a radio system—I appreciate it is not your direct responsibility—which will communicate from servers to tunnels for some several years now, yet the—

*The Committee suspended from
10.40am to 10.43am while it was inquisorate*

Q18 Chairman: The radio system that the BTP have had for several years appears to have worked extremely well. Why was the decision made not to take that radio system and distribute it more widely

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either, preferably, after the threat became very, very clear, to the best of my knowledge, in 2003 that the Tube was going to be attacked and, if that was the case, then after the bombings in 2005?

Mr O'Toole: The British Transport Police did not have a separate radio system, they were just using the old, somewhat unreliable system we have on our stations. They were just equipped with our radios, the exact one the station supervisor would have had or a CSA would have on a platform.

Q19 Chairman: Sorry, a "CSA"?

Mr O'Toole: A Customer Service Assistant, the people down on the platforms, I beg your pardon. There was a protocol for people who needed access to our system to do just that, for the British Transport Police to know that there actually was a way of communicating which was always available. It was replaced because actually it was a radio system that was in parts all over the network, it was very unreliable, very spotty, and we wanted to go to a modern system that was expandable and could address these increasing needs, including eventually being able to move video signals about the network, so we were just moving on to a more modern technology, but what the British Transport Police had available to them was simply the old thing that we were using to run the stations.

Q20 Chairman: And yet that was a much better system or, at least, it provided some means of communication for the services, none of which of course, on the morning of 2005, did the vast majority of emergency services and the police have.

Mr O'Toole: Well, there are different protocols that they use. For example, the London Fire Brigade has a protocol, but they literally have their own system, that, when they go to a site, they run a leaky feeder right down so that they have communications. Our radio systems are available to people. Of course, no radio system works when the antenna to the leaky feeder cable is blown apart, which will certainly frustrate your ability to communicate, as it did on that morning.

Q21 David Davies: I wonder if I could ask you a slightly different question. How easy is it for you to contact the Security Service or Special Branch if you become aware of, or are concerned about, something that is going on on the Underground?

Mr O'Toole: It is very easy, it goes right through our network operations centre. There are protocols for contacting people. It would go from them immediately to BTP.

Q22 David Davies: Are you absolutely confident that you could pick up the phone and, within seconds, get through to somebody in the Security Service, Special Branch or BTP?

Mr O'Toole: I am absolutely confident that I can pick up the phone and reach my network operations centre and that they can make the communication.

Q23 David Davies: And that it will be dealt with efficiently and promptly?

Mr O'Toole: Well, I have no reason to think otherwise.

Q24 David Davies: You must have made phone calls in the past though.

Mr O'Toole: I have never had to trigger the alarm personally.

Q25 David Davies: So have you, not explored, rehearsed that possibility or perhaps telephoned to say? Do you have conversations with them?

Mr O'Toole: You have to understand, would that I were so important that it all turned on my behaviour, but that is not actually the way the railway runs. The way it runs is that there is a rostered duty officer on charge 24 hours a day, there is also a security officer on charge 24 hours a day, and they are constantly in contact with the network operations centre and they have plenary authority to make the communications and make the calls in the light of events which would trigger the communications that you are concerned about. I have never witnessed the situation where that regimen, that system, has broken down.

David Davies: I see vigorous nodding in confirmation behind you, so I am going to assume that that is probably right then.

Q26 Chairman: My Specialist Adviser has prompted me, particularly on the radio issues, I can see this, that you will just return to Airwave for ever. Why is it that it has taken three and a half years since the bombings to get effective communication in place?

Mr Agnew: The Airwave project is something which obviously we are a party to, but we have not been the prime developer of, if I can put it in those terms, so, in the sense of outside London Underground, I would have to come back to you with more detail in writing. In the general sense, we are very aware that there was, from the word go, a requirement to make sure that the Airwave system was resilient, given that, certainly in the case of the Underground, a lot of its usage would be in areas where communication had previously been difficult, so the development timescale, I would certainly be sure, was linked to the need to make absolutely sure that, when the system was commissioned, it was fit for purpose, but it also brings in the point Mr O'Toole made, that we did have contingencies in the intervening period, recognising that the need to communicate was not of itself going to change and we just wanted to have a better system for our colleagues in the emergency services to have access to.

Mr O'Toole: I do not want to cast aspersions on Airwave, but Airwave could not be put on our system until Connect itself was built. When we came in and took over the Underground, we had Connect, which was a PFI that was failed and it was just a series of claims and very little had been built. We changed management and really completely reformed that effort and are quite proud that we were able to turn it around and get it installed across the network. At that time, there was no commitment and no arrangement for Airwave to go in on the Connect system. However, when we were coming towards the end, in co-operation with the police and

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the Home Office, I would emphasise, we saw that it was highly likely that people were going to want to put Airwave in. It is basically these base radio station racks where you go in and put in a base radio which gives you the four channels, so we, on our own time, built the capacity so that, if an Airwave contract were signed, it could be installed, and indeed that did happen, so actually it is kind of that forward-thinking that allowed Airwave to get in faster than the Home Office contract with us called for.

Q27 Chairman: Yet, correct me if I am wrong, the initial requirement for radio which would be compatible with services in-tunnel arose after the King's Cross fire in 1987?

Mr O'Toole: I believe that was mentioned in the Fennell Report, and I cannot explain the history between then and now.

Q28 Chairman: From the point of view of an objective or semi-objective onlooker, it does seem to be an unconscionably long period of time, first of all, that this requirement arose after the King's Cross fire, and I appreciate you cannot comment on that, but then it was still three and a half years after this major incident when, if what I say is supported, there have been at least two further attempted attacks on the Tube, and I do not know whether you want to comment on that or not, so are you confident that in that three and a half years between the July bombings of 2005 and January, this month, that you would have been able to cope better than you did on the morning of July 7?

Mr O'Toole: I think that most definitely we would have. The fact that Connect was not completed everywhere was undesirable obviously and we wish everything had happened faster, but we did have a radio system and we did have procedures in place to follow and, moreover, although it would have been nice to have had a working radio system on that morning, it did not figure prominently in the events.

Q29 Chairman: Well, that does not reassure me, I have to say.

Mr O'Toole: Well, what you should be reassured by is that it is in there now.

Q30 Chairman: If I just take the military analogy, if there were a radio system that had been proved to be inadequate in combat, it would be dealt with by an urgent operational requirement and the chain of command, if you will forgive the phrase, would have inserted the toes of their boots up various parts of anatomies to make sure it happened and it certainly would not have taken three and a half years. Now, where should the grip, the direction, the thrust, the leadership, have been coming from to make sure that this problem was overcome quicker than it was?

Mr O'Toole: Well, I do not think it would be proper for me to say that it rests anywhere else than with me, but, I have to tell you, I am quite comfortable with the management job we did in turning round that PFI and getting the system built, but I have to take responsibility for anything that happens on the

Underground and I take responsibility for the rollout of Connect which is also why, I hasten to point out, the delivery of Airwave, piggy-backing on Connect, was delivered faster than my contract requirement called for.

Q31 Chairman: Well, you have certainly incited my respect by taking that responsibility and I think that is a tremendous thing for you to say. I am glad that we have not had occasion to have our radio systems tested. Are you familiar with this assertion that I have made, that at least two further attempts have been made on the Underground?

Mr O'Toole: No.

Q32 Chairman: You have never been informed about that, told about it, or it has never been suggested to you?

Mr O'Toole: No.

Q33 Chairman: Moving on, if we may, to the wider provision of emergency equipment, particularly on Underground trains, in your memorandum to us, we were talking about equipment such as fire extinguishers, perhaps first aid equipment, certainly provisions of emergency water, et cetera, et cetera, on the inside of carriages, yet your assertion is that the provision of such things would be likely to result in theft and misuse. However, we find, certainly on other comparable underground systems in other countries or indeed on comparable underground systems in this country, that this does not happen. Why are you so concerned about the abuse of such equipment were you to place it there?

Mr O'Toole: First of all, there are no comparable systems in the world. What is distinctive about the London Underground is its complete lack of space. You have very small tunnels and very small trains that do not exist anywhere else in the world. No one would build, in this day and age, a network of these dimensions which puts very large constraints on you in the solutions that you can go for. Finding space on a Tube train is a very, very tricky proposition, and we determined that the most effective way to deliver most of the items you have mentioned was by keeping it at the stations and delivering it to the trains because one of the great advantages we have over other systems in the world is the amount of staff we have deployed who are in a position and who are trained to respond to incidents, and we actually think that that is a more reliable way of delivering the assistance and the various items you mentioned.

Q34 Chairman: Having spoken to a number of the victims who were stuck inside tunnels as a result of the bombings in 2005, many of them with their senses heavily afflicted by the devices that had just gone off, in darkness, in carriages that were filled with smoke and with bodies that were beginning to burn around them, they have all reflected to me, at least, on the fact that there was no fire-fighting equipment inside the carriages of those trains. I absolutely take your point about the lack of space, but, correct me if I am wrong, there have been fire

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extinguishers in the carriages in the past. What has prompted the decision not to have fire extinguishers then?

Mr O'Toole: Following the King's Cross fire, London Underground did a complete and thorough review of its vulnerabilities, and one of the things that has not been much remarked on, but should be, is that one of the most amazing phenomena that you saw on July 7 is that nothing burned, there was no fire. If there had been fires, many, many more people would have died in the smoke that would have filled those tunnels, but there were no fires, and the reason there were no fires is that London Underground has removed everything that is combustible from its system. That is why the wooden escalators were taken away and it is why the wooden parts of trains have been removed, which is why you used to see fire extinguishers on the trains on the District Line, the D stock, but, as soon as they had been refurbished and the combustible materials had been removed, you had no need for the fire extinguishers because there literally is no purpose to them. Also, they are a problem with vandalism and the like, so the sooner we could remove them when we do not need them, we have, and the reason they are not on those trains any longer is that they serve no purpose. There is a fire extinguisher in the driver's cab of course, but that is mostly to address the fact that sometimes you have fires as a result of litter on rails themselves, but those are always of minor items, and the only reason the extinguishers are there is because it allows us to clean up a situation faster which would otherwise delay the service, but you do not need fire extinguishers in a modern Tube train.

Q35 Chairman: The bodies and clothing burned, Mr O'Toole.

Mr O'Toole: Well, they do, but there were, to my knowledge, no incidents that I am aware of where you would have used a fire extinguisher on a body or on clothing which would have changed the situation. It is much better to put it out with your own clothing.

Q36 Chairman: One of the other remarks that they made was that there was no emergency water. Why?

Mr O'Toole: Again, it is this question of how much would you carry, where would you carry it, how would you refresh it. Our protocol is that our station staff deliver emergency water to people in trains and tunnels as quickly as they can. We just found, after studying this problem for a very long time, that this would be the most effective way for us to deliver this consistently over the whole network.

Q37 David Davies: Is there emergency water in every station then, Mr O'Toole?

Mr O'Toole: There are water supplies in every station, but, for dealing with a situation such as this or indeed any emergency situations we have where there is a train in a tunnel, we have core operations for trucks that deliver water to wherever the point is. We simply do not have enough room to keep enough water at every station that would have to deal with a possible emergency near it, given the number of bottles you need.

Q38 David Davies: Do you have a target time within which you could get water to any station?

Mr O'Toole: We do and, off the top of my head, I cannot tell you what it is, but I would be happy, if you would allow me, to supply that.

Q39 Chairman: I am told, Mr O'Toole or Mr Agnew, that there are carry sheets in every carriage which can be improvised as stretchers. Is that the case?

Mr O'Toole: There are carry sheets in trains, but also one of the things we have advanced since 7/7 is the modern collapsible stretcher units which are kept in the stations themselves.

Q40 Chairman: I am specifically referring to the trains because again, talking to the victims, many of them, as you know, had to get out and walk on to the tracks carrying casualties and they had nothing with which to carry them, yet it would appear that there were carry sheets which were available, yet nobody was told where they were, in what quantities, how to get them or how to use them. The first question: do these things exist or not?

Mr O'Toole: They do exist. They do not exist in a number that would have been able to address that situation because there just is not room for them, and the intention is that the real purpose is to deal with the one-off and the idea is that the driver or a member of station staff who responds to a situation would access it.

Q41 Chairman: Where are they kept?

Mr O'Toole: They are kept under the seat compartments.

Q42 Chairman: How many of them?

Mr O'Toole: Two on every train, I am informed.

Q43 Chairman: Two on every train rather than every carriage?

Mr O'Toole: Yes.

Q44 Chairman: Why are the public not told where they are?

Mr O'Toole: Because the public does not have access to them, the driver has to access them.

Q45 Chairman: Have you considered putting such devices in each carriage?

Mr O'Toole: Well, we consider all of these ideas as they come along, but again our emergency team had a review of how exactly would this work, would it be effective, how would people deal with that, and determined that it would be of marginal utility.

Q46 Chairman: What about the first aid training of members of staff? What level of training do they receive and how many of them are trained?

Mr O'Toole: We have 1,000 first-aiders, so, of our, say, 12,000 employees that are on the operating side of the business, there are 1,000 first-aiders fully trained. Also, as a result of 7/7, we have added a module to our training for our supervisors so that they get basic first aid training to, hopefully, help really their self-confidence in overseeing an incident.

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Q47 Chairman: One of the ideas that was suggested after the July bombings was that the travelling public should be encouraged to take first aid training, and some work was done on this, I know, by your own organisation, and that the qualified first-aider would be rewarded by subsidised, or perhaps even free, travel. How far has that idea progressed?

Mr O'Toole: I am not aware of how far it has progressed. Plainly, it is a political decision because that is a funding issue. It would not be for me to pass on that.

Q48 David Davies: Mr O'Toole or Mr Agnew, you have mentioned better communication as one of the lessons learned from the last bombings. Is there anything else you can think of that has been improved since that happened in 2005?

Mr Agnew: Certainly one of the things, and again I make no apology for using the word, is the strengthening of the partnerships which, in many cases, existed already, but, in some cases, have been reinforced or forged from new. If I can use the example of the London Resilience Team, which is a body that has representatives from key London agencies, including the responders, we have embodied, not just in our own focus on the post-7/7 situation, but in the workstreams of London Resilience, the need to make sure that we use the full partnership to its best effect in the context of things like the 7/7 attacks. That is not to say it did not happen because it happened very, very well during 7/7, but it is part of progressive lessons learned, review, and the ploughing of those lessons learned into future work.

Q49 David Davies: I think you and Mr O'Toole mentioned earlier on that the staff will conduct a full evacuation exercise every seven months.

Mr O'Toole: That is correct.

Q50 David Davies: Is that done with other agencies, such as the police or the ambulance service, and, if not, how often do you have multi-agency exercises?

Mr Agnew: Well, we do conduct multi-agency exercises, both at a local level and on a larger scale, and we do carry out, at the local level, as Mr O'Toole has said, actual physical exercises. We also—

Q51 David Davies: How often would that be, Mr Agnew? Is there a target for how often those take place—once a year or once every six months?

Mr Agnew: Well, the exercises, as has been referred to, every seven months are very much around operational procedures.

Q52 David Davies: Those are just evacuation exercises for the staff though. What I am getting at is the multi-agency exercises with the police and the ambulance service. How often will they take place and how many will take place in London?

Mr Agnew: Typically, if we take last year, we had five or six exercises, table-top exercises, involving a range of agencies, Transport, our colleagues in the emergency services, on a range of subjects, and this

is something that we have built into the way we work and will continue to do so, but it is not just about terrorism, let me stress.

Mr O'Toole: By my count, in the last two years we have had 14 multi-agency drills of the kind that Nick has just described. We also, on our own, run multi-agency drills that go beyond agencies and invite the boroughs and other affected parties at least once a year, which are very, very large, I am talking about a gathering of 100 people to go through a whole-day exercise of a drill, and we do that once a year. Of course, in addition to every station having to do something every seven months, we run a drill once a year for each line simulating how that management team would deal with a problem.

Q53 David Davies: These drills which happen once a year and the 14 multi-agency ones as well, these are just simulations carried out in an office, are they not?

Mr O'Toole: They are table-top exercises, right. We had, as you know, the very large exercise at Bank which took up about half the City, and we found, quite frankly, it was not great value for money from our perspective, that kind of a drill, that we learn much more, it is much more dynamic, through these table-top exercises and they just seem better value for money.

Q54 David Davies: Did you say you have 14 a year?

Mr O'Toole: No, I said there were 14 in the last two years.

Q55 David Davies: So about once every two months. I wonder whether it would be possible, or desirable, for anyone from the Committee to attend the next one, if they come along once every two months or so?

Mr O'Toole: I do not run them, but I do not see any problem with it. The whole point of it is to give people confidence.

Q56 Chairman: Exercise Osiris II, I think it was, which was held in the autumn of 2002, as far as I am aware, and please correct me if I am wrong, it was the only exercise that you have done, and I appreciate that it was not at your behest, which involved large numbers of people physically to be moved around the Underground, and it was actually Bank Tube it was conducted at on a Sunday. What were the lessons learned and why have you not repeated such an exercise, or have you?

Mr O'Toole: It was 2003, I believe. Again, as I said, it is an awful lot of expense for an amount of learning, from our perspective, that we think we get more effectively through the table top because we can posit so many different variations and, thereby, increase people's thinking. It, for us, was largely not as effective. The police and fire services speak for themselves, they may have found it of more value than we did.

Q57 Chairman: The travelling public do not seem to be rehearsed in the evacuation of trains or tunnels. Why?

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Mr O'Toole: The fact is that on our network, which is quite different from the train operating companies which I cannot speak to, because of the power system, the lack of space, the inability to exercise from the side of a train for the most part on a Tube, we ask that actually people do not evacuate, stay where they are, and only respond to our staff coming to deal with them, so I am not quite sure what it is we would do. When you consider the number of people we carry, it would be very difficult to do anything useful in terms of a drill with the users of the Tube.

Q58 Chairman: Coming back to the eye witnesses, to whom I have spoken, who were stuck in the tunnels after the trains had been bombed, they all remarked to me that there were no emergency instructions inside the cars. Now, I absolutely take the point about the fact that you would prefer to contain people inside the carriages rather than have them out on potentially live lines, but I absolutely take the point that there has been a tiny, blue notice introduced since which, if I may say, is a masterpiece of obscurity and ends with the interesting comment, "Take no risks". May I suggest that this is perhaps not terribly helpful, and this is the only form of transport I have travelled on where you will get instructions to turn your iPod down, not to eat smelly food, to keep your feet off the cushions, but actually there is nothing really sensible told to the travelling public in terms of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Mr O'Toole: I take your point.

Q59 Martin Salter: I was going to probe how effective you thought your co-ordination was with other agencies, but you have answered that in an earlier exchange. On a specific issue, can I just ask if you have been consulted on the Government's "Refresh", as they call it, of the CONTEST project in general? Have you been brought into the loop on that?

Mr Agnew: Yes, we work closely with the Department for Transport and also, as I mentioned earlier, with the multi-agency Government Office for London-run London Resilience Team, and both of those have been examples of areas where we have been briefed on the background to Refresh and some of the work that has taken place.

Q60 Martin Salter: What is your assessment of CONTEST as an overall operation? It has got the four strands and the rest of it, but do you feel that the initiative is in the right place, that it is properly resourced? Is it one of those things you go to where you feel that you are able to make a valuable contribution towards taking forward the counter-terrorism policy as it affects your operation?

Mr Agnew: Well, I think it builds on a point I made earlier about the relationships particularly with agencies that we have in place already, and it is very useful to have, I think, any review of the way in which procedures have been developed and put in place and tested, but it is not, as I see it from a

transport perspective, a substitute for a lot of the things that are ongoing and have already been in place. Again, without dwelling on any one aspect, we find particularly useful our relationship with the Department for Transport because clearly we have a range of transport modes that we are responsible for or are integrated with and some of the things I see in CONTEST are reflecting things that we are doing with agencies such as DfT.

Q61 Martin Salter: In your experience of CONTEST and in preparing your infrastructure to cope with possible terrorist attacks, is information being fed in from across the globe from other countries, from other jurisdictions? Is there an opportunity to refresh and learn best practice from elsewhere?

Mr Agnew: Most definitely. We have again a longstanding liaison with other transport operators around the world in various forms. We have a European committee which fosters the sort of work you are talking about and the sort of contact between agencies, and we have ones that are modal looking at metros or within the bus sector, for example. In Transport for London, we benefit from not just contact with, and visits to, other agencies, but from their representatives coming to us and that is a frequent occurrence, and it is very much about the sort of things you have mentioned; it is about identifying best practice and making sure it is shared and then being able to evaluate whether that is something that would benefit a wider community or whether it is specific to a particular country, agency or city.

Q62 Martin Salter: If I could persuade the Chairman to raid the House of Commons' budget so that we could go on one of our fact-finding trips, or junkets, as I am sure many people would like to call them, is there a jurisdiction, is there a transport infrastructure, is there anywhere you would hold up as good practice and, when you hear from them, you think, "Hang on, those guys are well ahead of the curve"?

Mr Agnew: I think we could certainly assist in a fact-finding trip of that nature in terms of looking at the specific issues that you have of interest and then saying, "In our experience, these agencies represent best practice", and again I would come back to our colleagues in DfT who have been extremely helpful again to agencies like ourselves in making recommendations, not just in the UK, but also in other countries.

Q63 Martin Salter: I want to push that a bit further. I am not after going somewhere hot and nice, I do not mind if it is Iceland, but is there another public transport system in a major conurbation or a major city where the security regime is particularly impressive and it might be instructive for us to go and take evidence from? I am half-joking about going anywhere.

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Mr Agnew: Well, the one that I have visited and found to be very impressive is Singapore. Now, obviously they have the benefit of much-newer infrastructure than we do in London, just to name one aspect of it, but they are very good.

Q64 Martin Salter: They do not have the added point of having to worry about human rights either, do they, too much?

Mr Agnew: Well, I was impressed all round with what I saw during the brief period of my visit, I would say.

Q65 Martin Salter: Mr O'Toole, have you got anything to add on those points at all?

Mr O'Toole: I would only echo this point Nick has made, at least on the metro side, that we have very, very close ties. We have an organisation of world metros that review each other's practice. We all face different versions of the threat because of the make-up of our systems, but you can look at different systems which have different things. For example, New York, the largest metro system in the world, has come to us for guidance because they do not even have CCTV and they would like to have CCTV on their system and improve. We look to the more modern systems, like Washington and the practices of Hong Kong and elsewhere, and evaluate all of the technology and solutions because we want to make sure that we are doing the right thing. I have to point out though, and you are quite properly probing for shortcomings, weaknesses and how can we get better because you can never be complacent, but I have a steady stream of metros through my office because they view us as one of the leaders.

Q66 Martin Salter: Could I just probe this CCTV issue because it fascinates me. There has been a bit of a campaign in this country, not largely supported in this House, I have to say, apart from one or two exceptions, which is basically saying that there are too many cameras and we are being watched too regularly, it is intrusive. Now, I do not get that from my constituents. I cannot remember getting a letter from any of my constituents, telling me, "I want the CCTV camera taken down at the end of my street". In fact, it is usually the other way round and the

public want more of these things, not less of these things. It seems to be broadly accepted in this country that CCTV is seen as a good thing and it is one of those bits of intrusion by the authorities that we will put up with in the broader interest of keeping us collectively safe. I get the impression in other countries that there is a different view of CCTV, and I see your adviser nodding behind you which is helpful, so is that the case in America and elsewhere and how is public opinion involved in other countries around the issue of CCTV?

Mr O'Toole: Well, some of this is gratuitous commentary on my part because it is without a great deal of study, it is opinion, but, first of all, I want to emphasise that the place we start from is that we have CCTV to run our network, we do not have it for security purposes. We have it so that the person that sits in the control room can see where the crowds are building up and know when to intervene and when to put the station control in place, and that is why we have it. It has evolved to present other advantages, as you point out, and it is useful for projecting control over an environment. I think you are right, that in America there have been the civil libertarians quite worried by what it means, where it could take us and the whole issue of the Big Brother society. However, and here is the gratuitous part, I think you will find that, contrary to one's expectations, and this is where it is evolving, there is the least resistance to CCTV among young people, that actually, once you get past Facebook, exhibitionism seems to be replacing the need for privacy, and the greatest objection to it seems to be among older people who remember more, or have probably read, George Orwell.

Q67 David Davies: Is there CCTV on every coach now?

Mr O'Toole: No, not on the old trains. It will come in on the new trains and, because there are two fleets, the Central and Bakerloo, which will not be replaced for quite some time, we are going to retrofit.

Chairman: Right, ladies and gentlemen, we are going to have a five-minute break now while we clear the room to go into private session for the remaining three or four questions on the sheet.

Questions 68–93

Evidence heard in Private

Thursday 12 February 2009

Members present

Patrick Mercer, in the Chair

Ms Karen Buck
David T C Davies

Martin Salter

Witness: Assistant Commissioner Robert Quick QPM, Assistant Commissioner, Specialist Operations, Metropolitan Police Service, and Chair, ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area, gave evidence.

Q94 Chairman: Good morning, everybody, and thank you very much for coming. Assistant Commissioner Quick, I imagine you now have a better understanding of the workings of the House of Commons, do you not, with the amount of time you spend here?

Mr Quick: Indeed, and it is growing by the week.

Q95 Chairman: It is very nice to see you again and thank you for sparing the Home Affairs Committee so much time this week and, in particular, the Counter-Terrorism Sub-Committee. I appreciate you are a busy man and indeed we might touch upon where your priorities are forced to lie over the course of the questions. I want to keep as much of this in the public domain as we can, however, clearly there are questions that the Committee will ask you and, if you are uncomfortable, then please say so.

Mr Quick: I will not hesitate to indicate my discomfort if we stray into any areas where I feel it is inappropriate.

Q96 Chairman: And, if we do that, then we will merely hold over the questions and we will go into camera for the last ten minutes or so of the evidence session, if that suits you.

Mr Quick: That suits me, thank you.

Q97 Chairman: I think you probably know everybody by now and I will not bother introducing them. Assistant Commissioner, can you explain to us briefly the Metropolitan Police's role in counter-terrorism operations in London and then, especially, across the United Kingdom please.

Mr Quick: Let me start with the fact that the Commissioner in law has an overarching responsibility for counter-terrorism in England and Wales and, accordingly, my role, as Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations, is accountable to the Commissioner for protection, security and counter-terrorism nationally. The Metropolitan Police have historically been the force that holds the police counter-terrorism resources to deal with all incidents nationally in terms of specialist resources. More recently of course, that has changed, and I will perhaps say a bit more about that in a moment. The Counter-Terrorism Command in London, SO15, is the primary police resource for countering terrorism. It is a very large and complex command. It has a headcount of approaching 1,500 personnel and is still growing under CSR funding, and that houses a whole range of specialist officers with specialist skills in counter-terrorism work, so the Metropolitan

Police are the primary resource and the primary accountability lies with the Commissioner, and I discharge that responsibility on a day-to-day basis. More recently, there have been developments following the attacks in London in 2005 and the introduction of the CONTEST Strategy, whose origins, I think, are as early as 2003, but certainly its refresh in 2006 led to the availability of more funding to grow police counter-terrorism resources, and that has led to a national build to establish large counter-terrorism units in Leeds, in Manchester, in Birmingham and a slightly smaller counter-terrorism unit in the South East region, in the Thames Valley police area, so in effect now we have five large counter-terrorism units, London, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and the smaller one in the Thames Valley area. They are supplemented by some additional units which we call "Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Units", so they do not have the full range of function and capability, but are focused primarily on intelligence, and there is one of those in the eastern region of the country in Hertfordshire, there is one in the Avon and Somerset police area for the South West and there is one in the East Midlands.

Q98 Martin Salter: What does Special Branch do now? Surely, setting you guys up was an admission really that Special Branch was not really up to the job. Now, I go back to days when Special Branch officers were cutting out photocopies from *The Daily Mirror* to find out who was a member of a trade union and it was really quite low-level stuff, and I am just wondering why we bother to have Special Branch now.

Mr Quick: Well, it certainly was not an admission that Special Branch were ineffective. Special Branch has a wider role of course than just counter-terrorism, but, increasingly in the last few decades, it has played an increasing part in countering terrorism. In fact, in October of last year at the primary decision-making body for the Police Service as a whole in England and Wales, the ACPO Chief Constables' Council, agreement was given to develop the National Counter-Terrorism Network which links together all of those counter-terrorism units and also links them with all of the four special branches, and they are actually an intrinsic and important part of countering terrorism because they are local intelligence officers who of course have a much greater, granular understanding of their communities and their force areas, so they have an understanding of the local context that national or

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regional units would struggle to achieve, so they are very, very important to the Counter-Terrorism Network as a whole. The sort of coalesce of countering terrorism is essentially every police force because all officers and staff have a role to be aware and to make contributions to a national effort. Then you have the local force special branches in each force, then the next level up is the counter-terrorism intelligence units, the next level up is the counter-terrorism units, the five larger ones, and at the top, I guess, is the Counter-Terrorism Command in London, which is the largest of all the CT units and which answers directly to me.

Q99 Martin Salter: I can understand that role for Special Branch and I think they are ideally suited for it in today's world, but is there not a danger of parallel lines of management here? Special Branch in my patch, for example, are they answerable to the BCU Commander or are they answerable to the Chief Constable or do they feed straight into the Counter-Terrorism Network? How are they managed?

Mr Quick: Historically, it was the former that you have just described inasmuch as they would answer normally directly to their head of crime or their head of intelligence, depending on how the force was structured. What is important to explain here is obviously that each counter-terrorism unit, counter-terrorism intelligence unit or Special Branch is under the direction and control of the local Chief Constable or the Chief Constable of the force area in which they sit. However, they work collaboratively with common processes and operating procedures and, as a result of an agreement reached last year, we are now developing much stronger national co-ordination of all of those resources, and again the chief constables have given the National Co-ordinator for Terrorism Investigation, my Deputy Assistant Commissioner, John McDowell, a wider remit. His role title has actually been redesignated now to the "Senior National Co-ordinator for Counter-Terrorism" to reflect his much broader role to co-ordinate the whole network operationally and, where necessary, direct it in operations.

Q100 David Davies: Is there a danger of conflict between who is running these CTIUs where, as you said, the local Chief Constable is in charge, but ultimately the CTIUs answer to the CTUs who answer to Counter-Terrorism Command who answer to you, so who is actually going to give the orders? If you want to give one set of orders, can they be countermanded at a CTIU by a local Chief Constable?

Mr Quick: Well, in theory, they could because, as I remarked earlier, the direction and control of chief constables in their force areas over their resources is unassailable. However, in practice, that has never happened, to my knowledge, in over 40 years of countering terrorism in modern times and indeed the risk of that happening now is probably lower than ever before as a result of operational agreements that have been achieved in very recent years and, most

notably, last October where the concept of the Police Counter-Terrorism Network was agreed by chief constables across the country.

Q101 David Davies: How does Scotland fit into this because they have a slightly separate system and there must have been issues when the attacks happened in Glasgow Airport last year?

Mr Quick: Indeed. They are a very active participant of counter-terrorism in the UK. ACPOS, the sister organisation to ACPO representing the Scottish forces, have joined the collaboration in ACPO and indeed they have themselves in Glasgow a counter-terrorism intelligence unit which works alongside our CT resources in England and Wales. In fact, you would hardly know that they were actually in a different country in a sense.

Q102 David Davies: But ultimately, as you have just said, although things are not set in stone, basically through the arrangements that you have got, you are effectively in overall command, so we know where the commander is and, even though a Chief Constable, theoretically, in England and Wales could step in and cause you problems, the precedent is not there, so hopefully they will not do that.

Mr Quick: Correct.

Q103 David Davies: But Scotland is a different kettle of fish, is it not, because you do not actually have direct control over the equivalent of the CTIUs and the CTUs?

Mr Quick: Well, indeed that is correct, there is a difference because their resources are funded differently, but of course you have the same issue in that the CTIU in Scotland is under the direction and control of the Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police who is very much a member of this collaboration and joins us at the Police Counter-Terrorism Board and sends representatives to my primary Board, which is the ACPO TAM, The Terrorism and Allied Matters Committee, which meets four times a year.

Q104 David Davies: What about Northern Ireland, while we are looking at the devolved regions?

Mr Quick: Well, they fit under the ACPO structure because of course that is England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They have established their own CTIUs in Northern Ireland. Of course, their history and context is somewhat different, but the relationship is very strong. They are very strongly represented at the ACPO TAM Committee meeting and they are represented in all the different work programmes and working groups that we establish, so really it is very difficult to differentiate them from other parts of the structure. The differences of course between England and Scotland are jurisdictional and legal issues and in fact, since Operation Seagram, which was a response to the Haymarket and Glasgow attacks, we have undertaken a good deal of work and have started now jointly to train officers in legal and jurisdictional issues. We are looking at improving command and control issues, although they did work in response to those attacks and clearly there were some issues that we identified

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during that response that we have since taken forward to resolve, so we have made very good progress, I would suggest.

Q105 Chairman: We will probably come back to you on question two, but the next couple of questions, Mr Quick, are slightly counterintuitive. Before that, the PSNI, the tasking control groups, TCGs, that used to exist there, have they now gone to be replaced by a CTU?

Mr Quick: For counter-terrorism in England and Wales, and of course again it is a slightly different set of arrangements in Northern Ireland, there is local tasking at force level, there is regional tasking, which the CTIUs and CTUs oversee, and then there is national tasking and co-ordination, and our sister organisation for counter-terrorism, the Security Service, are represented at those levels.

Q106 Chairman: But have the TCGs gone in Northern Ireland?

Mr Quick: That is a question I could not answer directly.

Q107 Chairman: Sorry, it is an arcane question. Would you be kind enough to let me know?

Mr Quick: I am not quite sure what your question is trying to achieve. The co-ordinating and tasking groups occupy themselves with broader force-level tasking for crime, organised crime and the deployment of all force assets, and there are specific CT tasking mechanisms.

Q108 Chairman: I will not take you down that rabbit hole. My concern over this is that we seem to have this Counter-Terrorism Network grafted piecemeal over the independent constabularies up and down the country. Do you believe there is an argument for Counter-Terrorism Command, or whatever term we could care to give it, being made a separate command in its own right with its own Chief Constable, or whatever appointment we want to give the head of this, which operates as a national body rather than the, understandably, fragmented organisation that we have at the moment?

Mr Quick: Well, I would, with respect, challenge the notion that it has been grafted on piecemeal. In fact, it was grafted on very precisely, deliberately and in a particular way on the basis of a lot of analysis and a lot of consultation, and it has the support of all the chief constables. I think what we are very close to achieving, and I would accept there is still a good deal of work yet to be done, is the best of both worlds because we have a very highly devolved policing structure in the United Kingdom, as you will know, and great benefit is derived from that and, indeed it could be argued, it has been the envy of many other countries elsewhere. We need to retain that because in the end countering terrorism is all about communities and the support of communities. However, I think the arrangements that chief constables agreed to last October amount to a virtual national set of arrangements, so we have an organisation that can replicate a national organisation if it needs to do so, it can task over

3,000 counter-terrorism officers and staff in England and Wales as a whole in concert, if necessary, and it is absolutely connected to every police force in this country, so I think, in a sense, we are pursuing the best of both worlds because there are obvious disadvantages in disaggregating counter-terrorism from the wider policing structure and separating it. In this way, it is deeply embedded into policing, so there is a direct connection from me, as ACSO, to every constable on every street corner or police community support officer on every street corner in the country, and actually through our tasking structures, if we need to affect their behaviour *in extremis* and, from lunchtime today, require them to do something different, we have the mechanism to do that.

Chairman: That leads us nicely into Mr Davies's question.

Q109 David Davies: Which is whether or not there is any truth in some of the press reports recently that SO15 might be broken up with Anti-Terrorism and Special Branch separated.

Mr Quick: I do not think there is any truth in that whatsoever. I think that is a popular notion in the heads of perhaps some dyed-in-the-wool officers and staff who hark back to a bygone era. I think the whole function of Special Branch is evolving very quickly nationally. As you will know, in Counter-Terrorism Command we brought together what was SO12, Special Branch, and SO13, Anti-Terrorist Branch, into a more integrated set of arrangements, so there are no plans to do that. We are constantly looking at how to improve the intelligence function, particularly now that so much emphasis, quite rightly, is shifting to the Prevent strand of countering terrorism and the intelligence requirements that would enable us to give our partners, whether they be local authority chief executives, education, specialist schools and others, the right information so that they can understand the local vulnerabilities and risks that they need to be active in helping to manage.

Chairman: That again takes us straight into the Metropolitan Police Service and Project CONTEST.

Q110 Ms Buck: Can I ask you a bit about the practical process of deciding how you resource and deliver on the four strands because, if you have got to keep all of those in balance and, to a certain extent, taking action under one can effectively undermine the others, particularly on the Prevent strand if you get that wrong and even sometimes if you get it right, but what is the actual mechanism for how you think about the resources and priorities you are going to put into each of the strands?

Mr Quick: Well, each strand at the national level has a set of priorities and objectives, and how we sought to organise ourselves to make sure we keep the very balance that you have suggested is required is that we re-aligned our national co-ordinating team, so we have the Senior National Co-ordinator in DAC McDowell who provides oversight for all the operational activity connected to the four strands and he, in London, runs weekly and bi-weekly

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tasking and co-ordinating meetings. In addition to that, we now have a team of co-ordinators, so we have a co-ordinator who is allocated directly to the Pursue strand of CONTEST, so his responsibility, working to John McDowell, is all of the policy and procedural development to pursue an investigation and developing and building the capability. Then we have a National Co-ordinator for Prevent, who is ACC John Wright and John oversees Prevent. Then we have Commander Gargini, which is the same rank as Assistant Chief Constable, he is the Co-ordinator for Prepare, and then finally we have ACC John Donlan who is the Co-ordinator for Protect. There are two levels of tasking. Within ACPO TAM, there is primary tasking of all the policy and development areas of police counter-terrorism, which is chaired either by me or my deputy, Deputy Chief Constable Margaret Wood, who sits in ACPO TAM, and operationally by DAC John McDowell in the Met.

Q111 Ms Buck: Are you constantly struggling to reconcile competing demands from all of those different strands?

Mr Quick: Yes. There will never be enough resource to deal with the work that we need to do. Having said that, of course police counter-terrorism resources have grown very significantly in the last two years. We have seen a 40% increase in headcount since 2006 and we now have this very significant infrastructure outside of London comprising well over 1,000 personnel, so our capacity to move forward has been enhanced quite dramatically.

Q112 Ms Buck: In the mainstream police activity, I find that the way that you structure tasking can make a huge difference to the type and quality of information that you end up with. Are you confident that the structures that you have for reviewing what comes up and shapes your tasking process is really grassroots? How do you test it?

Mr Quick: Yes. Am I satisfied it is perfect? No. I am satisfied it is a lot stronger than it was a few years ago and of course, from the bitter experience of the last few years with some dreadful atrocities and indeed plots that were foiled which, had they come to fruition, would have led to dire consequences, we have learnt a great deal from that experience and we have made changes to the way we collect intelligence and the way we support the Security Service, who of course are the primary agency for counter-terrorism intelligence. Indeed, I would say that the relationship between the police and the Security Service through these more recent times since 2001 has gone through a complete revolution.

Q113 Ms Buck: The engagement officer structure, is that the right way to go having this sort of separately designated local structure? Would it not make more sense to have those as tasks as part of the mainstream policing activity, or do you think they really do add value?

Mr Quick: Well, I think the tasks are a mainstream policing activity. I think neighbourhood policing teams across the country do play a very important

role in countering violent extremists and indeed terrorists, so that is why the police were very supportive under the Prevent strand of CONTEST that we had a very localised delivery structure, so neighbourhood policing teams and security teams in London are absolutely on the front line here for Prevent. They are simply supported by locally deployed counter-terrorism engagement officers and counter-terrorism intelligence officers who are there to provide front-line policing teams, communities and other public sector partners with the information they need to understand the risks and the nature of the threat and vulnerability and to engage effectively with the public, so our engagement officers provide briefings to neighbourhood teams, in particular, and they disseminate key bits of intelligence about vulnerability and they receive key bits of intelligence. The CTIOs, the intelligence officers, receive information about vulnerability back and we can match that with other intelligence that we might have to build a better profile of a place, it could be a meeting place, it could be an individual, it could be a group, in respect of whom we fear that there are vulnerabilities in relation to extremist views and potentially moving to violent extremism.

Q114 Ms Buck: If you could have one thing done better or more, what would it be?

Mr Quick: I think it would be understanding the social and psychological dynamics of extremism and radicalisation. We are in uncharted territory here. There is of course a lot more credible research available now than a few years ago, and indeed I would say that the Security Service have undertaken some very revealing research about how the process of radicalisation works and that is giving us some cues as to what to look for and how to open up a dialogue with communities about how vulnerability may be seen or identified. I think the test for the police actually in the eyes of many communities is whether, under the Prevent strand, our interventions are actually not law enforcement interventions, that we get ahead of this before people cross the line of offending behaviour, unlawful behaviour, and we get to them before that occurs, and our interventions may be through education, local authorities, or maybe through the voluntary sector. Indeed, for example, the Association of Muslim Police support our work by mentoring young people in communities who, we fear, may be on the track towards extremism and violent extremism and try to get them and coach and mentor them out of those influences and into a more productive lifestyle. I think we are in the very early stages of building an infrastructure on the ground with our partners that gives us a range of interventions that we could deploy, according to the need.

Q115 Martin Salter: Following on from Karen Buck's questions, you seem to be saying, Mr Quick, that there is a long way to go and a great need to have a lot of our urban communities where there is a substantial population of young Muslims, in particular, policed by people from within that

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community. There seems to me, in my multicultural community of Reading, to be a yawning gap and where we have got Sergeant Adiz who is doing a fantastic job in my constituency, you notice a palpable difference in attitude. Is that one of the objectives of the Prevent strand?

Mr Quick: Very much so. If I can steal your words, the utopian position really is that communities, in effect, police themselves. They are given the tools, the information and the understanding and they can actually help themselves to identify people who are vulnerable and at risk because it must be better that we can intervene in this risk through non-law enforcement options and get to people before their lives, and the lives of others, are blighted by offending.

Q116 Martin Salter: I will just go off piste a little on this one because I notice the engagement programmes that take place, and you will be aware that Reading is one of the areas for it, but what is the actual term for them? There are a number of pilot areas, are there not, where there is a specific dialogue?

Mr Quick: There are Prevent pilot areas and then there are the PV funding areas, preventing violence funding.

Q117 Martin Salter: Those are the ones. I have attended, with the Chief Constable, a number of those sessions and the dialogue can be incredibly academic. You seem to end up with a lot of students, Hizb ut Tahrir turn up in force, and we kind of rehearse arguments as if we are a debating society. I am not actually sure that a lot of that initiative is getting down into the grassroots, but it is a meeting about meetings for people who go to meetings. As part of the Refresh Strategy, are you looking at that again?

Mr Quick: Yes, we are certainly looking at it and, for example, we have four areas in London where we are trialling our approaches to Prevent and we are already now reviewing that to say, "Well, is this biting? Is it delivering? What do the public and the communities think about how we're doing this? What do our partners think? Can we actually assess its impact in an objective way? Can we tell whether we are preventing people becoming violent?" It is in its infancy, there is no doubt that this is still very early days, but, having said that, there are countless examples across the country of really good dialogue and debate with communities and partners and intervention.

Q118 Martin Salter: Let me put something to you, and just bear with me, Chairman, on this one. The stuff that I have seen work is not a bunch of academics having rehearsed arguments as if it is some kind of replay of an Islamic version of politics in the 1970s, but where you have got strong role models, often ex-offenders of knife crime and the rest of it, who will then come back into the communities, get kids involved in sport, get kids involved in coming to community centres, doing something constructive, getting them off the streets, to me,

those people are at the cutting edge of a Prevent strand rather more than the esoteric debates which I have seen taking place usually promoted by well-meaning people and local councillors who act for equality. You are nodding very encouragingly.

Mr Quick: I recognise some of what you are saying, and again I would entirely endorse your message that the real value here is in finding good role models who can relate to the vulnerable. Sometimes, that can be police officers in local teams who are capable of achieving that. We bring in of course others perhaps from outside and, as I have said, the Association of Muslim Police have played a very keen and active role in London and beyond, and we are hoping to extend that, where they are providing role model leadership in their communities and others. The Channel Programme, which is a national programme, is precisely aimed at the point you are making of finding people who have credibility with those at risk and who are capable of having a dialogue with them that they would relate to about their lives.

Q119 Martin Salter: Yes, and the Chairman and I are both involved in Northern Ireland, with different hats on actually. One of the most impressive bits of the Prevent Strategy that I have ever seen were former Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries coming out of the Maze and going into schools and telling kids, "There is no glory in this". It does seem to me that we have developed immense counter-terrorism capability in Northern Ireland and it would be a great shame not to build on some of the experiences that we have learnt over there both in terms of conflict-resolution and in terms of the Prevent Strategy.

Mr Quick: I entirely agree with you, and we have role models exactly like that in some of our communities. We have not got enough, but there are people, who have held very extremist views or were even persuaded towards violence, who have retreated from that position and have said, "Actually, there is no glory in this. This is wrong", and they are engaging with young people in their communities very productively. The risk that we all share, I think, is that occasionally we may get this wrong, we may utilise the assistance of someone who presents as one thing and may be another, but we will do our best to make sure that we are dealing with bona fide people whose opinions we may not like, whose politics we may not like, but, if we share one common thing that we are opposed to violence, then I think we can work together.

Q120 Chairman: I do not want to get bogged down in this, but it is instructive to note that, other than a passing reference to the other three strands, the vast majority of this discussion this morning has been on the Prevent strand. Clearly, prevention is better than cure. However, large amounts of money are being sunk into the Prevent strand and it is almost impossible to account for how successful or otherwise it is, and you have alluded to this already, and yet Glasgow Airport, for instance, when it was attacked, was wide open, there were no bollards

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there, there were no anti-crash barriers and, patently, the threat of the sort of attack that occurred there had not been considered or, if it had, nothing had been done about it. My view, as an outsider, is that the Prevent strand is dominating hugely, but with the other three strands the issue is a bit different because, frankly, we have had the Pursue strand ever since terrorism was invented, but Protect and Prepare, I feel, are neglected, or it is my observation that Protect and Prepare are probably subordinate to the touchy-feely, immensely difficult-to-assess-and-evaluate Prevent strand. What do you think?

Mr Quick: I would reject that, in all sincerity. I think there is a very hard end to this business, and that is certainly Protect and Pursue, and the softer side clearly is Prevent. It is less tangible and harder to measure, but probably in the end it is the most important strand in terms of getting from the back foot to the front foot in countering terrorism, so that is a long-term endeavour, without doubt. If I could give you some reassurance, by aligning our national co-ordinators to each strand, we now have a Chief Officer of Police leading nationally and co-ordinating activity not just throughout the network, but throughout the country in Protect, and we have ACC John Donlan who oversees the National Counter-Terrorism Office and the national counter-terrorism security advisers, of which there are about 240 nationally, and, thanks to the work of Lord West and indeed yourself, Mr Mercer, in reviewing protection nationally we have a very strong agenda for protective security and that is moving on at a very rapid pace. There has been enormous scoping nationally for vulnerability in crowded public spaces, hazardous sites and various other designations, transport systems and hubs, where we have scoped vulnerability and we have deployed counter-terrorism security advisers to advise the operators of those sites in protective security. Clearly, we have had to prioritise their work and target the most vulnerable first, so clearly airports, railway stations, bus stations, shopping centres, the nighttime economy, all of these areas are subject to quite intensive work now.

Q121 Chairman: Moving on then, if I may, to your work in the Association of Chief Police Officers, in your role as Chair of the ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area, what are the main threats, do you believe, to the United Kingdom at the moment and how are we meeting them?

Mr Quick: Well, the main threats, I think, are publicly articulated, they are from international terrorism and violent extremism, and we are at severe risk of attack. The current threat level suggests that an attack is highly likely and can occur without warning, so that is singularly the most significant threat that we currently face.

Q122 Chairman: In your day job, if you like, as Assistant Commissioner for Specialist Operations, have you got time to be both head of ACPO TAM plus your job and coming in and talking to sub-committees and committees for two days every week?

Mr Quick: Yes, because I am completely devoted to counter-terrorism, security and protection. I think you lose a lot by separating those functions because they are all inter-related, and my command was restructured some time ago to enable this role to focus on that activity.

Q123 David Davies: You have spoken a bit about this earlier, but you are happy that the co-ordination between yourself and the 44 police forces across England and Wales and, is it, 18 in Scotland, that that all works because people will ultimately answer to you through voluntary agreements? Is that a fair summary of what you said?

Mr Quick: In an operational scenario, we are developing new command and control protocols nationally which, I think, will improve the situation further still. I am under an obligation to bring back a new command and control national CT protocol for the Police Service in England and Wales. Our Scottish colleagues work with us on that and I think it has worked well and I think it will work well in the future.

Q124 David Davies: And it works well with the non-Home Office forces, BTP, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, MoD?

Mr Quick: Yes.

Q125 David Davies: Again, you would feel that you have overall charge of the direction of counter-terrorism operations, even if, technically speaking, a Chief Constable could override your orders?

Mr Quick: Yes. The strength of support to this collaboration is unquestionable in my mind.

Q126 David Davies: What about maritime security because there has been some concern, I think, expressed about that from other committees of the House? Do you feel that that is joined up and joined in with the Home Office forces as well?

Mr Quick: I think there is quite a bit of work to be done in maritime security. You will be aware that Chief Constable Hogan-Howe recently gave evidence to, I think, the Defence Select Committee on maritime security. Again, the work that we agreed to do in October is now well under way in terms of strengthening the command and control protocols to deal with a maritime terrorism incident.

Q127 David Davies: Effectively, the model which you are using for the Home Office force, which is chief constables technically having overall control, but, by and large, delegating that responsibility ultimately to yourself, that model needs to be put in place with maritime units, but it is not quite there yet? Is that a fair summary?

Mr Quick: In fact, there is now an ACPO Maritime Counter-Terrorism Security Strategy and SOP which would achieve exactly that, so, if we had a secure vessel off a coast, then we would look to the command being established in the force whose coast it is off, and the Counter-Terrorism Network would support that force, but, if it were a moving threat, ie,

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one that was not under control, then my deputy, the Senior National Co-ordinator, would take operational command.

Q128 David Davies: Just to ask you the difficult one, which I am afraid we have to ask you, given some of the press speculation, do you feel that your relationship with the new Chief Constable of the Met is perfectly good?

Mr Quick: The Commissioner?

Q129 David Davies: Yes, the Commissioner.

Mr Quick: Yes. I guess I would say do not believe everything you read in the newspapers!

Martin Salter: Really? Good Lord!

Chairman: A bit of *déjà vu* here, I think!

Q130 David Davies: We shall perhaps gloss over the implication of that supplementary! What about the Ministry of Defence? Do you feel that you can call up support from the Armed Forces, primarily the Army, if you require it, and that you have that link with the relevant people?

Mr Quick: Yes. Indeed, we have longstanding procedures to call on military assistance to the civil power. They are well tried and tested and very well exercised. My command, the Counter-Terrorism Command, and indeed now the wider Counter-Terrorism Network exercise and rehearse this almost all of the time.

Q131 David Davies: Finally, and this may be something that you would be more comfortable dealing with at the end, but, to a lay person, it is sometimes hard to understand exactly why the Security Service has responsibility for intelligence when, one would assume, that is a role that could be quite easily undertaken by relevantly trained police officers. It is because of the difficulty, the understandable difficulty perhaps, in getting information about how the Security Service operates. One wonders why and who is actually in charge there. Do the Security Service come to you and say, "We think that Mr X is suspicious and we'd like you to keep an eye on him", or do you go to them? Who is in overall command there because one feels that they are a completely separate entity almost? Hopefully, certainly you talk to each other, but who is in overall command of directing operations? If you do not want to answer that now, please say.

Mr Quick: I cannot give you any detail about the detailed working practices, save to say I think the formula that we have in the United Kingdom in countering terrorism is much-admired around the world.

Q132 Chairman: Can we pursue this in private or will you give the same response in private?

Mr Quick: I think I am very limited in what I can say even in private on these issues, but I would like to offer some reassurance that the police make a huge contribution to countering terrorism in intelligence terms, but I do think it is right that the Security

Service have the lead because of the relationship with other intelligence agencies that would be difficult for the police to achieve.

Q133 Chairman: Just going back to the CTUs for a bit and talking about military liaison, what embedded military personnel are there inside the CTUs?

Mr Quick: There are advisers in the CTUs and CTC who work alongside counter-terrorism officers, and again they are there themselves to learn and to make sure that the appropriate state of readiness is there, and we are constantly revising our protocols and our practice, taking learning out of exercises that we do jointly with the military.

Q134 Chairman: So there are military officers who have offices within the CTUs?

Mr Quick: Liaison officers, yes.

Q135 Chairman: They are there on a daily basis?

Mr Quick: Whether they are there on a daily basis, I am not sure, but they have desk space and they work alongside our officers to make sure that our organisations dovetail and particularly obviously in a crisis.

Chairman: We are moving now on to the terrorist attacks that we saw in Mumbai, bearing in mind that in this country we have experienced attacks of this scale before, albeit not for some years. Clearly, they raise a number of different questions.

Q136 Ms Buck: Have there been UK representatives going to Mumbai to actually see on the ground what lessons can be learned?

Mr Quick: Yes.

Q137 Ms Buck: Are you able to tell us what the kind of headline knowledge was that was gleaned from that?

Mr Quick: It is difficult to talk about that detail, I am afraid, but I can tell you that we deployed CTC, Counter-Terrorism Command, officers and indeed we have now deployed officers from the wider network at a very senior level and they have been given great assistance by the Indian authorities so that we can extract the learning from their bitter experience, and we have brought that learning back to the United Kingdom and it is the subject of work as we speak.

Q138 Ms Buck: Obviously, we would be interested in knowing more, but I understand if you are not able.

Mr Quick: I think that does take us into detailed operational responses that are very difficult for me to talk about in public or in private.

Q139 David Davies: Just on that subject, have we sent representatives to any of the previous host countries of the Olympic Games to learn about past security threats and ways to deal with them?

Mr Quick: Of course. We have an international network of counter-terrorism liaison officers and some of those in countries that are former hosts. I have been to Australia to learn about their security

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operations for the Sydney Olympics. We have officers in Counter-Terrorism Command who have very recent and detailed experience of the Athens Olympics who are embedded into our Olympic security planning.

Q140 Chairman: We will come back to Olympic security in a bit more detail later.

Mr Quick: You will know that the Commissioner is currently in South Africa looking at the security arrangements for the World Cup which will be relevant to our planning.

Q141 Martin Salter: It seems to me that we clearly have some vulnerable points, any country is going to have some vulnerable points, and it might be Milford Haven, it could be the Thames Estuary, the Olympics. Are you constantly assessing where we are weak in the planning of kind of major terminals, major transport infrastructure hubs, new airports, new oil refineries or whatever, and new power stations could be a prime target for the terrorist network? Do you get involved? The Security Service and the counter-terrorism services, do they get involved very early on in the planning and the layout of installations that could be a future target? Just in the same way as we hopefully now involve the police in trying to design crime out of estates, whereas in the 1960s we were very good at designing it in, do we try to design out terrorism?

Mr Quick: Absolutely, yes. Again, this has changed enormously in the last couple of decades and it is still changing. The police, I think, either have just become, or are about to become, statutory consultees in planning anyway, so, from the generic crime prevention design advice right the way through to counter-terrorism advice, we are now at the table and we are involved at the outset, and where it is a commercial establishment, whether it be to build a refinery, an office block or a shopping centre, CTSA's are there at the beginning and the industry of course engage very enthusiastically with them.

Martin Salter: It is a completely cheeky question and I have no right to ask it, but cramming even more activity and even more people into a vulnerable hub like Heathrow Airport presumably brings with it additional problems in terms of security and counter-terrorism. Is there a counter-terrorism argument for not going ahead with the third runway?

Q142 Ms Buck: Nice try!

Mr Quick: I really do not think I can comment.

Martin Salter: The answer is yes, Mr Quick!

Q143 Chairman: We have seen at least a dozen governments involved in Mumbai, maybe more, and I trust you know more about it than I do by this stage. It is not difficult, we saw the IRA operating in about 30(?) governments at one stage. How prepared are we not so much for specific and generic styles of attack, but for orchestrated, numerous, probably suicidally inclined individuals, not necessarily carrying bombs, but small arms and grenades, as we

saw in Mumbai? Clearly, the Mumbai attacks, in my view at least, have ratcheted up the threat. Would you agree?

Mr Quick: I would not agree actually. I have read the assessments and I think we must be cognisant of Mumbai. The whole world has witnessed those events and it would be fair to say that of course we considered an attack of that nature before Mumbai and we have operating procedures and resources available to deal with that type of eventuality. Of course, we have reviewed that and are reviewing, in the aftermath of Mumbai, what we have learnt, but I would wish to reassure you that we have got operating procedures and substantial resources in London, but it was a dreadful incident and dreadfully difficult for the Indian authorities to respond to.

Q144 Chairman: It is interesting that you mention London though. So much of what we discuss is London-centric. Are you as confident about a similar threat that might develop on the Humber?

Mr Quick: I think big cities have significant resources and they are all involved in this type of planning through the counter-terrorism units and through the Protect strand and the Prepare strand, and this tends to fall more into the Prepare strand, to make sure that we have got the right plans and resources to respond to a protracted and perhaps escalating attack. I think the resources that we have got are generally in the right place in terms of counter-terrorism resources, and of course big city forces, like Humberside who have Hull and other large towns and West Yorkshire, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, all have very significant resources to deploy.

Q145 Chairman: Just to press you, in the event of an incident of this scale happening outside of London, you are as content, and I appreciate you cannot be fully content, but you are as content as you can be, given the resources and the preparations that we have put in place?

Mr Quick: Yes.

Q146 Chairman: Moving on to Olympic security then, if we may, the Metropolitan Police Service have had an Olympic Security Directorate for nearly 18 months now. Do you think it is working well or not, and how has it changed your approach to the security challenges of 2012?

Mr Quick: I think, if I might be so bold as to suggest, it may be better to direct the questions to the OSCT now who of course are responsible for that. I might just offer the comment from a policing perspective that, in my role, I am much reassured by recent changes. I think putting the security planning into the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism was a wise move because I think there is a substantial resource base there and a framework within which to conduct security planning for the Olympics more effectively, so I am reassured by that, but I am not complacent and I recognise that there is still a lot of work to be done and still many issues yet to resolve.

Assistant Commissioner Robert Quick QPM

Q147 Ms Buck: You may redirect the question similarly, but just give us an overview of what you would see as being the main challenges and top priorities in terms of security preparations for the Olympics from the anti-terrorism perspective.

Mr Quick: The main challenges in the first instance are making sure that we have the right level of resource for what will be an unprecedented endeavour in security terms in this country and making sure that we get the sequencing and build of resilience right because clearly we have to start now building up key elements of resource to make sure that we have the resilience to run through the 60-plus days of the Olympics and Paralympics. That is why decisions are now being taken about where we need to invest money to recruit, train and deploy people with specialist skills at a level that we ordinarily would not have to do and these things have a long lead-in time.

Q148 Ms Buck: In terms of the designing out we spoke about earlier, you are represented adequately in terms of being able to input into the physical design to look at vulnerability to make sure all those bases are covered?

Mr Quick: Again, I hope I can reassure you, I visited the LOCOG offices in probably August of last year and I had an extensive briefing from my officers who are deployed to the OSD—the Olympic Security Directorate—who are expert counter-terrorism security advisors who are directly at the planning table giving advice about design and, of course, security during construction which is equally important.

Martin Salter: We have a strange quote from General Sir David Richards, who is responsible for military assistance to the civil power. Chairman, which committee was this, was this the Defence Committee?

Chairman: Yes, the Defence Committee.

Q149 Martin Salter: He told the Defence Committee he needed: “clarity on what might be required of the Armed Forces” in relation to 2012, presumably about the Olympics, which seemed a strange quote from a General. You implied in your evidence that there was very good liaison between civil power and military. Do you think there is anything unclear in that relationship at all or are the military waiting to brief you as to what you think might be required for 2012?

Mr Quick: That dialogue is going on. It is difficult for me to answer your specific question because I think the General’s comments were related to what messages he is receiving from those in charge of the Olympics security planning, so that is not the police. We play a part in that but do not lead that at the moment. I think that is a question probably better directed to the OSCT, if I am honest. However, I would like to stress that the liaison and relationship between the police and the military is long-established and very strong. Only this very week I have had military planners in my office talking about future development of military capability and how that fits with the future requirements of police counter-terrorism operations and there is agreed work underway to review and refresh those protocols and making sure military capabilities complement police capabilities and we are not duplicating one another.

Martin Salter: Thank you for that. I do not think that is germane to our inquiry, frankly.

Q150 Chairman: Mr Quick, we are going to go into private session now for about ten minutes if you are content with that. I will call the Committee to order and ask for the room to be cleared, but with your permission I will keep Mr Barker and Major General Williams in the room.

Mr Quick: May I ask my staff officer to remain?

Chairman: Of course.

Thursday 26 February 2009

Members present

Patrick Mercer, in the Chair

Ms Karen Buck

David T C Davies

Witnesses: **Mr Charles Farr, OBE**, Director-General, and **Ms Gillian McGregor**, Head of Operational Support and Knowledge Management, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, Home Office, gave evidence.

Q125 Chairman: Mr Farr, Ms McGregor, the joy of these Sub-Committees is that we can be as informal as we wish or as formal as we wish, and patently, the questions that we ask—please, I can assure you we are completely *in camera*; the report when it is drafted will patently be cautiously redacted in terms of any elements that we cannot put into the public domain. It would be enormously helpful to us therefore, with those rules of engagement established, if you could be as frank as possible. Mr Farr, can I start with you, if I may, please? Could you briefly explain the role of the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism in counter-terrorism policy and specifically in operations?

Q126 Mr Farr: Sure. I thought, subject to your views, of course, it might be useful if I did a minute of background about why we were set up first. Is that a good idea? I apologise if this is very familiar to you already. OSCT dates from August 2006 or, more specifically, to the consideration about counter-terrorism operations and policy led, I think, by the then Home Secretary, with other ministers and the then Prime Minister. People sat down and considered again whether we had got it right in the UK in terms of how we were developing our strategy, how we were running our operations, and that process lasted from the end of 2006 through to early 2007. At the end of it a series of recommendations were made and agreed, one of which was that responsibility for the development of the strategy for counter-terrorism—in other words, CONTEST—should move from the Cabinet Office, where it had been vested since 2003, to a new organisation, which became OSCT, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism. There was then a separate discussion, as you can imagine, about where with OSCT itself should be placed, because it was not inevitable or necessarily obvious that it should be in the Home Office. After all, CONTEST is a strategy about international terrorism. But in the end that is where it went, I think partly because John Reid argued very strongly for that, and passionately believed it, because he judged—and I confess, I think he was absolutely right—that there was a greater synergy between the work that was envisaged for OSCT and the work that was already going on in the Home Office. So OSCT was established in the Home Office first to do strategic planning for counter-terrorism. By that I mean as well not just writing a strategy but governing it and, to the extent that one can, measuring its impact. That was a strategy—and we can talk if it is helpful to you—which had certain

limits but certainly embraced everything that was going on in this country and a significant measure of everything that was going on overseas as well so far as UK agencies and departments were concerned. It did not from the outset include military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which come under a heading of insurgency and are outwith the scope of CONTEST. Once OSCT had been set up in the Home Office, before my arrival there, a number of other things happened. The first and most important thing was that joined to OSCT were all the other functions which the Home Office were already performing on counter-terrorism, which, broadly speaking, were not in the strategic planning space but in delivery. That was a rather miscellaneous range of activities from legislation, control orders, deportation strategy, broadly under the Pursue area, through to protective security issues from the Prime Minister's residence through to what happens at borders and into some aspects of what we now call Prepared, police exercising and contingency planning, and a few other things as well. We moved all those into OSCT, which gave us, as it were, our second function after strategic planning, which was delivery of aspects of the strategy. We then did two other things. We also moved into OSCT another bit of the Home Office which was responsible for oversight of the Security Service. As you know, the Home Secretary is the Minister responsible for MI5. There is a small section and has always been in the Home Office looking at that, and it made sense to move that into OSCT as well. We also moved in a section of the Home Office responsible for crisis planning. Finally, in December last year, in circumstances we can go into if we have time and you would like, we moved the Olympic security plan into OSCT as well.

Q127 Chairman: We will touch on the Olympics.

Mr Farr: So we ended up—and it is a long way of answering your question but I think the background is useful—with four functions: strategic planning, the delivery of aspects of the strategy, oversight of the Security Service operations in this country, crisis management, and Olympic security and strategy. The only other thing I would add is that when Reid and the Prime Minister reported—and I do not think there was ever a written report, by the way, or not a published report—they also argued that another area we had not got right in this country was CT-related communications. They meant by that I think two different things: one, outward-facing official communications, what we said both about the threat

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and about our response, but secondly, and I think very importantly, they also meant that we were not challenging the messaging that was coming to us from al-Qaeda, the propaganda that was coming to us from al-Qaeda, directed on the Internet . . .

Q128 Ms Buck: I think I need you to flesh this out a bit, because it is incredibly important.

Mr Farr: That recommendation, led to the formation of something called RICU, the Research, Information and Communications Unit, a rather Cold War type of acronym I am afraid but one that we inherited. RICU, a cross-government agency, Communities and Local Government, the Foreign Office and the Home Office, now MoD as well, was set up and put in OSCT too. I know that is not your question. Can I address your point? RICU has two functions within our organisation. It is responsible for advising the rest of government but actually, not just government, officialdom, from a brigade commander in Helmand province through to a chief constable in Yorkshire, about how they may wish to characterise the threat we face and describe the response that we are making and, secondly, rather different, they are responsible for challenging the propaganda which comes to us from al-Qaeda and associated groups—generally not from people in this country; usually from the incessant 4,500 websites that are in one way or another associated with radical Islamist terrorist organisations around the world. That is a very difficult task and it has only been going really substantively staffed for a year, about 35 people, across government, and a bit of the private sector in there to advise us on aspects of communications.

Q129 Chairman: Excuse me interrupting on that one, but can I ask about the website? You know I have a certain interest in all of this. Why has it taken so long for there to be the formation of a specific analytical unit for the aphorism “know your enemy”? I am surprised that it has not been established before.

Mr Farr: No, I think it had been. If I may, I would want to make a distinction. A huge amount of work since 9/11 has been done mainly by the agencies and to a certain extent by JTAC, Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, to understand how al-Qaeda—and when I say “al-Qaeda” I am using shorthand: al-Qaeda-related organisations—use the Internet and use propaganda, the messages they are complaining conveying, the weaknesses of those messages and what we might do about them. That has been done. The analytical piece has been done. What had not been done as much was the delivery of a response. That was the weakness and that was what RICU was really partly set up to do. I still think it is an incredibly difficult thing, by the way, but we have made some progress. I am happy to talk about it whenever you like, now or later, but I would think it is one of the most challenging things we have to do. Suffice to say, before I stop, we have four main functions but we kind of have a fifth because we

house this interdepartmental entity, RICU. It is pretty small in the overall scheme of things, 35 people.

Q130 Ms Buck: What I am hearing, very helpfully, is a sort of procedural response to the question. What I was trying to get at was more about the substance of the critique and what you have learned from that in terms of these two comments on communication strategy. From what angle was that critique driven? Was it framed in terms of illustration and example? I do not have a picture of what that critique is and what it means in terms of the language and the message that should have been going out to the public about the threat in terms of internal communications, particularly to the public about the threat.

Mr Farr: It is easy for us to send you some RICU papers, if it is helpful.

Q131 Chairman: It would be, thank you.

Mr Farr: What were we trying to do in this area? A lot of the focus has been how you communicate the threat in and through Muslim communities in this country, what language is appropriate and is true to the threat we face but resonates with the communities we need to work with. The starting point for a lot of RICU work was to address those questions. They came up with a number of proposed formulae that our work with Muslim communities indicated was acceptable but which, critically, we felt remained true to the nature of the threat that we face. So, very simply, we do not tend, as we know, to talk about war on terror; we do not tend to talk about Islamic terrorism, not because in certain circumstances that is an inaccurate description but because the language admits of a number of interpretations which are not always helpful to us. So RICU has initially operated to try to convey to, for example, local authorities, the Chief Constable, proposals about issues of that kind: how to catch the threat in a way that actually is faithful to the threat we face but, equally, does not alienate the communities we need to work with. I saw in draft yesterday the latest paper that RICU are planning to send to local authorities, people working on community cohesion projects, local police, neighbourhood policing teams, which goes through and updates earlier advice we sent, talks about how to communicate the threat, talks about how you might begin to challenge ideology—a very alien concept to many of the people we are selling this to—and I think, from the feedback we get from local authorities and other readers, is useful when they are, for example, with a Muslim community organisation or in another community forum. I do not want to give the impression that RICU’s sole purpose is to communicate with Muslim communities in this country. It is not. I think probably it made sense for us to start there because that was the most difficult communications task. Generally speaking, outside Muslim communities communicating about the threat and about our response to it is a bit easier. It is not straightforward but it is a bit easier.

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Q132 David Davies: Mr Farr, this is probably going to sound like a very stupid question but I am just wondering how all of these different organisations fit in and what their roles are, if there is a big picture. I have always understood that the Security Service deal with internal threats, the SIS deal with external threats, people abroad, and GCHQ listen to their phone calls. I could go into a bit more detail but obviously not a lot more than that, to be truthful. I am wondering how your organisation and how things like the JTAC and JIC fit into this picture. For example, do you answer to the Director-General of the Security Service or does he answer to you? Where do all these organisations fit in with each other?

Mr Farr: Your characterisation of what the organisations do is broadly right, of course. Let me try and explain it in a bit more detail. I am the SRO for CONTEST, the senior responsible official, which means, in government speak, senior civil servant responsible for the strategy. We provide, we aim to provide, we were set up to provide a policy and strategic framework for the activities of delivery organisations working on counter-terrorism in this country and overseas. That would include the police, Communities and Local Government, the Foreign Office, but it would also include the agencies. We provide them with parameters, a strategic framework—it is as simple as that—within which we expect them to be operating. Once we have established that framework, the day-to-day conduct of the operations is not my business; it is their business and, in pursuit of those operations, fulfilling their operational mandate, they do not report back to me. They report respectively to the Home Secretary in the case of the Security Service and to the Foreign Secretary in the case of GCHQ and SIS. We will certainly keep an eye that their operations are within the strategic framework and objectives that we collectively have set and established.

Q133 David Davies: That is a good answer because it is clear.

Mr Farr: The same, by the way, if I may interrupt, applies exactly to the police. My role with the police is to provide them with a policy framework in which their operations should take place. I then have oversight of the operations and I know what they are but I do not run the operations.

Q134 David Davies: The important thing for me to understand is that, whilst you do not run the operations day-to-day, those agencies, whether it be the police, the security agencies or whatever, effectively report back to you as to how those operations have been conducted within the parameters that you have set?

Mr Farr: That is precisely right. I would, if I may, go further and say that after we were created we developed for the first time in this country a PSA, public service agreement, which set targets for every one of our stakeholders. I am descending into a bit of arcane civil service speak so forgive me, but this PSA 26 has, I think, 12 key outcomes that we expect for the community, from the police, through other

departments into the agencies, 12 outcomes that we are looking for and which, in our view, will define the success or failure of this programme, and those outcomes, I am afraid, have a number of indicators against which we will measure whether we are meeting them or not. To that extent, not only do we keep an eye on what they are doing and make sure it is within the strategic framework we have set for ourselves, but we keep an eye on the outcomes, and we are beginning to be able to track whether we are actually succeeding or failing. You may well say, “What happened beforehand?” We were not taking place in a performance management vacuum but we were operating with performance management silos. In other words, each department reported separately against their counter-terrorism objectives.

Q135 David Davies: Would it be fair to simplify, for myself and others perhaps, that in some ways you were doing the job that would previously have been done by the Ministers, in that the Ministers previously would have set out how they wanted the different agencies to work? You can go into that in far more detail because you are dealing with all of the agencies and you can get a better overall picture, whereas previously, as you have said, the Home Office were dealing with the police and the Security Service and the Foreign Office with GCHQ and SIS. Is that too simplistic?

Mr Farr: I think part of that is true. We could talk as a whole separate meeting about the tasking and control of agencies in this country. I do not want to at all imply that we inherited a vacuum. There was a tried and tested method but it was not centralised in quite the way that it is now. Critically, it did not take place within the context of a strategy for counter-terrorism. It took place off to one side of that. Now what we have is a strategy from which flows tasking, as it were, guidelines for operations, and against which we can now performance-measure. You are right to say that all that means we can operate with the agencies at a level of detail that was not previously possible in terms of tasking, oversight, and performance assessment. I think that is fair.

Q136 David Davies: Lastly, how does that work fit in with that of the National Security Secretariat?

Mr Farr: The National Security Secretariat is part of the Cabinet Office. It ranges, as you may have seen in their National Security Strategy, the first one, over a vast swathe of areas of which counter-terrorism is just one. The counter-terrorist bit of the National Security Strategy was written, drafted, by us, and our bit of the national security spectrum slots into the much bigger bit which is run from the Cabinet Office.

Q137 Ms Buck: Is there an argument for full integration of all these different agencies into a single specialist terrorism organisation or does it not matter in a sense where you draw the borders because you are still going to have to pull together lots of different threads?

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Mr Farr: There is certainly an argument for it, and it has been voiced in this country and, for rather similar circumstances, in many other countries overseas, almost continuously since 9/11 and specifically actually after incidents, where people immediately think “What should we do? Let’s have a reorganisation.” There are two things I would say. One, there is a huge amount of integration already. Every one of the key agencies—the police, the Security Service, SIS, GCHQ and, although we are not an agency in quite the same way, us—have representatives in one another’s organisations. Many of them have whole sections which are in effect, as we call them, joint operational or analytical sections and, of course, JTAC is a fully inter-agency beast. SIS, the Security Service, everyone else funds their own bit. Everyone has secondees. So there is a huge amount of inter-agency co-operation, “jointery”, sharing of people, sharing of sections already.

Q138 Ms Buck: So if I pushed you to say would you recommend that there should be further reorganisation to create a single agency, what would you say?

Mr Farr: I would say definitely no because I think what we have at the moment is the best of both worlds. We have synergy—we could probably get more of it, by the way, but we have synergy, we have “jointery”, we have shared operations, we have technical capabilities. If you push it much further than that, you create enormous organisations which become bureaucratically unwieldy and are trying to do too much in a way that is unsustainable. The work that goes on in this country, a very simple example, is very different from the work that goes on overseas. It requires completely different skills. Although, of course, it is nominally all counter-terrorism, it is counter-terrorism of a very different kind. By the way, as well you do not save money; you actually end up spending even more than you started by.

Q139 Ms Buck: In 10 years’ time would you see a significantly different organisational model, or do you think it will be about refining and improving within the structure? Do you think this is now a settled structure? I do not mean will other people come along and mess it up; I mean if it was your decision.

Mr Farr: I have no doubt it will evolve actually. It is inseparable from another question, which is what is going to happen to the threat, what are the national security challenges we are going to face. I would be very surprised if it did not carry on evolving. I cannot entirely predict which way it will go. I think there will probably be more joint sections, more exchange, more joint reporting, more joint, full stop actually, not least because of economic constraints that will be imposed, and I think that is fine. I do not really see an operational case for the sort of change that you were describing earlier, in other words, much greater centralisation. That is not to say it will

not happen. As we all know, different parties have different policies on this. I do not myself think it is absolutely compelling.

Q140 Ms Buck: You talked earlier about the PSA targets and obviously that is a performance benchmarking process. In terms of the whole value for money argument, PSA is part of that. What other mechanisms are there for auditing the value for money outcome of the work of your organisational structure?

Mr Farr: That is a good question, of course. When we were set up, if I can be a bit bureaucratic, there was a degree of uncertainty, I think, in everyone’s minds about how much a central organisation like our own, sitting in the Home Office, would be able to bear down on the programme costs and VfM in a whole load of stakeholder organisations. There is no precedent for an organisation sitting outside the Treasury doing that, or certainly outside the Cabinet Office and the Treasury doing that. I think it would be a bit alien. As time has moved on and we have established ourselves and I think and believe have got the trust and support of many of our stakeholders, to use that dreadful term, actually, what you are proposing has become much more feasible and possible. We have (a) much more oversight of how money is being spent and, I think, (b) a greater ability to press down on programme costs and to begin to interrogate them to our satisfaction, leading, I think, eventually to a state where we will be able to do what we want to do and that is certainly what the Treasury, of course, would like us to be doing.

Q141 Chairman: Mr Farr, I must say I think you have made a strong argument for further rationalisation of the three services actually, but we will not dwell on that particular subject. For my rather simplistic mind, do you think you could provide an organic diagram of how these organisations fit with one another, where the lines of communication fit, where the lines of command fit? Would that be possible?

Mr Farr: Yes.

Q142 Chairman: I would be most grateful. You also mentioned tasking and control and that that would be a subject of a completely separate discussion. We could not visit, could we, and have that explained to us?

Mr Farr: Yes. The answer is yes, of course. As I made that comment, at the back of my mind was that there are two different processes, and perhaps more than two, that we need to be alert to, and I am sure you are. One is the strategic planning framework, which is ours, and it is our job, as I have said, to set the strategic parameters for what we are trying to do on counter-terrorism in this country, what it is realistic for us to achieve, what our objectives should be and to monitor, as I have said, the ability and the result of agency performance in those areas. Tactical co-ordination and tasking is not our job. We have oversight over it but it is run by a completely separate process, which I think Bob Quick, reading

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his evidence to you, touched on, and involves the agencies and the police. I see the results of that—it is reported back to the Home Secretary every week—but I do not participate in it and I do not think it would be proper for us to do so. So I am very happy to describe those processes in more detail but suffice to say here perhaps that there are two: the strategic planning process and the tactical command and control and co-ordination.

Q143 Chairman: Thank you. The next question, I appreciate, is imprecise but do your best, either of you, because I am conscious of the fact that you have been talking so far, so maybe Ms McGregor can take it. How many terrorist threats have been foiled since OSCT was created? I do appreciate: what is a threat? Therefore I do not expect you to give me chapter and verse but could you give us some details, please?

Mr Farr: Let me have a go, and give you some statistics and a bit of background. Statistics first: 88 convictions of people for terrorist offences in this country since the beginning of 2007. It is a bit of a messy picture because people are arrested for all sorts of things. Actually, some of the most important people we have caught have been caught on non-terrorist-related offences, which makes the answer to your question quite complicated.

Q144 Chairman: I do appreciate that.

Mr Farr: The headlines probably tell the story, at least in rough outline: 88 convictions.

Ms McGregor: I would just add to that that what is also important is that of the 88 that Charles mentioned who have been convicted, nearly 50% of those pleaded guilty, which is another issue. The statistics are very complicated. We are currently working on an official statistical bulletin, which we hope to publish very shortly, which will set out some of this. It is tricky because, as Charles says, people may be arrested under one Act and then convicted of something else. It is a tricky picture.

Q145 Chairman: I absolutely understand that and my codicil I put in before I think explained that. We took evidence from Transport for London where the gentleman whose name escapes me who gave evidence, when we said, “What is the threat that faces Transport for London?” he said a series of things: “Now that the IRA is dealt with”, “now that Islamic fundamentalism has burned itself out”, and a series of other jaw-dropping statements, frankly—I do not make any judgement but one of the things that worries me, one of the many things that keeps me awake, as I am sure it does you, is that form of complacency. Do you have that in the records? So why do you not make more of your successes? Why do we not hear more? Why do you not communicate that?

Mr Farr: Basically, I am not going to defend this at all because I entirely agree with you, which I know is rather revolutionary in committees of this kind! I would say a couple of things. There are a couple of issues which preoccupy us and trouble us in trying to do what you have described, about which, by the way, I entirely agree. The first is the *sub judice*

problem. The second problem is that most of these trials—and it is a very interesting feature of the threat we now face—involve between 10 and 20 conspirators. That means you have more than one trial and, until you have finished the sequence of trials, you cannot actually talk about the offence. So the whole judicial process and, to a degree, it reflects the number of conspirators, inhibits your ability to talk about this. Although that is a problem, it does not entirely explain why we have not given and been able to get out a connected narrative, an explanation of how these trials fit together. I am acutely aware of that. That is partly why, when we came to write the new CONTEST strategy, we quickly reached two conclusions about how we should do so: one, it had to be unclassified. We had to be able to release the whole lot into the public domain—not quite the whole lot actually but a significant percentage; and two, that it had to have a historical background, and for the first time therefore, when CONTEST is published, which I hope will be in March, you will be able to read in some detail a chronology about what has happened in this country of a kind that I hope will begin to address your concern, which I entirely share. Apart from anything else, we are all very aware that unless people understand the threat, they do not understand either the necessity or the proportionality of the measures that we have to take to respond to it and that, of course, in a sense, is where we are at the moment. I think it is quite difficult for us because people just see the response. They do not understand why we have made it and they can easily conclude that actually it is excessive. That is a long answer to your question but we are very aware of the issue that you raise.

Q146 Chairman: I base it on the fact that the Royal Ulster Constabulary, in conjunction with MI5 and other agencies, were very good at this. I know it was a different sort of campaign and actually the day-to-day operations of the IRA allowed it to be more high profile and therefore people were more alert to it, yet it was not particularly dangerous—and I say that with great respect to those people who died and were injured. I cannot help but feel that there must be more areas where you can say, “Hey, listen; this is what we have done.” It may not be precise but “Last year we nobbled 12 of these characters”.

Mr Farr: If you are making this point, and you follow it more closely than most, then clearly we have a problem. I am not going to suggest for one moment that we have got this right and I am very happy and indeed we will take that away and look at it. We are trying to. I do not want to understate the *sub judice* problem. I hope when you look at CONTEST you may consider that it does address some of your concerns but it will not do it entirely and I appreciate that.

Chairman: Thank you. That is a very encouraging answer.

Q147 David Davies: The next question is your relationship with the US and other European intelligence agencies. How formal is that? Do we know, for example, if there are members of the CIA

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working in this country? One would assume that there are but to what extent is that declared and to what extent do you have formal protocols for information sharing?

Mr Farr: I am going to be very boring, of course, and say that generally speaking, this is a matter for the intelligence services, not for us, but let me give you the policy framework, if that is not too pretentious a way of describing it. The terrorist threat we face, of course, as you well know, is international and therefore requires international co-operation. We cannot do it on our own. If you move overseas, you need to be talking to other services, be they police, security or intelligence, or often a combination of all three, and sometimes military as well. Responsibility for that lies with SIS, the Security Service, sometimes with the military, often co-ordinated by the Foreign Office, and I think it works pretty effectively. Do those organisations from outside have representatives here? Most certainly, yes. Are they declared? Yes. They are in regular dialogue with our agencies here. The cornerstone of much of this, of course, is the American relationship. Why? For two reasons, I think, above all: because of the huge American capability that can be brought to bear on counter-terrorism, and has been since 9/11. Secondly, as you well know, because people who pose a threat to this country are six hours away from the eastern seaboard, something which the Americans are acutely aware of, as are we, and therefore take a very close interest in. Operations that we are conducting here, people we are investigating and the whole counter-terrorist strategy that we have is intimately connected to and relevant to their own national security. So the relationships are very close. If I may add just quickly, my office, OSCT, sitting in the Home Office, we have a rather different map and set of international relationships. My counterpart in the States is someone called NCTC, National Counter-Terrorist Centre, set up after a recommendation in the 9/11 Commission report, and that organisation does sort of what I do here: policy-making for the US Government on counter-terrorism, delivery of some aspects of that policy, co-ordination inter-agency. They also actually, in their case, absorb what in this country is done by JTAC. We talk regularly to them, and I talk regularly to our partners in France, Germany, Netherlands, and other European countries who are responsible for strategic planning, and there is quite good co-operation.

Q148 Chairman: We were rather surprised by the Ministry of Defence statements last week, to hear that the Glasgow bombings were described as a success.

Mr Farr: I did not see that. Was it the Minister that said it?

Q149 Chairman: It was Brigadier Chapman who came up with that particular statement.

Mr Farr: Was this in evidence to you? I do not think that is official policy.

Q150 Chairman: I think we will probably leave it there, shall we?

Mr Farr: One point, if I may. I do think there were aspects of the investigation into Glasgow—let us put it like that—that were successful, although one could argue, and I would accept, that any operation, investigation, that actually does not stop a bomb is a success of a rather qualified kind but, subject to that, and as I think actually Bob Quick mentioned to you—I was reading his evidence—a couple of points. I think the investigation into Glasgow after the Tiger Tiger attempted bombing in London, because of course that was the start point, was a really good example of joint work between the Security Service and the police, a very rapid analysis of a very large amount of data with the objective of finding what we then knew to be another operational group who were attempting another operation. Moreover, I think it was a very good example of interaction between the National Police Command based in London and the police in Scotland, who are, of course, devolved and therefore operating in a sense outside of our authority. To that extent, I think the operation was entirely successful because it really tested and demonstrated the value of the co-operative partnerships that we have. It, by the way, very nearly stopped the operation as well but, in the time that was available, it could not. I would not just say it was a success; of course not.

Q151 Chairman: Thank you. Moving on then, again, much of this we have touched on but OSCT and Project CONTEST: how do you measure the success or otherwise of OSCT against the four strands of CONTEST? We have touched on this. There is no need to repeat yourself but is there anything on the audit process you think we need to know?

Mr Farr: I think I have probably given you the headlines about this. The key mechanism for measuring the success of CONTEST is the PSA. The PSA has a number of intended outcomes, and for each outcome there are a number of intended or associated indicators, and it is our job to track the performance of agencies and departments against those indicators. Some indicators are simply down to one department, some indicators, as it were, relate to a number of departmental activities, and I think at the end of that we can get a pretty good idea about how we are doing. If I may, I would like to pick up something I know you said in previous sessions, which is about how you measure the impact of Prevent, because I think I understood you to say that it was rather difficult to do that and I want, if I may, to push back slightly on that.

Q152 Chairman: It is difficult to quantify, is it not?

Mr Farr: It is difficult to quantify it but I do not think it is impossible to do it and, if it is helpful, can I spend two minutes explaining how we are trying to do that?

Q153 Chairman: Please, yes.

Mr Farr: I think there are two ways that you can do it. One is to look at the risk of radicalisation in certain environments in this country. Let me give you

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a couple of specific examples: prisons, and schools or higher education and further education. If you create, as we are able to, an intelligence baseline to establish how much radicalisation is going on in those places at the moment, you then look at the programmes you are trying to introduce in those areas to stop radicalisation, and then you check your intelligence the following year, you can get an idea, albeit an imperfect one, of whether the risk of radicalisation in those areas—and I have just picked those; there are others—has reduced or increased. We are working on that very closely, for example, with the Ministry of Justice in connection with prisons as we speak, trying to understand how the programmes that we have introduced with them into prisons are having an impact and how you measure that against the intelligence assessments which are produced for us for prisons by JTAC. So I think you can look at institutional capability and the extent to which it reduces risk. Secondly, you can look at attitudes. It is not difficult to look at attitudes. It is more difficult to attribute or to understand what has changed in attitudes but we have—and Communities and Local Government are leading on this, Hazel Blears—programmes which are intended to enable us to gauge changing attitudes in Muslim communities towards key tests and issues of terrorism. At the moment we are much too dependent upon commercial polling generally done for media outlets. We are doing our own now, to a much more rigorous framework, and we can do it year on year. We need to be very careful because it is, of course, politically sensitive with a small “p” and not easy to get accurate feedback, but, taking advice from all sorts of commercial organisations, we think we can do that. I would be very unhappy, and I know the Treasury would, if we had a key strand of our counter-terrorism strategy, £100 million or so this year, which we could not measure, and we do believe we can. I would not say the call was easy but I did want to push back slightly back on the concern that you expressed at that earlier session.

Q154 Ms Buck: If you do not mind my saying so, I think this issue is about what you know about the causes of radicalisation and how you attack it. Obviously, I would like you to talk about that a little bit. I also want you, and maybe you could cover that in what you say, to talk a little bit about that leaked draft in the media a couple of weeks ago which included a definition of extremism, which, as someone who has a number of Muslim friends through constituency work, really covers all of them and the mere inclusion of the definition would radicalise them further. It is a difficult task because you do need something as a benchmark, a definition, but that is a problem. I really would like to know what your current thinking is on that question of the definition and what your professional assessment is, based on this information you are acquiring, of the causes of radicalisation.

Mr Farr: Can I do them in that order? Hazel Blears gave a speech last night at the LSE which I see characteristically misreported in the press this morning, and I think it is quite useful in assessing

some of what I am talking about. If I may go back to our restructuring of the Prevent strategy, which was one of the early bits of work we did at the request of the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary in the summer and autumn of 2007, we provided, as you may know, a new framework of seven objectives which we think should guide everything we do on counter-radicalisation in this country. At the top—or the first one; it is not necessarily the most important—we said we had to challenge the ideology of violent extremism and we used those terms, “the ideology of violent extremism”. There was a lot of discussion amongst us and with, by the way, Muslim organisations at the time about whether that formula was correct, because many people said to us, even at the time, “Listen: there is not such a thing as an ideology of violent extremism. There are ideologies of extremism which lend themselves to violence and by limiting yourself to challenging violent extremism you are operating too far down the conveyor belt of radicalisation. If you wait till that point it is too late”. At the time we half accepted that advice but judged that it would be too difficult for us to explain how a counter-terrorism strategy could have at its heart countering the ideology of extremism; apart from anything else, it is a rather odd expression, so we stuck with “violent extremism”. Since that time, in all the very many, literally hundreds, of community interactions we have had, quite a lot of people have insisted to us, “You have to challenge the extremism which creates the climate in which violence becomes acceptable. It might not specifically espouse violence but it creates an environment in which violence begins to become acceptable”. What has happened since December is that the Home Secretary and the Communities Secretary have begun to talk about this. There are a couple of really important points. No-one is suggesting that we criminalise extremism. We are not arguing that extremist views should somehow now be criminalised; nor are we necessarily saying, “By the way, challenging extremism is part of the counter-terrorism policy”. I am not sure that it is. I think it may be part of the community cohesion policy but that is rather a different thing. However, it does seem to me from where I sit entirely appropriate that this Government, and I think probably any other government, will want to challenge aspects of what we might call Islamism which fall short of espousing violence—to give you an example, reporting from CIVITAS, the think-tank, the other day about views in some quarters here that western culture is evil and that Muslims living in this country should not engage with western cultural organisations, for want of a better term, with western culture itself. There is nothing violent about that and it is not necessarily going to lead to terrorism, but it does seem to me to be unreal for this or any other government not to say that they are going to challenge that, and that is no more nor less than what this Government is now saying. It is saying, “Yes, we will challenge violent extremism and, by the way, we will criminalise it and we will proscribe groups who espouse it, but we want to go

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a bit further. We are not going to sit on the sidelines and listen without responding to either Islamist extremist views or indeed to the far right”.

Q155 Ms Buck: I think that is absolutely right. As a deconstruction of the layers that is a completely spot-on analysis. Going back to our communication strategy, of course, the difficulty is that you cannot help the media filter, which is part of the problem but not the whole problem. The difficulty is that it is this common parlance of key indicators that are not themselves indicators of violence but can sometimes be the gateway into it that reinforces the sense of alienation and fear and antagonism.

Mr Farr: I am not disagreeing with that and I think we are going into this aware of the risk, and the risk is that by saying that we want to challenge these views we are going to alienate the communities or parts of communities on whom we necessarily depend for our key objective, which is to challenge violence and the ideology of terrorism, but I think any government in this country is going to face this challenge.

Q156 Ms Buck: No; this is not a political point at all.

Mr Farr: I personally think you simply have to ride that risk but I do not want to demean it. It certainly does require very careful communication, absolute crystal clarity, and I do not know whether, and I have said this internally, this is something we want to be arguing about in the context of counter-terrorism, because as soon as you do that you put people on the defensive in a way that is unhelpful to us. When we were drafting CONTEST there is a bit in CONTEST which is about this subject but I have been very strong with Communities and Local Government that it must be somewhere else too. This is about promoting the values on which this society depends, whichever government is in power, and there is more about that than counter-terrorism.

Q157 Ms Buck: Absolutely; that is completely correct. I just want to pick up on the second part of the question. It comes back to the point that if Operation CONTEST Refresh includes a definition and that definition can itself then be used and abused it is very important that, whether it is you or DCLG, somewhere in the heart of government we have to have means, very simple and effective top lines, that can be disseminated, including via people like MPs, that whole range of people interacting in the community that simply states, almost in the words that you have already used, that that definition is not about being criminalised. That single line is incredibly important: we are not criminalising the views.

Mr Farr: Yes, and that is in our strategy. It can so easily get lost in the wash. Let me if I may pause for a minute on this. The way we want to put this is not about defending anything, by the way; it is about promoting our shared values. What we have tried to say on the strategy is, “Yes, we are about attacking the ideology of violent extremism but we are also about promoting the basis on which our society depends, whichever government is in power, and we

will challenge people who are attacking those values”, and your definition of extremism, which I think is otherwise very difficult, relates to people who are challenging values. In a sense that is what we are saying extremism in this context is. I think it is very difficult to define extremism in another way. I do not know whether I have been clear about that.

Ms Buck: We can work it out.

Chairman: We can, yes.

Q158 David Davies: What influence then do you have over people coming into this country whom you might or might not think are appropriate visitors? We have seen recently the Dutch politician Geert Wilders was banned, but I read today that a senior member of Hezbollah is due to speak at a university and there seems to be an inconsistency here. Do you have any influence over that and should you not have an influence over it, given your role in defending our values?

Mr Farr: Yes, we do have influence. Decisions on these issues are made by the UK Borders Agency in consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and up to the Home Secretary, sometimes the Foreign Secretary and sometimes the Communities Secretary. It is a complicated landscape, necessarily, and into that, yes, OSCT will put a view. That is the policy framework. The practical issues are quite complicated. If you look at the person concerned, Ibrahim Moussawi, who is, as you rightly say, a member of a part of Hezbollah, things get a little bit more complicated. Not all of Hezbollah is a proscribed organisation. As you know, it is a very complicated movement. It is a parliamentary organisation, and the person concerned, from memory, operates in the Hezbollah television station al-Manar.

Q159 David Davies: He may not be a good example. I take your point entirely: there are elements of Hezbollah and Hamas who are more moderate than others, I fully accept that, but there have been people who have come over here who are clearly not in that moderate section. I suppose the question for you is, how much influence do you have and do you use it?

Mr Farr: We do have it and we do use it, and if you notice inconsistencies, which to a degree I plead guilty to, I think it is partly because consistency is so difficult. Every case is a bit different. May I give you an example? A notorious Islamist preacher operates on al-Jazeera, Qaradawi. You may remember Qaradawi came to prominence in this country when he came here and met Ken Livingstone. Qaradawi highlights all the difficulties of this for us. In some ways Qaradawi holds views which are certainly extremist by the definition that we suggested earlier. In other words, they are critical of the values on which our society rests.

Q160 David Davies: Women, gays, all the rest of it.

Mr Farr: Correct, all of those things, reprehensible. Equally, Qaradawi is one of the most articulate critics of al-Qaeda in the Islamic world. I think for any government, and I really passionately believe this, this is a real problem. If we refuse him a visa

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people will come back to us and say, “Hang on a moment. This person is coming here to speak against the organisation which most threatens you. Surely you need to operate within a degree of latitude which allows that”. I do not say that is a compelling argument.

David Davies: It is a moral dilemma; I agree.

Q161 Ms Buck: It is a fantastic example of the dilemma but it did not come out at all.

Mr Farr: No.

Chairman: You mean it was not communicated?

Ms Buck: No.

Q162 David Davies: But, actually, if it had been communicated, it would have come over as being rather cynical anyway—we are only letting him because he is attacking our enemies.

Mr Farr: I do think that is, by the way, a perfectly good argument and Qaradawi is a current issue for us: should we just refuse him a visa? By the way, his programme on al-Jazeera is probably the most watched programme on al-Jazeera and, of course, he will go on al-Jazeera as well and say he has been refused a visa to the UK. We could live with that, but certainly, when we put advice out to ministers, we have to say, “That is what is going to happen and you need to weigh this in the balance”.

Q163 Chairman: Coming back to current and future threats, either of you, please, or both, what are the areas of UK counter-terrorism policy that most concern you?

Q164 Mr Farr: May I interrupt. I was very interested in your line of questioning with the London Underground people. I wanted to say something about this. If you try to respond to that sort of problem with your protective infrastructure you will not succeed. That is why most of our investment has gone into what we call Pursue because that is still where you have got most chance of containing the problem. It is still a very difficult one but it is easier than trying to protect this city, even the Whitehall secure zone, from the threats that we can imagine over the next few years.

Q165 Chairman: The thing that concerns me particularly with the Tube is that first of all it has been fingered as being a primary target. It has been attacked at least twice, maybe more than that,. I take all of your points but I am still not convinced about the amount of deterrence that is being used. That leads neatly onto the next question, which is, what do you see as the greatest threat or threats to the United Kingdom at the moment?

Mr Farr: In terms of people who are threatening us or types of attack or both?

Q166 Chairman: Can we start with types of attack, please? In your assessment what will be the future most likely UK targets and types of attack against the UK? We have already covered that but what can we do better to mitigate against these styles of attack?

Mr Farr: I hope that we are doing all that we can, because if there is something there which we have not thought of then we will have failed. I do not think we are doing it perfectly and I am sure there are areas where, particularly if we had more money, we could do more; there always are. To me our response must be based on continuing to consolidate and use to best effect the resources that we have been given by the Government over the last three years. First, broadly speaking, Pursue stays, for the agencies and the police in particular. Secondly, we have to continue to build up—and we have put a huge amount of money into this—the Protect architecture. That is everything from borders (really critical; we need to do more) back through all the things I have just mentioned—critical national infrastructure, crowded places and the softer targets; and, thirdly, of course, we need to prepare for the prospect that an attack will succeed. I do not see any real gap that we are not trying to fill, which is not to say that we could not fill it quicker if we had more money, but this is the real world and I understand that choices need to be made and I am not suggesting that we do not have enough money. I think proportionately we probably do.

Ms McGregor: I think another important aspect of that is the way we try to exercise from these scenarios. We have a national counter-terrorism exercise programme and that involves all the police forces across England, Wales and Scotland in rotation, and all the time when we are thinking about the scenarios for these exercises, which involves government, police, the military, we are looking at the new threats.

Q167 Chairman: Thank you, and that takes me straight on to the next question. Again, I am making a comparison and I appreciate that it is probably not a very clever parallel, but we were quite good at saying, for instance, that the IRA used single tube mortars with home-made explosive; the next style of attack is going to be a multitude of mortars with commercial explosives. That is very simplistic, and generally speaking we got it right. We did not necessarily prevent it but we predicted it. What is your prediction like and how successful is it?

Mr Farr: There are various ways of answering that question.

Q168 Chairman: You are familiar with the work of ARAG, the Defence Academy’s Advanced Research and Assessment Group?

Mr Farr: Yes.

Q169 Chairman: Do you have an equivalent? Do you need an equivalent, or can you use them?

Mr Farr: Can we use them? I certainly know the people there and other people in my organisation do talk to them and we make use of some of their work. They have produced literature on radicalisation in this country, for example. Do we need an equivalent? I think yes and no. We need an equivalent in some areas but generally, of course, we look to JTAC to perform some of the functions that ARAG might be performing for MoD. Where I think we do need our

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own research capability, and we have got one, is particularly around the Prevent space. It goes back to your question: what drives radicalisation? I think to a degree that is up to us to answer, and I think we need it in the communications area, understanding how people communicate to us and working out how we respond to them. I am thinking in particular of terrorist organisations. In those areas I think we have got our own research programmes. Otherwise, we tend to rely on existing organisations.

Chairman: Thank you very much. I have to say these have been extremely refreshing answers. I am sorry to sound patronising, but they have. Let us move on to radicalisation. Karen, we have probably touched on a lot of this already.

Q170 Ms Buck: We have covered a lot of it but I have two specific things about radicalisation. One is the foreign affairs impact and particularly in recent times what you have been picking up around Gaza. Certainly, among some of my community there is absolutely no doubt that Gaza is the worst thing that has happened since I have been in public life in terms of Muslim reaction, much worse than Lebanon, even though the Government's position was much more helpful in response than it was at the time of the Lebanon conflict. The second thing is an assessment of economic impact and whether you have a view about the recession and the extent to which that will have an effect.

Mr Farr: Can I make a very quick comment about radicalisation? It is a subject in its own right. It has become a huge issue for the academic world as well as the intelligence and security world, what drives radicalisation. I have two or three remarks. One, there is no consistent answer to the question: what drives radicalisation? It varies significantly from country to country. Two, it varies most significantly from one terrorist organisation to another and even within a terrorist organisation what drives the leadership as opposed to the foot soldiers is very different. There is also a lot of rubbish out there, you have probably read some of it, which collapses all those things into one big basket and comes up with a generalisation or several generalisations which are often the source of some despair to us and can be very misleading in policy development terms. In simple terms, for us, subject to those criteria, we think of three factors driving radicalisation, some political, some psychological and some behavioural. Political factors driving radicalisation certainly include foreign policy, or rather, more strictly, a perception of foreign policy. They certainly include people living overseas, the experience of living in failed or failing states. They certainly include the experience of conflict. And, going back to your second question, they include the experience of deprivation, inequality, and, as it were, missed opportunity; I put it like that, and we can talk about that. There is a range of psychological issues driving radicalisation which I think are particularly relevant in non-Muslim societies where there are issues about identity and the relationships between individuals and their families, their communities and the state itself. In very simple terms we think of radicalisation

as having political drivers, psychological drivers and behavioural drivers. Amongst the political drivers are, as I have said, foreign policy and certainly economics. If you then look at the impact of the recession in this country, of course, it could be quite problematic. There is no doubt that under-employment and under-achievement can drive radicalisation. There is some very interesting literature around on how radical Muslim organisations in this country have recruited people. We have done some research on that and some academic research has been done which is really good. These organisations have talked about how they recruit people and have told us that there are two real drivers—a sense of thwarted ambition and racism. Those two things encourage people to join that group. It does not make them terrorists but it does get them on the track. It is a long answer to your question. We look at radicalisation under the three headings—political, psychological, behavioural. Under “political”, yes, foreign policy creates grievances, or the perception of foreign policy, and the recession could do so too.

Q171 Ms Buck: That is very helpful. I completely accept those tiers of psychological and behavioural as well as economic. It is also true to say, is it, that in addition to the pure radicalisation dimension some of these factors are relevant for you in terms of the Pursue agenda? It is the extent to which a wider community that is not itself radicalised is influenced by external political and economic factors in its willingness to engage and pass on information?

Mr Farr: Absolutely. Let me put it another way. There is a group of people that have been radicalised and are committed to violent extremism and the only solution to that group of people in this country is criminal investigation and prosecution. There is a much larger group of people who feel a degree of negativity, if not hostility, towards the state, the country, the community, and who are, as it were, the pool in which terrorists will swim, and to a degree they will be complicit with and will certainly not report on activity which they detect on their doorstep. We have to reach that group because unless we reach that group they may themselves move into the very sharp end, but even if they do not they will create an environment in which terrorists can operate with a degree of impunity that we do not want. By the way, that generalisation applies in other countries as well. We have to reach that group. That is to a degree what Prevent is all about.

Q172 Ms Buck: It raises an interesting question because you mentioned the far right earlier on. By and large I do not detect that there is much in the way of organised far right terrorism, although I think there is violence on the periphery, but there is a growing number of people voting for one far right party in particular. I think that what you have just described amongst the Islamic community be reflected in that—a smallish number of people who will commit violence, a large number of people who, for a variety of reasons that you mentioned: unemployment, poverty, various social factors, are

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drawn towards that philosophy. Do you think we need perhaps to be reaching out to those sorts of people as well and saying, "Come back. All is not lost. There are reasonable alternatives to what you are doing", because I think we should and I do not think we do it with the far right. I think we do it, rightly, with people getting involved in Islamic extremism but not in far right extremism.

Mr Farr: I basically agree with everything you have just said. I am slightly nervous about it because you see the waterfront of counter-terrorism expanding even further than it has done, but it is not necessarily—it rather reminds me of the conversation we were having earlier—a counter-terrorism issue; it is a community cohesion issue. It is an issue about social policy. I would definitely say, yes, you have to address both problem areas. Indeed, unless you address the second the way you address the first—targeted aid assistance programmes inside the Muslim communities—it simply risks pushing your other community further to the right as they feel disenfranchised and discriminated against. You can see in the work we are doing in areas where the far right have got local government representation how difficult that can be for us. We have to be very careful.

Q173 David Davies: Absolutely. In canvassing I have spoken to plenty of people who would otherwise be quite respectable who are voting for the far right and who should not be.

Mr Farr: This goes back to my issue about communications. This is why communications are so difficult. You can construct a communication strategy which will suit the Muslim community, but you will run it into some white communities and they will regard it as being evasive and unreal and that we are pandering to a certain point of view and not taking a sufficiently robust stance towards it. I do not defend that point of view, nor do I think it is accurate, but it would be idle to deny that it is not a perception that we have not come across.

Q174 David Davies: I think you have given us some very interesting food for thought there.

Mr Farr: Yes. We have to be aware of them.

Chairman: Prisons, mosques.

Q175 David Davies: There is radicalisation going on in prisons; we think there is. Are you aware of that and, if so, what role do you have in preventing it?

Mr Farr: We are very aware of it Muslims constitute a disproportionate percentage of the total people in prison in this country, somewhere between 12 and 13%, from memory. That is over 8,000 people; it is a very significant group, and we know that once they get inside prison there is a danger that they will be radicalised. It is not a danger just in this country; it is a danger throughout every prison system in the world, including the United States and prisons in the Muslim world as well. There is an additional risk that, for entirely legitimate reasons, people can get converted in prison to Islam. We are very aware of the risks. Since we were created, and it was one of the priorities we were given, we have worked very closely

with the Ministry of Justice to develop a counter-terrorist programme inside prisons. I do not think you are taking evidence from the Ministry of Justice but if you had more time it would be well worth doing, if I may say, because I think it is not yet a success story but it is a story of real progress. We have certainly enhanced the intelligence infrastructure in prisons; we have created an intelligence infrastructure, in fact, working very closely with the police as well. Of course, we are anticipating—which is already happening—what we are going to do when people who are convicted of terrorist offences are released; that sounds very odd but it is already happening, and when they back into the community what are we going to do about that? There is a very large complicated programme run by NOMS, the National Offender Management Service, under the strategic framework that we have provided. We are funding it. They do not have enough money so we have transferred some of our programme budget, and it is a good thing that we are able to do that, into the Ministry of Justice to enable them to get it off the ground.

Q176 David Davies: What percentage of that 12 or 13% were Muslims when they went in, because I have always had probably a stereotypical view that one problem you do not have in the Muslim communities is the petty crime that plagues other communities because Muslims tend to be very law-abiding?

Mr Farr: Most of the 12 or 13% were Muslims when they went in. I do not have that statistic but definitely most would have been.

Q177 David Davies: Am I wrong in thinking that? What you are suggesting is that there is a bigger problem with crime in the Muslim community.

Mr Farr: Yes, there is, absolutely.

Q178 Ms Buck: Predominantly young Muslims.

Mr Farr: Yes.

Q179 David Davies: Young males.

Mr Farr: Yes, less than 30.

Q180 David Davies: If you broke down, say, the white community into, for want of a better expression, social classes, and if you took—I hate to use this sort of Victorian terminology—the group of people who are on very low incomes and usually out of work, and then looked at the percentage of young males between 18 and 24 in prison from that community, you would probably find it was at least as high, if not higher, would you not?

Mr Farr: Yes, you probably would. Again, this is why the Ministry of Justice would be able to give you more exact figures on this, or indeed we could if we prepared them. The only other thing I would add, and it goes back to your question about radicalisation, is that there is a direct relationship between criminality and radicalisation and it is not just in this country; it is overseas as well. In other words, people who have criminal records, and criminal records not related to terrorism, appear to

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be vulnerable to radicalisation more than many others. We think this is because they find in terrorist networks a refuge from the blame that otherwise gets attached to them in the community as a result of their criminal activity. They may not have been convicted but simply the isolation and alienation that can happen in a community as a result of their criminal activities can drive them into a terrorist network and can drive them towards Islam as a sort of solution to some of the problems they face. I am simplifying it hugely, but criminality and radicalisation—there is a causal relationship there that greatly interests us.

Chairman: We will move on to Olympic security if we may.

Q181 David Davies: Did you welcome the decision to move responsibility for the security of the 2012 Olympics to the OSCT, and have you been given extra money to deal with the responsibility?

Mr Farr: In the early stages of OSCT I felt that we simply were not resourced to deal with an issue of the complexity of the Olympic security programme. This was when I arrived, which was the middle of 2007. We were 160 people when we began, very few, transferred from all other bits of Whitehall. We did not have the staff, we did not have the expertise, we did not have the wherewithal to do it, and for that reason the programme was left with another, more mature bit of the Home Office, something called CRCSG, which you may be familiar with, which broadly speaking deals with conventional crime and policing. As we progressed through 2008 two things became apparent that we had increasingly the people and the expertise to enable us to address that programme ourselves, so by the end of 2008, we took the decision that the organisation was mature enough to absorb that function. It is a long way of saying, was I happy to do it? Yes, I thought it was essential that we did. We could not have done it very much earlier because you cannot run a programme like that with a brand-new organisation. In December last year we made the decision to move it over within the Home Office. On the question of resources, we simply (although it was not simple) took everyone who was working on the Olympics already into something called the Olympic Security Directorate and absorbed them into OSCT as a self-standing directorate. We have got five directorates. We simply added a sixth, and that was fine.

Q182 David Davies: They answer to you, of course?

Mr Farr: Yes, via the SRA.

Q183 David Davies: You set parameters and they report back as to how they have got on without you telling them to do it?

Mr Farr: Yes, absolutely. We inherited the entire envelope budget, which is £600 million, as you may know, for the security of the Olympic Games. Was I happy? Yes. Did I think we could have done it earlier? No. Did we need to do it earlier? Not particularly, and I think we have made very good progress. Yesterday we had the key ministerial meeting which signed off the framework documents

for the security strategy. I am about to brief Pauline Neville-Jones on it and we have got a press briefing this afternoon. I think it is in good shape and I am quite pleased with the progress we have now made.

Q184 Ms Buck: I think in large part you have covered the questions I was going to ask. Is there anything else that needs to be developed in terms of co-ordinating the different agencies with security responsibilities, and where do you see that going?

Mr Farr: We are about to publish a strategy which I think is quite interesting. It is quite complicated, 120 pages, 45,000 words. We have never done anything like it before.

Q185 Chairman: Have you a date for that?

Mr Farr: The second half of March. Of course, there is no point in publishing a strategy unless it gets traction with the people to whom it is relevant, and that is the next key test for us. The strategy has been developed across government, 21 departments, and local government and the international picture as well, but it is only as good as the degree to which it is adopted by everyone seriously. We have spoken a lot about this during this meeting. I think our ability to encourage other departments to play their part in this is necessarily variable. Some departments are much more aware of it because of the programme than others, and the challenge for the next couple of years, having rolled out the strategy, is to make sure everyone participates in it to the extent that we require.

Q186 Chairman: Just coming back briefly, if we may, to the Games, what do you think the major threat is to the Games?

Mr Farr: We have got four threats, we believe. One is terrorism, of course. Another is public disorder. The third is serious crime and the fourth is what I would call non-malicious hazards, which could be anything from heat or flood to epidemic. Globalisation and globalisation movements could yet prove to be a very big challenge for us. Even with non-malicious hazards, if you are looking at the sorts of crowds we are expecting for the Olympics, the task is immense. I am sure you know the figures, but you are talking about an event which is 20 times the size of a World Cup. Simply crowd control, without public order problems or terrorism problems, is a great challenge, so we have got those four areas.

Q187 Chairman: I entirely accept that.

Q188 David Davies: Do you honestly think we have got enough police officers and PCSOs at the moment just to deal with the non-malicious, the public order and the heat and the crowd control at the moment?

Mr Farr: I rely, obviously, on the police to tell me that. There is a work stream in the new Olympic strategy which is about command and control and resources, and a key part of that is to come up with those figures. An awful lot of work has been done. I am sure that we have. Remember that a lot of forces are not directly affected by the Olympics and therefore can provide, under mutual aid resource,

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into the Met and other forces who are. I am told the answer is yes and I have seen nothing that would lead me to question it.

Q189 Chairman: And the co-ordination of the police forces that are going to be involved? Half a dozen or so?

Mr Farr: The Metropolitan Police are about to appoint a counterpart to me who will be responsible for the delivery of the programmes by policing. That person will have nationwide responsibility and in the police parlance is an ACPO as well as a Met appointee, which is essential. Otherwise, basically, this would not work.

Q190 David Davies: This session has been excellent and the last question is whether or not you think it is likely that you will be taking over security for other major sporting events in the future. I suppose it might depend on how you perform on this one.

Mr Farr: As you know, as someone helpfully told me the other day, there are issues about whether and how we bid for World Cup, rugby, cricket and football, and it seems inevitable that at least two of those are going to come here. They are not anything like the scale of the Olympics. Whether we will have a role, whether they are big enough for us to have to get involved or whether they remain policing issues, I do not know. I do think—it is not your question but it is perhaps worth stating it—that one of the real legacy benefits of the Olympics is to give us the expertise to do these things, not as a matter of routine because they will never be that but to make the concept of operations much more familiar to everyone in the delivery chain.

Chairman: Thank you. I take that point. Can I thank you, Ms McGregor and Mr Farr, for what I think has been an outstanding session.

Ms Buck: I think this has been one of the best sessions I have ever had on a committee; superb.

Q191 Chairman: May I ask for guidance, please, and discussion if we need to, very briefly? How much of this could we have done *in camera*?

Mr Farr: My problem about not being *in camera* is that for every answer that we give there is often a bit that is classified and you cannot separate unclassified questions and answers from classified

questions and answers. The classified and the unclassified are mixed together. That is the difficulty. When you see the transcripts you can split off the classified bit and you are left with an unclassified answer, but what you cannot easily do is break the session in half because you then end up having to go over every question again, saying, “I want to add this to that, that to that, that to the other”. That is why, I am afraid, we suggested it was easier to have the whole lot *in camera* and then to look at the transcript and deal with it through the transcript rather than through the evidence session.

Q192 Chairman: Ms McGregor?

Ms McGregor: Yes, and if the transcript can come to me in the first instance we will discuss it with Charles and then we can quickly separate out those things. There are quite a number of things that were said that we could not have said in a public transcript.

Mr Farr: I do stress, and I hope you see this when you read CONTEST, that it is a really clear objective of ours, set by the Home Secretary, that we have got to get as much of this out into the public domain as we possibly can. That is our default position. I hope you will not regard our suggestion that we have this *in camera* as, as it were, contrary to that principle.

Q193 Chairman: No. Frankly, it raised a few hackles and it raised a few question marks, but I think my colleagues’ points are well made, that this has been an extremely interesting session compared with some of the others, which may be our fault for not being focused terribly well. This is totally useful and where we now take it is clearly up to us to decide.

Mr Farr: If I may add, I think there is a real willingness by everyone in the counter-terrorist community, leave aside the agencies who work with the ISC, to talk more about what we are doing. I have expressed a degree of frustration that we cannot do it more and I do find it, I have said to people, an anomaly that I go around the world talking about our counter-terrorism strategy but I do not do it in this building. That does not seem to me to be sensible, so we welcome really genuinely an opportunity to get asked questions, interrogated, get views, advice, suggestions, about how we should improve it. If we do not do that then we are not doing our job.

Chairman: Thank you very much indeed.

Written evidence

Memorandum submitted by VT Communications

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memo:

- (a) Provides an introduction to VT Group.
- (b) Offers VT's viewpoint on the "Protect" strand of the Government's Countering International Terrorism: The UK's Strategy, July 2006.
- (c) Identifies some of VT's core capabilities with regards to counter-terrorism, intelligence and resilience.

2. INTRODUCTION

VT is a leading defence and support services contractor, providing engineering focused, mission critical support to the defence, nuclear and secure communications sectors, supported by a comprehensive specialist training business.

The Group employs over 14,000 people and has an annual turnover of over £1.2 billion as well as a current order book of over £6 billion. The Group is a long-standing supplier to a number of Government customers and operates in a number of countries world-wide, with over one hundred offices, ranging from Cornwall to Northern Scotland, in the UK alone.

3. COUNTERING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM: THE UK'S STRATEGY, JULY 2006

VT welcomes HMG's Countering International Terrorism Strategy. Below, we comment specifically on the "Protect" strand of the Government's strategic response to international terrorism.

"Protect"

The successful delivery of the "Protect" strand of the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy necessarily depends on close co-operation between the public and private sectors. The existence of the UK Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers' Community (RISC) and the regular meetings it holds with Government "to consider how it [RISC] can help support the objectives set out in the National Security Strategy" are an excellent start to co-operation. However, there is scope for much closer co-operation (without compromising proprietary information and/or public confidentiality): for a start, RISC and its members could be invited to comment on the next iteration of the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It is only via means of dialogue with industry that:

- (a) Government will understand the art of the possible in terms of finding solutions to deliver its Strategy.
- (b) Industry will plan and invest in the UK economy (at a time of particular economic uncertainty) to deliver requisite counter-terrorism, intelligence and resilience capabilities.

More specifically:

- (i) For security reasons, it is clearly not possible for the Strategy to divulge the extent to which there are concerns in relation to specific risks or vulnerabilities. However, it will continue to be valuable for Government and industry to identify in confidence how we can best support the protection of key national services.
- (ii) We applaud and encourage the Strategy's stated intention for the Government to "say more publicly about its general analysis of the terrorist threat and broad approach to protective security." The more information available to industry, the better we will be able to respond to the Government's requirements.
- (iii) It would be hugely valuable for industry to have an early understanding of the proportion of the annual Counter-Terrorism, Intelligence and Resilience budget to be made available for private sector engagement. As before, the more information industry has, the better we can plan, budget and invest with a view to providing Government with the wherewithal it requires to respond to threats to national security.
- (iv) Finally, and arguably most importantly, VT would welcome a streamlining of procurement processes and guidance. We appreciate the benefits of having more than one department (ie the Home Office) looking after all aspects of counter-terrorism, eg taking advantage of the expertise and resources of other departments, agencies and the emergency services. However, the large number of security and resilience procurement agencies (SBAC puts the number at around 60), all

with their separate processes and guidance, is both confusing and counter-productive. By introducing streamlined processes and guidance, Government would induce industry to invest its resources and capabilities in products designed to meet Government's evolving requirements in the security and resilience sphere.

4. VT GROUP'S CORE COUNTER-TERRORISM, INTELLIGENCE AND RESILIENCE CAPABILITIES

VT's project management experience and its knowledge of the counter-terrorism, intelligence and resilience arena make it ideal for bringing together multiple capabilities to deliver output-based solutions. Many of these solutions are directly concerned with reducing the vulnerability of the UK, including the protection of critical national infrastructure and the deterrence of illegitimate CBRN activity. VT delivers these solutions via innovative contracting practices, for example contracting for availability, the financing of asset or infrastructure deals and the bundling of contracts where appropriate.

A number of specific capabilities are summarised in the table below:

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Current Example Contracts</i>
Secure and Resilient Networks and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provision and operation of secure communications infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Communications infrastructure and associated support to GCHQ — Provision of highly resilient terrestrial back-up to GPS (eLoran) — Provision of atomic clock-driven signal (used for transportation, telecommunication and emergency services systems) — International delivery of the BBC World Service, which is often the only communications medium instantly available in the aftermath of a national security incident where other networks are likely first casualties
Nuclear Material Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Design and supply of CBRN monitoring equipment — Supply and maintenance of Tactical Radiological Monitoring Equipment (TRAME) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Cyclamen programme, providing key nuclear installations with 24/7/365 radiological incident support (including identification and disposal) — Provision of all UK Armed Forces' military radiation monitoring equipment
Nuclear Incident Clean-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Specialist clean-up services, including characterisation, containment and disposal of radioactive material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Government "decontamination service" framework contractor (DEFRA)
Critical Asset Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Fleet management — Communications vehicle modifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — New Dimension contract, providing DCLG's fleet of emergency response vehicles with vehicle management support

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Current Example Contracts</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Met Police fleet management contract — ALC Joint Venture with Amey to provide the Army's C-vehicles (which can be deployed to support 'critical national infrastructure' incidents) with fleet management support
Preparatory Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Specialist fire and rescue training facilities, including in the marine environment — Deployable UOR training teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provision of training to UK fire authorities in respect of core fire and rescue mandates

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by Department of Health

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The health sector represents one of the most complex and diverse parts of the National and Critical National Infrastructure. It plays an integral part in the UK's readiness and response to domestic and international terrorist threats and events.

1.2 CONTEST has an increasing bearing on the way in which the NHS and the wider health sector operates in terms of its own readiness and response to major emergencies (which will include terrorist attacks) and in the sector's resilience to disruptive challenges.

1.3 The health sector faces some significant challenges in delivering against its CONTEST commitments given:

- no one single strand will reduce the overall risk of terrorism. Read-across between strands should ensure that priorities and deliverables are mutually supportive and not repeated or conflicting;
- the increased pace of change and the way it affects how the strategy continues to evolve and expand when matched against scarce local resources, competing priorities and the speed at which mitigation can be delivered;
- the "all-risk approach" required to prepare for unpredictable challenges (both threats and hazards) and the balance that must be struck between investment in wider civil resilience against counter-terrorism;
- the complexities around criticality and critical assets and the read-across into the wider civil resilience agenda;
- the need to further develop the strategy's performance management system so as to ensure relevance, achievability and proportionality;
- performance management and process overheads can be disproportionately burdensome and overshadow delivery;
- although at LOW Threat, the sector is exposed to far greater risks in responding to a wide variety of major emergencies; and
- the need for a more centrally coordinated approach to sector engagement by sponsors and delivery partners.

2. PREPARE

2.1 The health sector (through the Department of Health), has a well-established and long-standing relationship with the Cabinet Office's Civil Contingencies Secretariat, (being the sponsor for PREPARE), which is reflected in the more mature civil resilience delivery plans under this strand.

2.2 Given that it is impossible to predict all challenges, the health sector takes an all-risk “threat and hazards” approach to its preparedness relying on established legislation, systems and structures to support a significant part of its response. For instance, public health surveillance systems (supported by the Health Protection Agency and various Royal Colleges), are equally capable of identifying covert intentional CBRN terrorist attacks as well as naturally occurring disease outbreaks.

2.3 The balance between programme management overheads and delivery should be proportionate. Programme management should not detract from or overshadow delivery.

3. PROTECT

3.1 It must be remembered that in employing in excess of 1.3 million people, the NHS is the largest single employer in Europe and that its estate includes somewhere in the region of 3,000 separate sites plus in excess of 12,000 or so primary care GP surgeries.

3.2 Hazard-type incidents such as flooding, interruptions to utility supplies etc. can cause rapid and far greater disruption to the health sector than terrorism. A PROTECT approach to the NHS must therefore be proportionate and any investment justifiable, given the sector’s LOW Threat Assessment.

3.3 Currently, work around criticality and critical assets (replacing the previous system of Economic Key Points or EKPs), is very much embedded in the CNI Protect programme. In broadening the definition to include essential services, the health sector is now responsible for the defence and preservation of a significant number of highly diverse critical assets including:

- acute hospitals;
- countermeasure storage sites;
- forensic and secure mental health facilities;
- level 3 and 4 laboratories;
- blood banks; and
- critical elements of NHS supply chains.

3.4 These assets are as much, if not more vulnerable to general challenges. In this way, their defence/preservation crosses into the civil resilience agenda under PREPARE. There is also the assumption that the sector already has in place the “building blocks” required to support the concept of “doing something differently” to defend and preserve.

4. PURSUE

4.1 Health has very little to contribute to this strand. However, we actively engage when called upon.

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by Transport for London

1. Transport for London (TfL) is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Committee’s inquiry into Project Contest: the Government’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Our comments below are in relation to the committee’s inquiry into the “Protect” strand of Project Contest—focusing on the preparation of London’s transport infrastructure, and London Underground (LU) in particular, against terrorist attack.

2. The safety and security of passengers is TfL’s highest priority. Across all modes TfL adopts a co-ordinated approach to managing the risks presented by the threat of terrorism, keeping policies and strategies under constant review and working closely with all relevant agencies including the security and emergency services, central and local Government, and other transport providers.

3. TfL has invested heavily in improving the transport infrastructure in London and delivering a safe and secure transport network and it remains a priority for the organisation going forward. The public transport system in London is currently carrying a record number of passengers. In 2007–08 there were over one billion journeys on the Tube system, over two billion journeys on the bus network and over 125 million journeys on London Rail (the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), London Overground (LO) and Croydon Tramlink).

4. In particular, LU has made great strides in recent years and is carrying more passengers and delivering more train kilometres than ever before. Set against this is the fact that the system is undergoing the biggest transformation in its history, with a massive rebuilding and change programme in full swing. Yet customer satisfaction is also at an all time high.

5. TfL’s achievements around customer satisfaction are largely down to the professionalism and commitment of management and staff, which in turn stems from their training and experience.

6. It is those factors which were also at the root of the Tube's, and the wider transport system's ability to withstand and very rapidly recover from the attacks of 7 July 2005. Also vital was the multi-agency planning that was put in place by the UK Government, supported by the Mayor of London, following the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington DC. LU was fully involved in that process, with a senior manager seconded to the London Resilience Team (LRT) from its outset, to ensure that the operational realities of a mass transport metro system are properly considered in political and investment decision making.

7. The LRT has led work in subject areas such as the evacuation of parts of London; chemical, biological and radiological attacks, and most visibly has arranged tabletop and live emergency exercises to test and validate the preparedness for such attacks as well as for more conventional means of attack. The largest of these was a weekend exercise at Bank London Underground Station in September 2003, which simulated a chemical attack at one of the largest, most complex stations on the network. This was a multi-agency exercise which was also attended by political and elected representatives, with coverage from world media. This is in addition to the regular exercises that we hold with our own and emergency services staff to test our readiness for a wide variety of operational emergency situations. The learning from all these exercises played a vital role for Underground senior managers in revising training and in their own actions on 7 July.

8. TfL has continued its engagement with LRT and other agencies on planning and exercising for major incidents and emergencies. Recent exercises in which "transport" has participated include flooding, contamination at sites away from London but with implications for London and a major London hospital evacuation. TfL was engaged as both scenario planners and players.

9. The training and refreshers that all staff receive is in our view the most important factor in dealing with a range of emergency situations. The Underground's ability on 7 July to evacuate around a quarter of a million people from the Tube network within an hour, without injury, is testimony to that, as was the restoration of 85% of services by the following morning.

10. This was also true of the restoration later in the day of the bus service in Central London after its initial shut down on July 7. The restoration of service was essential in allowing many thousands of stranded commuters return home.

11. In terms of what can be done to secure open access mass transit systems, we are in a very different position to some other forms of transport. One has only to buy a ticket to secure largely unrestrained access to the public areas of the rail network—500 trains, 270 stations on the LU network, and 115 vehicle sets and 129 stations/stops on the London Rail networks—along with millions of fellow passengers.

12. Indeed the Lord West Review presented by the Home Secretary in a written statement to the House of Commons on 14 November 2007 concluded that:

"The review has acknowledged the effectiveness of the security programme that has already been implemented across the transport sector. This focuses on delivering security measures that help protect the travelling public and transport staff and facilities from terrorism threats, without impacting disproportionately on how the industry operates."

13. There are a number of ways of controlling risks by applying layers of security measures which create a controlled environment. No one measure by itself is sufficient and all measures have to find the right balance, as Lord West concluded:

"To ensure that people and businesses are free to go about their normal social, economic and democratic activities as far as possible, as a result there will always be some vulnerability to terrorist attacks."

14. CCTV is vital to managing security on the Underground and the wider transport system in London. In July 2005 we already had CCTV coverage of all buses in London and over 6,000 cameras, covering nearly all stations and some of our trains. We also have extensive coverage on the DLR, LO and Tramlink systems. The number is ever increasing as part of the transformation of the system—there are now over 8,500 cameras across the Tube network and this will reach over 10,000 by 2012. The quality of the equipment is also being upgraded where necessary.

15. For all new CCTV systems, every camera will provide images that can be recorded.

16. All of the cameras on the bus system (up to 12 cameras on all 7,000 buses) already record to a hard drive on the bus and can be downloaded at the bus garage to provide evidential quality images, as can those on the trams.

17. The CCTV footage provided by TfL cameras played a vital role in the investigation and identification of the individuals involved in both the 7 July and 21 July events.

18. TfL also invests heavily in the visible policing of the network. In 2009–10 TfL will be investing over £150 million to provide over 2,600 uniformed officers dedicated to the network.

19. The Tube network is policed by a dedicated division of the British Transport Police (BTP) comprising over 700 police officers and PCSOs, the numbers having increased significantly in recent years thanks to additional funding for the force from the Mayor of London.

20. In addition, 6,000 front-line station staff are deployed across the Tube, with every station staffed throughout the time trains are running and the vast majority staffed around the clock. All trains have a driver who is in contact by radio with a line control centre. There are seven such rooms across the network. This is a high level of staffing compared with other metro systems world wide. It is widely recognised that high levels of customer service also provide high levels of perception of security.

21. On the bus network over 1,900 police officers, Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) and traffic wardens provide a dedicated visible presence. In 2009–10 TfL will also provide an additional 155 officers for the London Overground Network and other parts of the Heavy Rail system in London over and above the BTP presence paid for by the Train Operating Companies. Again, numbers have increased substantially due to additional funding by the Mayor.

22. All our operating staff have to prove their identity and are subject to criminal conviction checks when they join. In this as with other areas we strictly adhere to the guidance of the security services. In fact the Transport Personnel Review conducted on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport by Stephen Boys Smith in 2008 identified London Underground as a model of best practice across the whole of the transport sector (including aviation) because of our risk based approach to this issue.

23. LU and DLR have in conjunction with the Government run trials of equipment at a small number of stations to scan and search passengers. It remains our view however that wholesale screening and checking of all those who use the Tube and bus network on a daily basis is impractical and disproportionate, and that intelligence led checks sometimes linked to major leisure events are more appropriate. BTP have made great use of searches¹ of individuals entering stations in conjunction with behavioural assessment techniques.

24. We are fully aware of the capabilities of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) detection however there are significant challenges with fixed detection equipment in a metro environment and we continue to monitor this type of technology with DfT Transec and through our extensive international contacts. The BTP currently have the best available portable detection equipment.

25. We have also examined protective measures used internationally (including those used by buses in Israel) and again we have found them not suitable for London's mass transit infrastructure due to the volume of passenger numbers and frequency of service.

26. CCTV and policing, together with the vigilance of our own staff, provide a controlled environment which is hostile to criminals and those planning possible terrorist attacks. Our passengers also have a vital role to play, and we have encouraged them through information campaigns to be on the look out for, and to report, any suspicious behaviour or unattended items. The latest multi-modal "vigilance" campaign was launched at the end of November 2008 [an example poster is attached].

27. Communications between staff, and with the Police, are vital. We have now rolled out a new communications network for the Tube, which links control centres, trains, stations and depots, replacing the existing systems that were not as joined up and which have been too prone to failures. The new system was delivered through the Connect PFI, a contract that was behind schedule when LU was transferred to Transport for London in 2003, but which we have worked as quickly as possible to bring into service. The new radio system was only put into operation on each Underground line once it has passed stringent validation, operational and safety checks.

28. The Connect system will also improve communications between drivers on trains and rescuers in an emergency situation.

29. As part of the project there is now interoperability with the Metropolitan Police service's "Airwave" digital radio system. The Airwave radio system can now operate above and below ground and enables the Police to communicate on their own encrypted channels between the surface and deep tunnels (The BTP and London Fire Brigade already had radios that worked underground).

30. Although the new system will be much more effective and resilient to damage than the previous Underground radio system, no system can be guaranteed against the effects of an explosion.

31. In addition, TfL's operational control rooms are co-located with the relevant police control rooms. LU's Network Operations Control room has recently been revamped and is co-located with the BTP control room for the rail system in London. The main MPS transport control room (Metrocomm) is also co-located with the bus network control room (Centrecomm) and in the summer of 2009 it will be moved to a newly built and equipped facility and co-located with the London Traffic Control Centre.

32. These co-located control rooms allow the operational response to incidents to be closely co-ordinated with the police and engender a close working relationship between TfL and our policing partners.

¹ Under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000

33. Since 7 July LU has investigated and implemented a number of other improvements to our resilience, including:

- Better first aid provision at stations. Mass casualty first aid kits have been placed at 170 key locations and these can be taken to the scene of an incident if necessary. The importance of providing first aid kits on the scene is also being incorporated into staff training. In addition we have 30 NHS “pods” (emergency dressing packs) at major stations. It is not feasible to store these on our trains. These are for the use of the emergency services personnel.
- Emergency water—All London Underground stations have access to a supply of bottled water that can be made available at short notice to passengers who are feeling unwell or have been involved in a stalled train incident. It would be impractical to provide emergency water on every train as the conditions for storage are not ideal and would create health hazards.
- LU has also provided new, improved stretchers at all stations (to replace the existing ones), at all levels so they can be quickly utilised.
- We have over 1,000 qualified first aiders amongst our employees.
- Members of the public also step forward in situations such as 7/7.
- New safety notices on trains, all trains now have standard “In an emergency” signage, advising passengers of evacuation procedures.²
- We have reviewed other emergency equipment in conjunction with the emergency services and other relevant experts. This resulted in a number of changes but emergency equipment on trains will continue to be provided for staff use only. To publicise its availability to passengers would be likely to result in theft and misuse.
- In addition to existing torch provision, new hands free torches have been provided at stations, for use in emergency.
- Training—lessons learned have been incorporated into new training programmes.
- The BTP have increased the use of sniffer dogs on the system and are increasing this further for the Olympics. In addition they use passive dogs. BTP are better placed to report on this.

34. At the core of our resilience strategy is that we constantly work in close co-operation with Central Government Departments, the security service, the Police, Fire and Ambulance services, and other agencies and transport operators. It is that co-operation and co-ordination that enables us to be aware of and respond to changing circumstances.

35. The need for continued focus on “resilience” is clear and close working with the agencies described above will remain a key part of the TfL strategy to provide an open network in the context of keeping London moving whilst ensuring that those who use or provide the services are encouraged to maintain vigilance and can benefit from appropriate investment in systems and equipment. We know that the threat remains high and that we can never be complacent, but we must not create an environment of fear as this will adversely affect public confidence and give the terrorists what they strive for.

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SBAC is the UK’s national trade association representing companies supplying civil air transport, defence, security and space markets. SBAC encompasses the British Aviation Group (BAG) and UKspace. Together with its regional partners, SBAC represents over 2,600 companies across the UK supply chain.

1.2 SBAC members provide support to the Home Office’s Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) through participation in the UK Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers Community (RISC). RISC is an alliance of companies, trade associations and think tanks with links to academia that brings together the UK industrial community to support the Government in creating a more secure and safe environment for UK citizens.

1.3 SBAC members are engaged in the fast developing domestic and international security markets for which there are many interfaces with government departments, emergency services and other agencies. There are opportunities for the Home Office and other appropriate agencies to continue to work closely with industry to meet the UK’s national counter-terrorism needs and SBAC therefore welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

² This was in response to concerns raised by some of the survivors of 7/7 who were not sure whether it was safer to stay on the trains or not. Research conducted with international colleagues unanimously agreed that this is the preferred and safest option in most cases.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The UK's national policy agenda is affected by well-documented security challenges, especially the threat posed by terrorism. Industry has a critical role to play in supporting OSCT and other government agencies in delivering CONTEST and must do so in the context of rapid change. Industry should be looked upon as a key component of the UK's ability to meet the major threats identified in the Government's National Security Strategy (NSS), especially the severe threat posed by terrorism;

2.2 UK industry possesses a broad range of capabilities that can support the Home Office and other appropriate agencies in delivering UK national security; industry should be considered as a willing strategic partner to agencies responsible for delivering counter-terrorism;

2.3 Industry welcomes the Government's decision to update the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST II) and looks forward to continued cross-government engagement through existing mechanisms such as RISC to deliver it. RISC provides government and industry with the opportunity to review security matters collaboratively and, where appropriate, to work together to improve the UK's ability to meet operational requirements that are needed to counter terrorism.

2.4 Specific recommendations relating to this inquiry's scrutiny of the Prepare and Protect strands of CONTEST are listed in section five.

3. DELIVERING THE UK'S COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY—SBAC VIEW ON THE UK CONTEXT

3.1 The UK faces a serious, sustained and well-documented terrorism threat. As recognised in CONTEST and the NSS, multi-agency cooperation and public/private sector partnership working are necessary to meet this challenge.

3.2 It is encouraging that CONTEST identifies that "Successful delivery of this counter-terrorism strategy depends upon partnerships between all parts of Government; the public, private and voluntary sectors; and all of us as individuals and as members of communities." It is hoped and anticipated that industry's role in counter-terrorism will continue to be looked upon positively in future revisions of CONTEST.

3.3 CONTEST makes clear that the current threat from terrorism is genuinely international in scope. As such, traditional boundaries between "defence" and "security" policy are increasingly blurred. For example, overseas stabilisation and peace-keeping operations can help to tackle the conditions which might promote terrorism and lead to terrible consequences for domestic security. Similarly, in industrial terms, "defence" equipment, systems and technologies can be adapted and deployed in a domestic, civil context to help counter the threat posed by terrorism. Government structures and industry's outlook are adapting to reflect this increasing trend. It is encouraging that OSCT has been established to coordinate the UK's domestic counter-terrorism effort across all the departments that are responsible for security policy both at "home" and overseas. SBAC members can continue to assist the OSCT with its responsibilities, including with respect to how UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) industrial capability can be merged into domestic security at both technical and other levels.

3.4 No single Government department is responsible for the provision of all aspects of UK security. UK National Security governance must continue to address the new and complex interconnected challenges by integrating the outlook and activities of all the relevant agencies. The NSS explains that "the major security challenges require an integrated response that cuts across departmental lines and traditional policy boundaries." Similarly the processes for developing and supplying the equipment, systems and technologies that may be required to mitigate (and respond to) emerging terrorist threats will continue to benefit from integrated engagement across Whitehall and with private operators of the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI). Industry is fully supportive of an integrated government approach to meet national security challenges such as the terrorism threat.

4. INQUIRY COMMENTS

4.1 Against this background SBAC would offer the following comments.

4.1.1 OSCT has engaged industry in a productive manner during its first two years of operation. The co-ordinated articulation of OSCT and other departments' priority operational requirements that draw on industrial capability is the next natural step for the security agenda.

4.1.1.1 With regards to developing UK-based security operational requirements, the Home Office has a leading role to play in setting counter-terrorism priorities and working with other agencies and industry to deliver them. Since 2007 OSCT has engaged the security industry positively through RISC; considerable progress has been made through this channel and it is hoped that strong dialogue will continue. RISC has emerged as the principal strategic point of contact between Government (OSCT) and Industry to address counter-terrorism issues.

- 4.1.1.2 Industry in the UK welcomed the Government's establishment of four pilot RISC "Industry Advisory Groups" (IAGs) in April 2008 on themes pertinent to the current threat posed. Industry is encouraged that the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI), The Transport Security and Contingencies Directorate (TRANSEC) in the Department for Transport (DfT), the Home Office Science and Development Branch (HOSDB) and other Government Departments and operational agencies are represented within these IAGs' deliberations; in this way OSCT and the full range of appropriate domestic security agencies are able to draw upon the relevant capabilities and experience whilst engaging industry in a coordinated manner. With a drive to develop the groups' objectives and outcomes well underway, the IAGs are seen by SBAC as useful mechanisms for pulling HMG and industry closer together. Industry can best bring its technology and investment to bear in helping to solve security problems when it is taken into the confidence of the Government agencies. The IAGs should therefore be given time to develop and work in a proactive manner with all relevant agencies across Government who are tasked with addressing future threats and challenges.
- 4.1.1.3 The publication of CONTEST II could place necessary additional requirements on these groups' activities and Industry will aim to be responsive to HMG's needs. Government should therefore consider carefully whether wholesale reform of these groups will be necessary in the wake of CONTEST II. In so far as industry is involved in delivering CONTEST the collaborative formation of the Government's necessary requirements that can be met by private sector suppliers is the next natural step for the counter-terrorism agenda. Greater clarity over future capability requirements will help to encourage industry to invest shareholders' money in developing new approaches.

4.1.2 It is not easy to judge how well the UK's critical infrastructure is prepared for, and protected against, terrorist attacks. Despite the work being done by the CPNI which has gone out of its way to contact the supply side of industry this is because CNI ownership is overwhelmingly in private sector hands, subject to different regulatory regimes and the demands of shareholders. Improvements could be made and stronger relations with industry (both installations' private operators and industry suppliers) could be developed. As CONTEST makes clear, "the private sector is crucial in protecting the UK and UK interests." This is because it is often private companies who are responsible for the financing and operational delivery of protective security measures around critical assets (including energy installations, transport systems and crowded places) across the country. Similarly, the effectiveness of UK critical infrastructure's protective security measures is to a certain extent reliant upon industrial suppliers' ability to develop new and innovative solutions to mitigate against specific threats. Against this backdrop, a continued debate is needed about the role that regulators of the CNI might play on security issues in the future. In that respect the Government's efforts to protect the CNI against terrorist attacks could benefit from stronger interaction with the private sector at the strategic level:

- 4.1.2.1 With respect to oversight of private operators' operational security responsibilities, the Government might feel it should have powers to impose security/resilience standards on CNI designated operators/organisations. It might choose to do this by ensuring that sectoral Utility Regulators take into account security and resilience capabilities when making judgements about investment and competition issues. This may require legislation. The introduction of security and resilience measures can be seen as non added value costs hitting the bottom line. Unless there is some financial incentive to invest within a level playing field there could be large variances in the approaches taken by the Boards of CNI operators. The supply industry believes that this is an important area for the Government to tackle.
- 4.1.2.2 In the area of encouraging counter-terrorism innovation from the UK security industrial base, Government should work closely with RISC to address industry's concern around the existing potential for disproportionate third party liability exposure following acts of terrorism in the UK or across the European Union (EU). In industry's view legislation introduced after the events of September 11 2001 in the United States has helped to create an environment whereby closer public and private collaboration has encouraged stronger security technology innovation. The US "Safety Act" removed barriers to innovation because the Government was tasked with approving new technologies that are appropriate for deployment. Upon each technology's approval by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), suppliers are protected against unmanageable liability claims that might follow new attacks. This both encourages companies to invest in security technology innovation and ensures stronger product quality control. In addressing the existing potential for unmanageable liability claims following new attacks in the UK, potentially in a similar manner to the US's experience, the OSCT would help foster an environment whereby the delivery of technological innovation and harmonisation necessary for the counter-terrorism agenda would be more easily achieved.

4.1.2.3 With respect to the International security policy agenda the UK should also encourage counter-terrorism innovation by looking to take full advantage of the EU's €1.4 billion budget from 2007–13 that offers Government agencies, academia and industry up to 75% of the cost of undertaking research and development in the security field.

4.1.3 In meeting the counter-terrorism challenges that the UK faces, the provision of state-of-the-art systems, technologies, services and equipment will continue to be critical. SBAC members are widely acknowledged as world leaders in the provision of defence and security systems, equipment and technologies. For example, they provide cutting edge system integration capabilities that support the emergency services and protect the UK's borders. Industry was encouraged by the Home Secretary's October 2008 IPPR Security Lecture which recognised that Government departments "need to be working with industry." She also highlighted that "We are world leaders in security and defence technologies and we have on our doorstep great expertise and creativity, prepared to help us solve some of the problems we face. We do not want to forgo that opportunity. We have worked hard to develop new forms of engagement and new mechanisms for sharing problems, ideas and solutions."

5. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE INQUIRY REPORT

5.1 Industry should continue to be recognised in CONTEST as a key strategic partner to the Home Office and other appropriate agencies in delivering the UK's counter-terrorism strategy through the RISC Framework;

5.2 The Government should consider whether the private sector's role in supporting CONTEST, as both a supplier and an operator of the nation's Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), should be treated more thoroughly in future revisions of the National Security Strategy;

5.3 A continued debate is needed about the role that regulators of the CNI might play on security issues in the future. The Government might feel that it should have powers to impose security/resilience standards on CNI designated operators/organisations;

5.4 Government should work closely with Industry to address its concern around the existing potential for disproportionate third party liability exposure following acts of terrorism in the UK or across the EU to bring the market into line with US practice;

5.5 The four pilot RISC IAGS setup at the request of Government in April 2008 should be updated to meet specific needs arising from CONTEST II if appropriate, but also be given time to deliver the outcomes and deliverables that have already been agreed to date;

5.6 The Home Office and other appropriate agencies should continue to engage industry at senior and operational levels through RISC to formulate and develop future security technology/equipment operational requirements and responses;

5.7 RISC and the associated IAGs should evolve over time to cover all security and resilience issues, not just the threat from terrorism.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

6.1 SBAC and other RISC members already support OSCT and other agencies responsible for counter-terrorism with a broad range of equipment, technologies and systems. Industry in the UK should continue to be identified as a willing strategic partner to the Home Office in meeting complex counter-terrorism challenges.

6.2 SBAC would welcome the Committee's recognition of industry's crucial role in the UK's counter-terrorism effort. Through its support of OSCT through RISC, industry will continue to contribute to the UK's counter-terrorism effort.

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by John Archibald

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a serving Greater Manchester Police constable currently working as a Counter Terrorism Security Advisor within the Greater Manchester Police Counter Terrorism Unit. My role involves providing counter terrorism protective security advice with the main focus of my work currently being Crowded Places. In terms of the Government's counter terrorism strategy then my work falls under the Protect and Prepare strands.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The purpose of this submission is to illustrate that the current voluntary scheme allowing companies and organisations to choose whether they attend briefings and training events designed to raise their awareness of the terrorist threat we face is not effective. The briefings give practical, hands on advice of action they should take when they are faced with hostile reconnaissance and there should be a mandatory requirement for companies operating within the “crowded places” arena to attend such events.

CROWDED PLACES

3. The intention of the Crowded Places work stream is to identify and address the vulnerabilities of those sites that are deemed to be at greatest risk from a terrorist attack.

4. The process starts with drawing up a list of crowded places sites that may be at relatively high risk of terrorist attack. We then apply a risk assessment filter that looks at the attractiveness of a site and the potential impact of an attack.

5. Sites that are passed through to the second stage are then surveyed to identify their vulnerabilities and recommendations are made to address these vulnerabilities. The recommendations we make fall under four broad headings: Vehicle access; Personnel access; Building construction; Staff awareness & contingency planning.

Once the recommendations have been made it is for the site to apply them. There are no powers that we as CTSA’s can use to ensure that they do.

6. Some of the recommendations involve the sites spending considerable sums of money. Measures, such as bollards and planters to mitigate against hostile vehicles can cost considerable sums of money and I accept that it may be undesirable to compel sites to comply with recommendations that may affect their ability to operate as commercial companies. However, there are recommendations that are not costly options and these involve raising the awareness of staff.

7. This process involves CTSA’s giving briefings and running training exercises to increase people’s knowledge and understanding, specifically:

- The threat faced.
- The process that terrorists go through when they are planning an attack.
- The importance of hostile reconnaissance to the attack planning process.
- The behaviour and activities of individuals involved in hostile reconnaissance; what action the sites should take if they suspect hostile reconnaissance is taking place.
- Contingency planning for the aftermath of a terrorist attack.

8. Within GMP this is achieved by delivering Project Argus events and Project Griffin briefings. Project Argus is a workshop based on a video scenario involving a terrorist attack and is aimed at the retail industry, night time economy and professionals operating within the construction industry (architects, planners and structural engineers).

9. Apart from the abstraction of staff for the duration of the event there is no charge for the Argus event. We rely on an organisation to provide a suitable venue for the event and they are run depending on our ability to generate sufficient interest in organisations and their willingness to host the event. Since we started Argus events GMP has run 32 of them.

10. It has been suggested that not making a charge for attending an Argus is counter productive as organisations perceive it as an inferior product and that it would be better received by the management if we were to make a nominal charge for it. Making a charge might also prevent the situation we experience where a significant number of people say they will attend but then do not turn up for the event. Generally, if the organisation providing the venue has sufficient staff to send to the event then it will be well attended. Difficulties have arisen where the organiser acts as landlord to a group of tenants. In these situations we have found it difficult to generate sufficient numbers of attendees. People seem initially keen and say they will attend but appear to change their mind at the last minute.

11. Griffin briefings are aimed at security practitioners (door staff and security personnel). We run the Griffin briefing every month at the Force Training School and make a nominal charge of £25 per attendee. The briefings are generally well attended with around 20 to 25 delegates. Delegates are given a Project Griffin pin badge and a certificate of attendance. Perhaps because we make a charge there is usually a higher attendance rate than for Argus.

12. I think the issue is that we have no power to request the attendance of people at these events. This is despite these briefings being one of the most important ways we have to address some of the vulnerabilities that are identified in the survey report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. I would like attendance at Griffin briefings and Argus events to be made compulsory for security staff and management at crowded place sites. This is such a key component in the limited range of options we have available to us to address the vulnerabilities of crowded places that it is too important for it to be left to the whim of the venue or site as to whether or not they should attend.

14. The Griffin awareness input could become a mandatory element of the Security Industry Authority. The SIA exist to manage the licensing of the private security industry as set out in the Private Security Industry Act 2001. This would ensure that staff whose work, on a daily basis puts them in a position to identify the hostile reconnaissance phase of terrorist attack planning have received the appropriate awareness training. Not all security staff are SIA accredited, but this would cover a significant number of people. Additionally attendance at a Griffin briefing or Argus event could be made a condition of the license granted to night time economy operators (bars, pubs and clubs).

15. The issue of how to ensure the attendance of companies within the other categories of crowded places, such as retail premises is more difficult. However, the aim should be to link attendance at an Argus event with some form of licensing system. For example within Greater Manchester the North Manchester Division operate a competition for licensed premises called “Best Bar None” that has made attendance at a Griffin event part of the scoring system.

16. I do not think the current, voluntary attendance is disseminating the information to a wide enough audience quickly enough. The subject is too important for it to be left to individual whim.

January 2009

**Correspondence submitted by the Association of Chief Police Officer of England,
Wales and Northern Ireland (ACPO) to the Chairman of the Sub-committee, 16 January 2009**

I write to advise you of the plans for the submission of written material on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers, and in particular its Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Areas, in respect of the Sub-committee’s inquiry into CONTEST.

As Chair of the Business Area and Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations for the Metropolitan Police, I have considered this question with colleagues and it has been determined that, rather than making an outline, generalist submission at this stage, I will arrange for a written briefing note to be dispatched to the Sub-committee in good time for members to review it prior to my appearance before the Inquiry in February. This note will, of course, reflect the guidance on length and methodology of submission previously circulated on the Sub-committee’s behalf.

Fundamental to this approach is the desire to ensure that the submitted material should be helpfully reflective of any particular themes emerging from the Inquiry’s opening sessions and to enable the submission to be dynamically current and responsive to any key events that may take place in the interim, such as, potentially, the launch of “CONTEST2”.

I trust that you and your colleagues will find this approach, and our subsequent submission, to be helpful.

Memorandum submitted by Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Police Service has a strong record of CT delivery and a clear plan to build on this success by establishing a co-ordinating infrastructure that will ensure that the best and broadest use of national and local assets is secured.

1.2 This operational intention is echoed and confirmed at the strategic level—for example, ACPO’s National CT Co-ordinators have been realigned from functional roles to reflect the CONTEST themes directly so that the service may benefit from comprehensive strategic coverage contiguous with the UK’s overarching CT Strategy.

1.3. These significant changes are already in the process of realisation and beginning to yield dividends—a number of initiatives across the relevant CONTEST themes are highlighted below.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This note is provided to support the appearance of Robert F. Quick QPM before the Sub-committee. As Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and head of the Association of Chief Police Officers’ Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area, Mr Quick is uniquely well-placed to represent the police service on matters relevant to counter-terrorism.

2.2 It may also be helpful to provide an outline introduction to a number of terms used regularly within the below submission:

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

The Association of Chief Police Officers is an independent, professionally led strategic body. In the public interest and, in equal and active partnership with Government and the Association of Police Authorities, ACPO leads and co-ordinates the direction and development of the police service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In times of national need ACPO, on behalf of all chief officers, coordinates the strategic policing response.

ACPO's 341 members are police officers of Assistant Chief Constable rank and above, and senior police staff managers, in the 44 forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and other forces such as British Transport Police and States of Jersey Police.

The ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area (ACPO (TAM))

ACPO is comprised of a number of Business Areas that in aggregate provide oversight and direction across the breadth of policing themes.

The Terrorism and Allied Matters Business Area, ACPO (TAM), leads the development of the capability and supporting infrastructure within the police service to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from the threat of terrorism and domestic extremism.

Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU)

CTUs are regionally located national assets whose personnel support the forces in their region (and beyond) in respect of counter-terrorism (CT) and Domestic Extremism (DE). These substantial Units are comprised of staff drawn from a number of disciplines including highly skilled detectives, community contact teams, financial investigators, intelligence analysts and high tech investigators. The CTUs are largely "self-sufficient" and can effectively co-ordinate "routine" enquiries and operations without compromising the commitment of local forces to day to day policing.

Counter Terrorism Command (CTC)

This Metropolitan Police Unit resulted from the merger of the MPS Anti-terrorist Branch and Special Branch in 2006. In effect, the CTC mirrors CTU functionality, but has additional capacity and capabilities to enable the Metropolitan Police Service to discharge its particular local, national and international CT responsibilities.

Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit (CTIU)

While still substantial, these regionally located national assets are smaller in scale than the CTUs and are focussed upon the development of CT intelligence rather than the investigation of relevant offences.

ACPO Counter Terrorism Network

The CT Units outlined above represent the core of the "ACPO CT Network"—each of the nine ACPO regions across England and Wales is host either to a CTU (three regions, soon to be four once the conversion of the South East CTIU to CTU status is complete) or a CTIU (five regions, soon to be four through the conversion of the S.E. Unit), while the London region is covered by the CTC. The Units are coordinated nationally and managed locally by a "lead force".

The ACPO CT Network and the wider police service undertake the work to prevent and counter terrorism in full and active partnership with communities and a range of other partners including the Security Service, local authorities and CT policing structures in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

2.3 The remainder of this submission offers a brief rehearsal of current and anticipated developments in the police service's approach to Counter Terrorism, both in general and in respect of the CONTEST themes that the Sub-committee has indicated will be the focus of its Inquiry.

3. CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

Delivery of Capacity

3.1 Historically, the great majority of the police service's CT personnel, experience and resources have been located within the MPS. In the last two years, there has been a considerable development of the resource base within and outside the capital. For example, the establishment of the CTU and CTIUs has resulted in the recruitment of more than 1,000 officers and staff. Taking the CTC into account, the core "ACPO CT Network" is currently comprised of more than 3,000 personnel.

3.2 In addition, the service was able to realise these crucial resource increases significantly ahead of schedule.

Current Developments

3.3 As identified in part by the “Co-ordinating Pursue” report produced by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary in 2008, the challenge for ACPO (TAM) and the police service more widely is to ensure that the increase in CT resources yields as full and broad an increase in capability as practicable.

3.4 In October 2008, ACPO (TAM) provided a paper making a number of wide-ranging and significant proposals for the development of the ACPO CT Network to Chief Constables Council, the police service’s “premier” executive decision-making body, whose membership includes the Chief Constable of each force in England and Wales. Council unequivocally endorsed TAM’s proposals and this has provided a strong mandate for implementation.

3.5 In essence, the proposals seek to build on the successful establishment of the CTC, CTUs and CTIUs in order to draw together and fully “activate” a responsive CT policing Network that effectively connects endeavour across England and Wales (and the wider UK) in a way which is consonant with the core values and “constitution” of policing.

3.6 In particular, the proposals cover the following broad areas:

Invigorated Co-ordination and Collaboration

- The role of the National Co-ordinator Terrorism Investigations (NCTI) should be reframed to include an imperative to maintain a comprehensive overview of, and as necessary co-ordinate, significant operational CT activity across England and Wales.

In recognition of this broadening of role and remit, the post should be re-designated “Senior National Co-ordinator (Counter Terrorism)” (SNC (CT)).

- The creation of an ACPO CT Co-ordination Centre (from within existing resources) to assist the SNC (CT)’s work of day-to-day co-ordination by maintaining a comprehensive and current overview of relevant CT demands and corresponding activity.

In addition, the Centre will facilitate a collaborative approach to tasking and co-ordination at the national and regional levels across a wider tranche of priority intelligence/investigative work than at present and where relevant, provide for the co-ordinated progression of policing activity across the breadth of the CONTEST themes.

- Formally defining and, as a result strengthening, the relationship between Forces, CTU/CTIUs and national-level CT structures in order to ensure that each Force and in particular, each Special Branch unit, should take its place as an essential constituent within a fully “activated” and responsive police CT Network.

Ensuring effective Strategic “fit” and oversight

- Re-shaping the roles of the ACPO (TAM) Assistant Chief Constable ranked National Co-ordinators from a functional to a thematic basis that accords with the CONTEST strands of PURSUE, PROTECT, PREPARE and PREVENT to ensure that the police service benefits from comprehensive strategic coverage and leadership contiguous with the UK’s overarching CT Strategy.

For example, the functionally designated “National Co-ordinator Ports Policing” has become the “National Co-ordinator PROTECT”.

- Development of an ACPO (TAM) Business Improvement Unit to build and bolster business planning as well as “internal” police service performance monitoring and management.

3.7 Work is ongoing to deliver these and other key changes in a phased way that will accrete functionality rapidly and incrementally. For example, the ACPO CT Co-ordination Centre is entering delivery via a “proof of concept” phase; the principles for defining the relationship between the regional CT units and local forces have been determined and in addition, relevant National Co-ordinators are establishing their revised, CONTEST-based portfolios and are working to define their future programmes.

3.8 In essence, the programme of change that is now underway is designed to achieve a more fully co-ordinated future for the Network of CT policing resources that will deliver enhanced coherence at national, regional and local levels and so enable the police service and its key operational partners to meet relevant threats in a fully joined up way that is consistent with the current and emergent CONTEST Strategy.

3.9 This wider work underpins and facilitates that being undertaken by the police service in respect of the individual CONTEST themes and those themes of particular interest to the Sub-committee are briefly reviewed below.

4. "PURSUE"

4.1 Recognising the police service's need to enhance its capability at the earliest opportunity, ACPO (TAM) re-evaluated its budget planning and delivered the CTU and CTIU units in 2008, a year ahead of schedule.

4.2 This resulted in the early delivery of key capability and capacity in respect of CT investigations and corollary enhancements in the management of information/intelligence.

4.3 In summary, the number of police officers and staff dedicated to CT work across the service has risen by more than a third since October 2006 and a very broad indication of the success of subsequent police CT activity is given by a range of statistics including the comparatively high 83% conviction rate in respect of relevant offences that was achieved in 2008.

4.4 It has proved particularly important that the CTC/CTU/CTIU units include embedded Security Service (SyS) personnel as this allows for the collation of the most complete depiction of the threat and vulnerability within each region and in turn facilitates optimal management of the risk by police, SyS and other partners.

4.5 In respect of enhanced working with local partners, ACPO (TAM) has recently been instrumental in producing national guidance to assist the appropriate sharing of sensitive material between the CT community and key agencies such as local authorities to assist in preventing people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism—work to enhance the synergy between PURSUE and PREVENT is a particular focus for the respective National Co-ordinators.

5. "PROTECT"

5.1 A number of key themes are briefly rehearsed below.

Crowded places

5.2 The National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) works to raise awareness of the terrorist threat and measures that can be taken to reduce risk and mitigate the effects of an attack.

5.3 NaCTSO co-ordinates, trains and "tasks" the network of around 240 local police Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) located across the UK. Crowded Place risk assessments are carried out by CTSAs.

5.4 NaCTSO also enhances Crowded Places activity through its production and targeted distribution of tailored guidance on counter terrorist protective security for specific sectors. This is supplemented by a scenario-based training exercise aimed at providing businesses with counter terrorism advice on protective security, resilience and hostile reconnaissance. NaCTSO is progressing variants of the exercise aimed at night-time economy businesses, as well as planners, architects and property developers.

Hazardous Sites and Dangerous Substances

5.5 A new Hazardous Sites and Dangerous Substances work stream has been established to take forward the recommendations of the relevant West review and co-ordinate the various security initiatives in this area.

5.6 In addition, NaCTSO liaises with industry to provide specialist advice on the security of hazardous substances and the sites which handle them. The "Know Your Customer" campaigns raise awareness about the "dual-use" of certain products and encourage suppliers to be more enquiring of new customers and to report suspicious enquiries.

5.7 Through its network of CTSAs, NaCTSO has, as at January 2009, delivered bespoke security advice to nearly 2,000 sites storing hazardous material. Of these, 77% have implemented improvements and CTSAs continue to work with the remainder to improve security—no sites are currently assessed as "unsatisfactory".

Border Security

5.8 This issue is a particular current focus for the National Co-ordinator and work is ongoing to develop proposals for the "active enhancement" of Border Policing to ensure that, for example, SB Ports activity is connected with the wider ACPO CT Network in an explicit and thoroughgoing way so that the effective flow of CT information to and from Ports is guaranteed and enhanced in the future.

5.9 More broadly, PROTECT colleagues will be engaged in the first phases of the "roll out" of the e-Borders programme that will increase the number of passengers screened as they cross the UK border to 190 million by December 2009 as well as other developmental work, such as the production of refreshed guidance for Ports officers in their use of Schedule 7 Terrorism Act powers.

6. "PREPARE"

6.1 The developing police PREPARE programme includes within its scope ACPO (TAM)'s engagement with the 2012 Olympics as well as an increasing emphasis on the management (as opposed to investigation) of terrorist "crimes in action" and, as a corollary, the development of the interoperability between forces and partners that will enable an effective response to significant incidents.

6.2 In support of the current and anticipated CONTEST priorities, ACPO will lead work to:

- Continue to build capabilities and determine the level of readiness to ensure that the policing response to an attack should be comprehensive and co-ordinated.
- Establish Organisational Learning and Development processes that will effectively deliver Organisational Learning and Knowledge Management in a Networked CT Community.
- Provide an integrated CT training programme for police CT professionals, the wider service and delivery partners.
- Review the wider police exercise programme to ensure its relevance to the National Resilience Planning Assumptions (NRPA) and that learning from exercises is validated.
- Examine police business functions and processes to ensure "internal" and "external" interoperability.
- Develop multi-agency CT networks with "Cat 2" and other resilience partners.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 ACPO (TAM) and the police service as a whole have a strong record of delivery in respect of Counter Terrorism and a strong plan for the future that seeks to consolidate and significantly enhance the gains in capacity and capability already made by ensuring that the opportunity and appetite to collaborate in a co-ordinated fashion is fully seized.

7.2 The intention, which is already in the process of realisation, is to move from an effective, "PURSUE-oriented", series of dedicated Units to a fully articulated Network that co-ordinates and informs the breadth of significant CT endeavour from the national to the local, with the ability to connect Strategy with "the street".

7.3 This approach will not only maximise the police service's capacity to deliver across the full breadth of "CONTEST 2", but most importantly, will help to ensure that, in line with the public's legitimate expectations, police CT work should be broad and preventative in scope and fully integrated across the police service.

February 2009

Memorandum by submitted by Amnesty International

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a worldwide membership movement. Our vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending abuses of these rights.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite the explicit inclusion of human rights principles within the CONTEST strategy, Amnesty International would question whether these principles are currently reflected in the reality of some of the policies pursued under the strategy. This is particularly evident within the Pursue strand and policies such as deportations with diplomatic assurance and Control Orders. Not only is the UK Government violating its obligations under international law with regard to deportations, but it is also risking undermining its own work on Prevent with its mixed human rights record.

Unless governments across the world respond to the threat of international terrorism in a manner that is fully grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law, they risk undermining the values they seek to protect and defend. Given the nature of radicalisation, they also risk undermining the very policies they are pursuing.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a noticeable shift in the Government's approach to counter-terrorism. This was reflected in the new, more consultative approach taken by the Home Office in the preparation of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2008, and the more measured response to the failed terrorist attacks of summer 2007. The then Home Office Security Minister Tony McNulty referred to this shift in September 2007 when he said that the Government had made mistakes in its response to the July London bomb attacks.

Tony McNulty went on to warn against rushing to legislate in response to the threat from terrorism and said that one of the mistakes had been the argument that people must be ready to accept reductions in their civil liberties in the fight against terrorism. He also said that ministers had been too ready to adopt exceptional measures which could impact on the liberties enjoyed as part of the British way of life.³

This recognition and new approach is to be welcomed. Amnesty International firmly hopes that it draws a line under some of the worst excesses of the UK Government's counter terrorism policies, such as the indefinite detention of foreign nationals under Part 4 of Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act.

Amnesty International further welcomes the inclusion in the 2006 CONTEST strategy of a number of overarching principles. The first of these is in paragraph 44: "The Government believes that respect for international law and human rights standards must be an integral part of its efforts to counter terrorism. The promotion of good governance and human rights internationally is also a key element of wider efforts to combat terrorism and extremism."⁴

Foreign Secretary David Miliband's recent remarks on international counter-terrorism efforts are also positive in this regard. Amnesty International wholeheartedly welcomes the statement that "We must respond to terrorism by championing the rule of law, not subordinating it, for it is the cornerstone of the democratic society. We must uphold our commitments to human rights and civil liberties at home and abroad."⁵

However, Amnesty International would question whether these principles are currently reflected in the reality of some of the policies pursued under CONTEST.

States have an obligation to take measures to prevent and protect against attacks on civilians; to investigate such crimes; to bring to justice those responsible in fair proceedings; and to ensure prompt and adequate reparation to victims. This is clear in human rights law. However, it is equally incumbent on governments to ensure that all measures taken to bring people to justice, as well as all measures to protect people from terrorism, are consistent with international human rights law and standards. Due process remains the best way to ensure durable security; it is also the best way to ensure that the victims of terrorism receive justice. Miscarriages of justice do nothing but disservice to the victims of terrorism and undermine the rights to truth and justice.

At times there has been a tendency to dismiss criticism of the Government's counter-terrorism policies by questioning whether critics understand the gravity of the threat. Amnesty International does not question the Government's assessment of the severity of the threat posed by terrorism. However, the organisation does question, and has serious concerns about a number of policies currently pursued by the Government.

This submission will focus on human rights aspects of Pursue. While the sub-committee is not focussing on Prevent in this inquiry (and this strand has recently been reviewed by the Government), this submission will also make some reference to aspects of Prevent, particularly where there is potential for overlap with Pursue.

PURSUE

In its discussion of the "disruption" element of Pursue, the strategy states: "Prosecution remains the preferred way of responding to persons involved in terrorist activity, but other options for taking disruptive action include deportation on grounds of national security or unacceptable behaviour, control orders under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, freezing and seizing financial assets, and proscription of organisations."⁶

Some of the policy options listed as alternatives to prosecution raise very serious human rights concerns.

Deportation

There is an urgent need for the UK Government to abandon its efforts to deport terrorism suspects, in conjunction with various diplomatic assurances, to countries where they face a real risk of grave human rights violations, including torture or other ill-treatment. These diplomatic assurances are not only unenforceable and inherently unreliable; they also undermine the absolute prohibition against torture.

³ "'Mistakes' made over 7/7 reaction", BBC Online, 26 September 2007.

⁴ "Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom's Strategy", July 2006, Cm 6888, p.11.

⁵ "War on terror' was wrong", Guardian Comment is Free, 15 January 2009.

⁶ "Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom's Strategy", July 2006, Cm 6888, p.17.

Amnesty International considers that the UK's reliance on diplomatic assurances when seeking to expel people to countries where they would face a real risk of torture or other ill-treatment violates its obligations under international law.

Diplomatic assurances are only sought from countries where there is a recognised risk of torture and ill-treatment. These are, by definition, countries with a record of failing to respect their binding obligations under international law to prevent torture and other ill-treatment. There can be no grounds for confidence that unenforceable bilateral diplomatic understandings will be respected where binding multilateral treaty obligations have been repeatedly flouted.

The idea that monitoring mechanisms bolster the effectiveness of diplomatic assurances is misguided. The safeguards that assurances provide fall below those in international law; they lack an enforcement mechanism and do not provide a remedy in case of a breach. Indeed, diplomatic assurances have proven to be ineffective.

The Government should reaffirm its commitment to the absolute obligation under international law not to return any person to a country where they face a real risk of torture or ill-treatment. It is extraordinary that the Government, which has been a strong advocate of the elimination of torture throughout the world, should now be undermining this work by seeking to circumvent the principle of non-refoulement.

Control Orders

There is an urgent need to end the use of Control Orders. The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (PTA) granted the executive sweeping powers to issue Control Orders against UK and foreign individuals.

These orders impose restrictions on fundamental freedoms, which are guaranteed under domestic and international human rights law (including the right to a fair trial, the right to liberty and the rights to freedom of assembly, association, movement and expression).

The system of Control Orders is profoundly unfair and incompatible with international fair trial rights. This reflects the reliance on secret material considered in secret court sessions as well as the low standard of proof required (this latter problem is compounded by the broad and vague definition of terrorism in the Terrorism Act 2000 and the broad definition of terrorism-related activity in the PTA).

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns over the broad definition of terrorism used in UK domestic law. As a result of its breadth, the definition of terrorism in the Terrorism Act 2000 lacks the sufficient legal certainty to satisfy the requirements of clarity and precision necessary for any criminal offence to comply with the rule of law and human rights.

The court hearings imposing Control Orders can be profoundly unfair. They take place under special rules of court which allow the Secretary of State to rely extensively on secret evidence. This evidence is considered in secret sessions from which the subject of the order and his lawyers are excluded, and can result in a judgment which is kept partially or (in some cases) entirely secret.

The extent to which the controlled person is told the allegations against them varies from case to case. There have been cases where the basis for the Secretary of State's case has been entirely based on closed material. This means that the individual is not given the opportunity to see or hear the evidence, which leaves them unable to effectively challenge it. The system of Special Advocates is not an effective substitute for a legal counsel of choice. A Special Advocate cannot provide a proper defence, as they cannot take instructions from the person they are supposed to represent once they are made party to the secret intelligence.

In addition, a particularly low standard of proof is required for the court to uphold a Control Order. The court must, in effect, only be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the Secretary of State's belief that the individual is or has been involved in terrorism-related activity, and reasonable grounds to consider the restrictions imposed necessary for the protection of the public. This is not the same as requiring the Secretary of State to prove—even on the balance of probabilities, still less beyond reasonable doubt—that the controlled person has been involved in any terrorism-related activity.

In July 2008 the UN Human Rights Committee expressed its concerns about the system of Control Orders. The Committee called on the UK to “ensure that the judicial procedure whereby the imposition of a control order can be challenged complies with the principle of equality of arms, which requires access by the concerned person and the legal counsel of his own choice to the evidence on which the control order is made”, and urged the UK to “ensure that those subjected to control orders are promptly charged with a criminal offence.”⁷

Amnesty International urges that the control order regime be abandoned, and that, instead, anyone against whom there is sufficient admissible evidence that they have committed a recognizably criminal offence be brought to justice in fair proceedings before an independent and impartial court.

⁷ Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: UK, CCPR/C/GBR/CO/6, 21 July 2008, para. 17.

IMPACT ON PREVENT: PURSUE AND THE OPPOSING NARRATIVE

The four strands of CONTEST do not operate in isolation. Policies put into practice under Pursue, as well as the other strands, have an impact on efforts to prevent radicalisation. Clearly there remains much to be learned about radicalisation, which is a varied and complex process.

Nevertheless, it is clear to Amnesty international that in addition to the specific concerns expressed above, human rights failings and inconsistencies have the potential to undermine efforts in the Prevent strand. This is especially true of efforts to construct a convincing narrative to oppose the narratives that fuel radicalisation. Any enduring and successful narrative must have at its core a strong integrity based on the consistent application of values, including human rights.

Consistency

International cooperation is a key aspect of Pursue. The strategy describes this as “working with partners and allies overseas to strengthen our intelligence effort and achieve disruption of terrorists outside the UK.”⁸ The strategy also sets out some of the assistance the Government has given to other countries.

There is a need for greater consistency in the approach to human rights in the UK’s international relationships and partnerships. This is particularly true of the UK’s relationships with security, strategic and trade partners, where there are often competing interests at stake.

Amnesty International believes that it is critical that human rights values are fully integrated and consistently respected in the UK’s foreign policy, and not just given rhetorical support at opportune moments. It is particularly important that the Government does not baulk at speaking out to “difficult” countries with which it has numerous interests (for example Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, China and Israel).

If the UK fails to live up to the human rights standards it advocates, it risks opening itself to charges of hypocrisy, playing into the hands of repressive states and provoking resentment around the world. This is particularly dangerous in the modern globalised world.

This approach should hold true whether this entails telling difficult truths to close allies, or pushing unpopular agendas with international states. There is a time and place for quiet private diplomacy. However, at times what is required is robust and forthright public criticism of human rights abuse. In its relations with states that abuse human rights, the government should develop a dialogue with specific benchmarks against which to measure progress on abuses with an agreed timeframe.

Accountability

There are a number of areas in which the Government has failed to properly investigate allegations of human rights abuse.

There remains a need for a full, effective and independent inquiry into the role of UK officials and territory in rendition, secret detention and enforced disappearance. This includes in relation to UK residents Bisher al Rawi, Jamil el Banna and Binyam Mohamed. In this context, Amnesty International welcomed the Home Secretary’s decision to ask the Attorney General to consider whether there may be any grounds for criminal prosecutions in relation to the involvement of UK and US agents in the illegal detention and rendition of Binyam Mohamed. However, there remain many unanswered questions about the role of the UK overseas territory of Diego Garcia in the US programme of rendition and secret detention, including the fate of the two detainees who are known to have been transferred through the territory.

Amnesty International also has concerns about the lack of transparency and accountability of the UK intelligence and security services. This is symbolised by the Intelligence and Security Committee. This Committee lacks meaningful independence. If there is to be accountability for violations in which the security and intelligence services have been involved, and if there is to be robust scrutiny of their actions in the future, there is a pressing need to establish a genuinely independent and effective mechanism to exercise oversight over the activities of these agencies.

CONCLUSION

Any counter-terrorism strategy that does not have at its heart a genuine and robust commitment to the protection and promotion of universal human rights will be short-sighted and counter-productive. Unless governments across the world respond to the threat of international terrorism in a manner that is fully grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law, they risk undermining the values they seek to protect and defend. Given the nature of radicalisation, they also risk undermining the very policies they are pursuing.

⁸ “Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy”, July 2006, Cm 6888, p.2.

There is a need for human rights law and standards to be more fully and consistently integrated within CONTEST. The UK's counter-terrorism policies must be firmly anchored in the rule of law based on justice and due process, and its foreign policy consistent in its respect for and promotion of human rights. This is the right thing to do in terms of the values the UK aspires to represent. It is also essential to any successful Prevent strategy.

In today's globalised and interdependent world, where what the UK says and does is closely watched internationally, consistent application of human rights values and standards and adherence to the rule of law are essential in any successful challenge to the environment in which radicalisation and extremism flourish.

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by from Unisys

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Unisys' responses are made from the perspective of Industry's involvement in the CONTEST process.
- The Home Office does not have access to a range of System Integrators, as were created and supported by the Ministry of Defence during the IRA's mainland bombing campaign.
- Such integrators are needed to utilise and adapt the existing industrial base to meet the particular needs of Counter-Terrorism, a task that cannot be achieved through the Home Office's existing procurement process.
- The defence industrial base is not entirely suited to meet the requirements of Counter-Terrorism, which cannot be met simply by "dumbing down" defence solutions.
- The Home Office should establish a Strategic Supplier Group specifically for CONTEST, "owned" by the OSCT.
- OSCT's recent designation of a full-time Industry Liaison Officer is welcome, but progress to date has been slow.
- The pace at which Industry manages and changes the Critical National infrastructure is a challenge to Government efforts to protect it. Government has to be able to move as fast. This requires a more intimate relationship with Industry, which must embrace the Government's own R&D base.
- Industry is in a position to tackle vulnerabilities in the fields of, especially, Transportation and Crowded Places, but Government needs to make it clear whether the approach is to be Threat-driven, Capability-driven or Evidence-based.
- It would be a worthwhile contingency for the Government to invest a modest amount through a Strategic Supplier Group on demonstrating solutions to such problems.

PREPARE: THE WORKING OF THE OFFICE FOR SECURITY AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

1. Industry is a crucial stakeholder in supporting and providing the Critical National Infrastructure, very little of which is now directly owned by Government.

2. This fragility has been understood by Government since the early 1990s and the IRA's mainland bombing campaign when the Ministry of Defence was the focus for most of the industry response to countering terrorism.

3. Rightly, since 9/11 and, more importantly, the launch of CONTEST, the Home Office and, specifically OSCT, have taken the lead. The difference between the MoD and Home Office leading is quite stark, but the main and obvious difference is that the Home Office–industry linkage for providing support and assistance for national and critical responses to events is weak in comparison to 10 years ago.

4. The MoD were fortunate in that they could utilise an existing industrial base and adapt it to the asymmetry of Counter-Terrorism. As such they created and supported a small number of System Integrators—not too large that the UK Government were just another client; not too small that the System Integrator could not cope with the risk of short notice readiness—who were capable, accredited and responsive to UK Government requirements. These companies do not exist now.

5. Expecting traditional industries to support CONTEST and Counter-Terrorism efforts would be wrong. Most of these suppliers are large and come from the Defence Industrial base. Counter-Terrorism is conducted under the rule of law. Solutions for it need also to be based within a rule of law context—apprehend and bring to justice—rather than a defence basis—locate and kill. Dumbing down defence solutions will not necessarily meet the requirement or provide good value for money.

6. The Home Office approach to procurement is different to that of the MoD. The MoD had a well oiled machine for Urgent Operational Requirement procurement and Operational Emergency procurement, born out of necessity in-theatre, and they still do. The Home Office has the restricted procurement process through

OJEU but little else. It also has a “gene pool” of suppliers for Counter-Terrorism, but these are mostly small to medium sized enterprises. Very few of these suppliers are System Integrators with the breadth to take on sophisticated Counter-Terrorism systems. There is a Strategic Supplier Relationship Group but this is mostly equipped to provide IT, not to respond to the specific needs of Counter-Terrorism.

7. OSCT has laudably initiated an engagement with industry through RISC (Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers Council) within which INTELLECT, the ICT trade body, has been most active. However little of practical value is yet to be achieved by RISC although INTELLECT has provided some very useful information through its Resilience and Security website.

8. Unisys suggests a similar such body to the Strategic Supplier Relationship Group be created by the Home Office specifically for CONTEST and “owned” by OSCT. This small group of System Integrators would be established through, say, a Framework Agreement, and kept current and responsive by providing the Home Office with Technology Demonstrators of solutions to various challenges. The checks and balances of ensuring the “gene pool” is also engaged is straight forward. The NIS Strategic Supplier Group Framework is a good example of how to set this up.

9. OSCT has also recently designated a full-time Industry Liaison Officer to improve dialogue with Industry. Unisys applauds this but is concerned at the time it took to take this step after the publication of the Science and Technology Strategy. The tempo of progress reinforces the view that, unless industry has been prepared to respond, it will not be able to in the time frames desired.

10. This greater “connection” with Industry must also include the Government R&D base, in this case DSTL, the Counter-Terrorism Centre and Home Office Scientific Development Branch. Efforts are made by them all in the course of normal business but the processes are either traditional (through the CATALIST procurement mechanism) or ad hoc. It was hoped that the Science and Technology Strategy for Counter-Terrorism would sort this out, but so far it has not.

PROTECT: PREPARATION OF THE UK’S INFRASTRUCTURE AGAINST TERRORIST ATTACK, IN PARTICULAR, TRANSPORT SYSTEMS AND CROWDED AND VULNERABLE PLACES

11. Industry has an intimate and important role in supporting the Preparation of the UK within CONTEST.

12. Industry owns much of the Critical National infrastructure which may be targeted by terrorists and need to be part of the exercise process.

13. Industry processes are more nimble and flexible to changes in society and the markets than Government. This means that the way they manage the Critical National Infrastructure changes rapidly too. It will be too late to find out that fundamental processes have changed at the time of an event—the September 2000 fuel protest is a good example of a non-terrorist catastrophic event. The floods of 2007 would be another.

14. The Industry Panel announced under the National Security Strategy that exhibited a desire to involve industry more was a good step, but little has happened.

15. Industry has a number of solutions to addressing the vulnerabilities in Transportation and Crowded Places, two of the most recent areas of greatest concern, current still with London 2012 looming. Unisys believes that these challenges require Government to go back to the fundamentals of requirement definition: is the approach to be Threat-driven, Evidence-based or Capability-driven?

16. Threat-driven is where we are now in engagement-with-Industry terms—waiting for something to happen and then trying to respond in the shortest possible time with a solution that solves the immediate problem. It is the most costly approach.

17. CONTEST, by contrast, is very much Capability-driven: this is what we can do, so create a system that brings coherence to all the many efforts so that we have only one system to address the myriad of threats. It is the least costly approach but looks expensive to set up. However CONTEST does not extend to Industry engagement for procurement.

18. Evidence-based is a compromise, used when funds are short: we know we may have a threat (against Crowded Places for instance) but where is the evidence to say this has ever happened before? Hence how can you justify what may turn out to be an expensive nugatory expenditure of funds on something that evidence supports may never happen?

19. Creating a Strategic Suppliers Group of System Integrators and providing them a small amount of work to demonstrate solutions to these problems is a worthwhile contingency that invests in solutions, improves knowledge of what is possible between lab demonstrations in R&D and what Industry can practically roll out and by when and acts to both PROTECT and PREPARE in terms of CONTEST and Industry.

PURSUE: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTELLIGENCE FUSION CENTRES OUTSIDE LONDON

20. Unisys has no evidence to submit on this.

As a System Integrator, Unisys has had an intimate involvement with the UK Critical Infrastructure for some time. As well as providing every police force in the UK with an investigative case management application (HOLMES) for managing major crime, it supports the Metropolitan Police command and control system (999) and other applications. Unisys has, over the years, had involvement with a number of UK Government Departments and underpins many of the UK's financial management systems. In the United States, Unisys has been the major System Integrator to the Department of Homeland Security and the Transport Security Agency. Globally we provide the application for the aviation supply chain and the US Department of Defense with a global tracking system for their container freight.

January 2009

Memorandum submitted by Merseytravel

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Merseytravel is a public body comprising the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority and the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (PTE), acting together with the overall aim of providing a single integrated public transport network for Merseyside which is accessible to all.

With effect from a date not yet determined, the Passenger Transport Authority will become an Integrated Transport Authority as per the Transport Act 2008.

Merseytravel is delighted to have the opportunity to submit this memorandum to the Committee.

Merseyrail is an urban network of vital importance to the transport infrastructure of Liverpool and Merseyside. Merseyrail is a unique concession in the UK as the role of the Strategic Rail Authority (now replaced by the Department for Transport) has been delegated by Parliament to the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive, Merseytravel and the concession agreement is between the operator and Merseytravel.

Under this arrangement Merseyrail has undergone a renaissance with annual passenger growth levels now in excess of 9%, transforming itself to become consistently one of the best performing Train Operating Companies and a leader in security provision. This memorandum details actions that have been undertaken to address the terrorist threat and also illustrates how activity to combat conventional crime also delivers a counter-terrorism yield.

Delivery of the Security Strategy has required an enhancement in Merseyrail's security arrangements and supports a more effective and efficient security service through:

- (a) Optimising the use of security, revenue protection and prosecutions management teams via a revised integrated management team.
- (b) A consistent approach when working with BTP, security services and legal departments for a more effective delivery of the strategy. Merseytravel has embedded BTP Officers in the organisation which has help develop partnerships.
- (c) Enhancing visibility of security personnel through more efficient deployment, thus improving communication streams and intelligence gathering via a number of Key initiatives.

A number of initiatives have been completed to inform the security strategy and have helped in its development.

- 1.1 T332—Railway Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) Research into Trespass and Vandalism and ease of access on to railway infrastructure. A detailed report and risk assessment exists for each station location, ranking them as either High, Medium or Low risk stations.
- 1.2 A Station Security file (TRANSEC standard) has been developed for each Merseyrail location as required under the National Railway Security Programme (NRSP). The file covers general security arrangements at each station including a search plan, details on TRANSEC and roles and responsibilities for staff.
- 1.3 A series of enhancements have been initiated to improve surveillance, monitoring, visibility of security staff and more efficient deployment to act as a deterrent to “would be” opportunist criminal activity. The enhancements have been introduced followed detailed workshops with frontline staff, trade unions and listening to customer concerns through local forums managed by Merseyrail Senior Management staff and British Transport Police Neighbourhood Teams.

2. MERSEYRAIL—KEY FACTS

Merseyrail Electric is a high density, high frequency rail network with the largest underground outside of London. It operates on an electrified third rail system and its key features are:

- (a) 75 route miles, outer termini at Southport, Ormskirk, Kirkby, Hunts Cross on the Northern Line, and New Brighton, West Kirby, Chester and Ellesmere Port on the Wirral Line.
- (b) Core city centre underground network, including 6.5 miles in tunnels and five underground stations.
- (c) Underground section includes the original Mersey railway tunnel opened in 1886.
- (d) Approximately 100,000 passenger journeys per weekday or 30 million passenger journeys per annum.
- (e) Nearly 50% of passengers are daily users.
- (f) 67 stations of which 66 are managed by Merseyrail.
- (g) One of the most intensively used networks in the UK with almost 600 train services daily (Monday to Friday).
- (h) Clockface, regular interval timetable (15 minute frequencies, increasing to five minutes on city centre sections).
- (i) Approximately 1,100 staff.
- (j) A fleet of 59 fully refurbished electric multiple units. These were refurbished under a contract executed by Merseytravel before the concession was let.

3. T332 RESEARCH MODEL (RSSB)

3.1 During 2006–07 individual risk assessments were made at each of Merseyrail's 66 stations on the potential for non authorised access onto station areas. The criteria followed for assessment purposes was:

- (a) Site visit to each station.
- (b) Completion of a site survey of station and surrounding environment.
- (c) Photographic evidence of Key areas of weakness.
- (d) Review of Safety Management Information System (SMIS) date for each location in terms of line of route trespass/vandalism.
- (e) Risk ranking of each location based on data provided (High, Medium or Low).
- (f) Action plan of agreed actions arising from the above process.

3.2 A report by the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) carried out and published in April 2008 commended Merseyrail for their actions on reducing the risk of trespass on their stations.

3.3 Plans to improve network wide security were implemented as early as 2004 with the introduction of an improved security contract with a significant increase in resources to improve customer personal perception, enhance visibility and reduce the fear of crime.

3.4 To support the security contract in this area and improve communications the following measures were introduced:

4. CCTV

It was clear even before the T332 research was carried out that Merseyrail CCTV was old and becoming life expired. (this was evident following the events of July 2005 and the request for mass downloads of CCTV footage across the country). The T332 risk assessment process served to reinforce this fact. A replacement programme was agreed with Network Rail at the beginning of 2007 and funding jointly shared:

- (a) Delivery of an enhanced CCTV system, removing all analogue CCTV and upgrading to digital technology.
- (b) Targeting High, Medium and Low risk in priority order, taking further into account key business risks (train stabling points etc).
- (c) The use of Perimeter Intrusion Detection Systems (PIDS) in vulnerable areas to enhance surveillance of areas, linked to CCTV and remote monitoring.
- (d) Standardised equipment for staff and BTP to download to remove any inconsistency in using the kit provided.

5. TRANSEC SECURITY FILES

Following the revision of the National Railway Security Programme (NRSP) in October 2007, Merseyrail introduced individual station security files for all locations irrespective of categorisation. The files meet the requirements of the Transec instructions and are located at each station for any Transec Inspector to review during any inspection made and include:

- (a) Security search plans for each station, "HOT" procedure advice, useful telephone numbers, and roles and responsibilities of staff and management in the event of a security incident taking place.
- (b) Depot Security plans for train searching and security checks as well as enhanced CCTV and the use of PIDS on the depot environment. The system is linked to a remote 24/7 monitoring depot.
- (c) Line management briefings were undertaken to inform the Transec documentation. There then followed a series of "one to one" briefs with frontline staff on the importance of this documentation whilst they are on duty.
- (d) Merseyrail's private security supplier were provided with details of the DfT security and "HOT" training plans and held their own training sessions to fully brief their personnel.
- (e) Enhanced security training (Project "Griffin") is being undertaken by both Security staff and frontline Merseyrail staff, to reinforce the counter terrorism message.

6. EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT

6.1 Partnership working between Merseyrail, BTP and Security was programmed following a visit to New York to share "Best Practice" on dealing with security incidents and how to combat the criminal element within society.

6.2 Initiatives were introduced in 2006:

- (a) "Code of Conduct signage (Do's and Don't's) on Customer behaviour signage installed on each station entrance.
- (b) Train Order Maintenance Sweeps (TOMS) at high footfall stations to improve customer perception on trains and stations.
- (c) Joint policing initiatives using security staff, BTP and Ticket Inspectors on designated areas, including drugs dog and "Operation Shield" (metal detector) exercises.
- (d) "If you see something, Say something" poster campaign to ask for public vigilance, (if suspicious behaviour is spotted, report it).
- (e) A specific Bye Law enforcement policy to target low level crime and disorder highly visible to the public and staff as follows:

7. BYE LAW ENFORCEMENT

Significant steps have been taken in the area of Bye Law enforcement on the Merseyrail network to act as a deterrent. An enhanced enforcement regime was required to support BTP on the lower level incidents across our network.

- (a) Introduction of "Exclusion" letters to ban people who continue to ignore our warnings and instructions on their personal behaviour. The information would be shared with BTP to enable them to provide us with the support we need in keeping offenders off our network.
- (b) The feasibility of Merseyrail staff and security contractors issuing our own version of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) to allow us to deal with offenders quickly and without having to take them to court. This proposal is being explored with the Department for Transport (DfT) for guidance and approval.
- (c) A "step up" on verbal abuse against our staff by ensuring that offenders are dealt with swiftly either by the BTP or Merseyrail working towards a "zero tolerance" stance. We will get support for this from our industry partners (trades unions and Merseytravel) by engaging with them at each stage of the process.
- (d) Enforcement of alcohol Bye Law at key times of the year and at significant locations on the network. High profile, very visible and active members of security staff and BTP enforcing the bye laws and providing public reassurance and awareness.

8. THE NEXT STEPS (FUTURE)

8.1 Merseyrail have just (December 2008) gained 100% Secure Station status on all of their stations. The process has taken four years to complete and has been a combination of investment, strategic deployment, information sharing and partnership working, between all industry stakeholders. This is part of Merseytravel's aspiration of having a "Secure network". With completion of the secure stations accreditation, the scheme compliments the other security and counter terrorism measures previously mentioned.

8.2 As the first secure network in the country the next challenge will be to maintain accreditation. This requires a sustained effort by Merseyrail, BTP and security services through regular review and monitoring forums.

9. NEW TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

As and when new technology is required to maintain and improve our customer security, new ideas and concepts will be reviewed as part of the Security Strategy. Plans currently being developed include:

- (a) Providing an enhanced dedicated "comfort" zone, a safe and secure environment on stations, under CCTV surveillance, warm, light, bright with real time information.
- (b) Improved Passenger Help Points (will be upgraded from the existing BT telephone type) with an emergency call button facility, linked to a CCTV system.
- (c) On train CCTV "live" transmission of images is the next logical step for on train security, with the benefit of being remotely monitored and linked to an emergency alarm. A review of the existing equipment has been undertaken along with a feasibility of what can be achieved working with Merseytravel. A trial with a supplier on a line of route is being developed.
- (d) New reporting equipment (blackberry type) for Ticket Inspectors/Enforcement officers to use to speed up the reporting and intelligence gathering process. A trial will commence early in 2009 to evaluate the equipment.

10. SAFER JOURNEY CONCEPT

Customers have advised us that they feel more vulnerable travelling on trains and during the evenings. To support the CCTV, "real time" monitoring trial, the need for Customers to remain vigilant will continue and plans for 2009 include:

- (a) Enhanced media coverage, via on train posters, "Eyes and Ears" campaign, confidential reporting of on train incidents and an improved communications system to give staff and customers the confidence they have a point of contact.
- (b) Highly visible rail enforcement teams on dedicated areas working on trains and stations, further complimenting BTP teams engaging with customers to give a physical and verbal reassurance. Deployment will include last train services to and from final destinations.
- (c) Rapid response security vehicles to respond to reactive situations across any part of the Merseyrail network, with trained multi functional personnel to deal with a range of problems and equipped to do so. The rapid response team will be equipped with radio communication for real time information updates.
- (d) A new Neighbourhood Police Team to be located on the Wirral, using shared Merseyrail resources to support the project. Merseyrail will support BTP with security resources and Ticket Inspectors for improved visibility and general vigilance and information sharing between all organisations.

11. CONCLUSION

Merseytravel along with its operating partners Merseyrail Electrics have encouraged step change in the delivery of a secure rail network for the people of Merseyside. This memorandum makes a strong case for recognising the connectedness of providing for personal security from crime, delivering on counter-terrorism and creating an environment where passenger growth can flourish. The ethos of a network wide approach in terms of achieving accreditation or application of procedures has produced an improvement in security greater than the sum of its parts. From secure stations accreditation to the use of perimeter intrusion detection systems, Merseyrail Electrics and Merseytravel have demonstrated a willingness to innovate and exceed statutory requirements in the provision for security on the rail network.

Memorandum submitted by British Transport Police

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 British Transport Police (BTP) is the dedicated, specialist police force for the railways. It functions like other police forces with similar units, however, the environment and crime mix dealt with is unique. Policing a transient population and undertaking major crime and other investigations presents challenges. An intimate understanding of the physical complexities of the rail environment is vital: its unseen dangers, how it operates, and how the public behaves in these surroundings. The railway network is made up of 10,000 miles of track, 2,500 stations and there are over two billion passenger journeys per year across England, Wales and Scotland. BTP polices inter-city, cross-country, suburban and rural services, the London Underground, light rail (trams) and international services through the Channel tunnel.

1.2 BTP's ongoing mission is to ensure that passengers, rail staff, operators and infrastructure owners can all use the railways free from crime and the fear of crime. BTP works within the national policing context and the priorities set by the governments and executives in Westminster, Edinburgh and Cardiff. The Force makes an important contribution to national objectives, but, in line with the strategic direction set by the Department for Transport (DfT), is increasingly focusing on the specific needs of the rail system and strengthening those partnerships. Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) are deployed at local level, backed by a national, specialist organisation that is a world leader in railway policing.

1.3 The following report is submitted in relation to the issue defined by the Committee: "Protect: the preparation of the UK's infrastructure against terrorist attack, in particular, transport systems and crowded and vulnerable places." In response to this subject the evidence in this paper first provides an overview of key issues regarding managing terrorism related risk in the mass transit rail environment; it provides an update to the Committee on developments in counter terrorism activity on the rail network since the atrocities on the Underground system in July 2005 and finally discusses the issue of "proportionality" in terms of policing the rail transport system.

2. MANAGING TERRORISM-RELATED RISK IN THE MASS TRANSIT RAIL ENVIRONMENT

2.1 BTP, in addition to its collaboration with the Association of Chief Police Officers (Terrorism and Allied Matters) Committee (ACPO-TAM) is involved intimately with the Department for Transport (DfT) led *Transport Security Programme Board*. Within the rail environment, this work is integral to the Protect strand supporting the overall Counter-Terrorist Strategy (CONTEST) structure. Within the application of CONTEST—particularly the Protect strand—there are several interrelated factors that influence directly the ability to "secure" the open, mass transit, railway.⁹ Research, including the *Appleton Inquiry Report*¹⁰ of 1992, more recent work by the *Mineta Transportation Institute*¹¹, the *RAND Corporation*¹² and the *House of Commons Transport Committee*¹³, points to several recurring themes:

- 2.2.1 There is an inevitable cost (in terms of exposure to risk) associated with operating rail services in an open environment. The style of policing and the overarching counter-terrorism strategy must acknowledge this.
- 2.2.2 Terrorism involves challenging, unpredictable and, in real terms, rare events¹⁴. The wide range of variables and small dataset are not amenable readily to conventional Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) techniques.
- 2.2.3 Policing the railway network is not an activity that can be approached piecemeal. In particular, an intrinsically close-coupled system (ie one in which the individual components are highly interdependent) demands a consistent style of policing and security.
- 2.2.4 There is a need for clear risk communication at all levels. Such communication must be realistic and proportionate if it is to reassure to a greater degree than it arouses.

⁹ *Security*, in this context, is related to an aspirational absence of risk.

¹⁰ Brian Appleton was a senior chemical engineer and risk manager with ICI. In 1991, he was selected by the Health and Safety Executive to report into the way certain types of hazard were being managed on the railways. The terms of reference included:

- (i) to evaluate the reduction in risk achieved as a result of specific precautions, and
- (ii) to identify and evaluate, or rank, other risks arising from stoppages brought about by such precautions, and their impact on systems availability and associated recurrent and investment costs, in light of the stoppage on the Central line on 19 February 1991;

(b) to consider what parallels may exist in relation to other mass transport and high-density commuter systems;

¹¹ See: Jenkins (1997 and 2001); Jenkins and Gersten (2001) and Taylor et al (2005). The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) was created by the US Congress in 1991. It is the leading academic body in the US dedicated to the study of transportation. MTI works closely with leading academics from a wide variety of US universities (eg UCLA).

¹² See Rand Corporation (2007)

¹³ The House of Commons (2007) *Travelling Without Fear* report, referenced below.

¹⁴ This paper does not seek to define *terrorism*. However, the term is used throughout within the context of what has happened in Britain in particular and Europe in general, rather than what is happening in Iraq or Afghanistan. (See, for example, *The definition of terrorism: a report by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, independent reviewer of terrorism legislation*, see: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/carlile-terrorism-definition>)

2.3 The railway, by virtue of its core-function (ie to move millions of people each day safely, with the minimum of impediment; but not to provide a “citadel” against terrorist attack) is not a risk-free environment. The societal and individual benefits of rail travel involve exposure to a range of interrelated potential hazards; both foreseeable and unforeseeable. With direct reference to terrorism, allowing the relatively unhindered movement of four million people each day around the iconic London Underground—without checking first their identity or belongings—is a risk. The absolute benefit (and, arguably, the primary purpose) is that because of the availability of mass transit rail travel, *London works*. The potential cost is that the population to whom the railway remains “open” may, at some point, include terrorists; who may, at some point, attack it. Research conducted by the DfT suggests the majority of rail users recognise this yet still elect to travel by train¹⁵. The police for its part, and particularly BTP, in close cooperation with partners in the rail industry, attempt to ensure the risk is managed effectively and proportionately.

2.4 Recognising the need for proportionality is central to the risk management philosophy and style of policing adopted within the railway. For example, two highly-effective risk management models—for dealing with unattended items and anonymous threats—were developed specifically for Britain’s mass transit rail environment¹⁶. It is the close-coupled¹⁷ nature of railways—and the potential for a minor incident to escalate rapidly in a way that, even based upon previous experiences, may not be obvious—that makes these concerns particularly acute. It is notable that suspicious and anonymous threats both become more frequent, and their impact more acute, after high-profile reporting of an attack. The approach of BTP (the counter-terrorist strategy of which is aligned with CONTEST) has ensured that disruption is kept to a minimum, that risk is maintained at a tolerable level¹⁸ and that people can go about their lawful business.

3. DEVELOPMENTS IN RESPONSE TO 7/7

3.1 The immediate response to the events of July 2005 is well-documented in a variety of reports, including a detailed account provided by BTP to the Home Affairs Committee (see Reference B). Further detail was added as part of evidence provided to the House of Commons Transport Committee in 2006 (see Reference C). Since that evidence was presented, the risk has been subject to constant assessment and developments have continued to ensure hazards associated with terrorist attack can be managed effectively. Many developments are clearly visible (and designed so to be); others are conducted in a manner less likely to attract significant public or media attention. This approach may be interpreted, sometimes, as an indication that the police and rail industry is primarily reactive. A recent letter from BTP to the Home Secretary¹⁹ gives a clear indication of the range of recent proactive developments devised to support, primarily, the Protect strand of CONTEST (see Reference D). In summary:

- 3.1.1 BTP numbers—there has been an increase in the number of BTP officers working in the three London Areas from 1,344 in 2005 to 1,510 in 2008, 188 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have also been recruited in this period, giving an overall increase in policing numbers of 26%.
- 3.1.2 Behavioural Awareness Screening System (BASS)—Since 2005, over 1,200 police officers have been trained to incorporate BASS into their daily policing duties. This has greatly assisted police activity associated with screening and stop and search of people under the provisions of the Terrorism Act;
- 3.1.3 PDA technology²⁰—Officers are now able to input stop and search data, etc, via PDAs, thus increasing their availability for patrol duties²¹.
- 3.1.4 Screening equipment—New, real-time, high-resolution x-ray equipment is currently being used to support overt search activity. (Other technologies, such as Passive Millimetre Wave are kept under constant review but, as yet, are not considered suitable for use as a mass screening option²²);
- 3.1.5 Dogs—Nationally, BTP now deploys more explosives search dogs with a greater detection capability than was the case in 2005;

¹⁵ See, for example, the DfT document: *Research Findings: Attitudes to Transport Security After Jul 05 London Bombings*. Despite the high threat level and media focus on terrorism, in September 2007, the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) reported that Britain’s railways were busier than at any time since 1946—passenger usage (measured in passenger kilometres) having risen by over 40% since 1997. See <http://www.atoc-comms.org/dynamic/dynamic/atoc-press-story/997819/BRITAIN-S-RAILWAY-STILL-THE-FASTEST-GROWING-IN-EUROPE>

¹⁶ See Reference C, Memorandum from BTP (TS13), Appendix 1

¹⁷ Perrow (1999) identifies environments such as railways as being *tightly coupled* and thus prone to “incomprehensible interactions”

¹⁸ Note: *tolerability* does not imply *acceptability*—see Reference A p.93

¹⁹ In response to comments made by Mr. Patrick Mercer, MP and published in several news papers. See, for example: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/3453696/London-Underground-remains-unsafe.html>

²⁰ Hand-held computers known as Personal Digital Assistants

²¹ See, for example:

http://www.bapcojournal.com/news/fullstory.php/aid/139/Mobile_Data_improves_efficiency_with_BTP.html

²² See, for example: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/security/land/lunr?page=6>

- 3.1.6 Radio communications—Airwave *Digital Tetra* system is now implemented in all deep tube and sub-surface stations including tunnels;
- 3.1.7 CCTV—4,000 cameras on Network Rail, 12,000 cameras on London Underground by 2011; accessible to BTP and subject to a process of digital upgrade²³;
- 3.1.8 Unconventional weapons—In terms of the risks associated with the release of chemical, biological or radiological materials BTP is a member of the Home Office Detection, Identification and Monitoring Working Group, works closely with a number of specialist agencies, and is constantly updating its front-line capability. For example:
- (a) Chemical hazards—BTP capability involves some of the most advanced, commercially available, field-portable equipment able to indicate, classify, identify and quantify several thousand likely chemical hazards. This capability—and the specially trained and equipped officers to use it—is unique to BTP and the railway.
 - (b) Radiological hazards—BTP maintains a capability to indicate, classify, identify and quantify radiation hazards (including alpha, beta, gamma and neutron).
 - (c) Biological hazards—Despite acknowledged challenges in this area²⁴ BTP has developed a proven procedure for dealing with “white powder” incidents.
 - (d) “Fixed-Point Monitoring” equipment—The requirement for fixed-point “detection” on the London Underground is kept under regular review and is being supervised by DfT with the involvement of BTP, London Underground and Network Rail. The prevailing view is that, at present, the cost is likely to exceed the benefit and that the existing procedure—involving CCTV and rapid intervention by the BTP Specialist Response Unit (SRU), and London Fire Brigade (including the joint Rescue and Recovery Team (RART))—represents a proportionate response. (The railway in London has been subject to profiling activity using a range of technologies since 1995.)
 - (e) Explosives—BTP has significant experience in dealing with the threat posed by improvised explosive devices. The approach to this challenge involves:
 - (i) BTP’s extensive use of explosive search dogs in the London Underground and the national overground railway environment;
 - (ii) BTP’s “passive” detection capability involving specially trained explosive search dogs;
 - (iii) BTP’s explosive search dog’s ability to detect peroxide-based explosives (in addition to more “traditional” explosive materials);
 - (iv) BTP’s newly introduced portable screening capability (PSC) incorporating high-definition digital x-ray;
 - (v) the national availability of designated counter-terrorist search teams;
 - (vi) the training of all rail staff in basic counter terrorism awareness (jointly by TRANSEC²⁵ and BTP). London Underground, for example, has produced written instructions for its staff,²⁶. The DfT has produced written requirements and instructional DVDs and training packs (eg, *the Rail Industry Security Training package*). BTP worked closely with TRANSEC in framing the counter terrorism advice in each case. (This is but one example of the close working relationship between the rail regulator and the BTP).
 - (f) Emerging technologies in other parts of the world—The Home Office and DfT have both looked at “overseas” systems and will be better placed to comment in detail about their efficacy. The current assessment by BTP accords with the collective view that none of the systems seen to date offer a more effective means of managing risk than what is in place already. This situation is, of course, kept under constant review.

4. PROPORTIONALITY

4.1 The style of risk management outlined above stands in stark contrast to that sometimes observed in public spaces elsewhere, where the risk associated with terrorism is perceived differently. (Examples of which might include, despite the best intentions of the police, the media’s characterisation of tanks at Heathrow or the closure of Birmingham city centre following 7/7²⁷). Integral to the maintenance of public confidence is the need for clear evidence that terrorism-related risk is being managed proportionately and effectively. It is, for example, exceedingly difficult to promote the preferred resilience message of business as usual, if

²³ See, for example; http://www.buildingtechnologies.siemens.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/29569EF1-7EA3-413C-A6E3-D15608C2D588/12473/Network_Rail1.pdf and <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/archive/4412.aspx>

²⁴ See, for example the work of the Home Office Detection Identification and Monitoring Working Group

²⁵ The Transport Security and Contingencies Directorate of DfT

²⁶ For example, a 22 page document entitled “London Underground Security Employee Guidance”—last updated in March 2008)

²⁷ See, for example, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2749659.stm> “Army patrols Heathrow” dated 11 February 2003 and <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml> “Thousands evacuated in Birmingham bomb scare” dated 11 July, 2005.

stations are evacuated unnecessarily because of anonymous threats, unattended items, “funny smells”, the incongruous appearance of loose “white” powders or other unidentifiable substances. It would, of course, be equally hard to convey the same message in the face of a rising death toll due to recurring attacks. In some respects, it could be argued that this is the crux of the proportionality debate—and one of the reasons why risk aversion is a sometimes easier option to justify than risk taking. In terms of social amplification of risk (eg media coverage that not only reports events but is often seen as defining and shaping the issue²⁸), it seems unlikely that images of normality will ever be as compelling as scenes of death, destruction and human suffering.

4.2 Maintaining the utility of the rail services in the face of the latent threat from terrorism requires a thorough understanding of how the different aspects of mass transit rail combine to operate as a system. In the rail environment, any “local” decision may affect hundreds of thousands of people and train services nationally. Precipitous action to close a station, without first considering how passengers and train movements will be affected, could lead to a number of adverse (and from the perspective of a Public Inquiry, perhaps entirely foreseeable) consequences. These could include: people being trapped in trains, possibly in tunnels—with the attendant risks of self-evacuation onto the track or suffocation; overcrowding on platforms at feeder stations—with the possibility of crushing, or people falling onto the line of route; the uncoordinated movement of large numbers of people all seeking alternative transport²⁹. Particularly when a credible link to terrorism is not established subsequently, this approach provides a less than edifying public spectacle. (Note, for example, the adverse and unintended consequences following the well-intentioned closure of Aintree racecourse during the *Grand National*, in 1997—and the media’s portrayal of the police response³⁰.) The threat posed by suicide bombers, and their ability to exploit crowded locations at very short notice, further amplifies the need for caution when considering the large-scale and uncoordinated movement of the public.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The benefits of open mass transit rail travel are obtained only at the expense of tolerating some exposure to terrorism-related risks. There are, of course, many other sources of risk, to which exposure is more likely than a terrorist attack, but which (for a number of reasons) do not convey the same dread³¹. The reporting of terrorist attacks across the world, through television coverage, in print and across the internet appears to be how many people’s perceptions of terrorism-related risk are formed; and this wide-range of “inputs” probably accounts for the wide-range of “outputs” when people are confronted by unexpected and ambiguous events. While the probability of terrorist attack cannot be reduced to zero, anxieties can be reduced if the benefits of taking risks are shown to outweigh the costs. To ensure ‘buy-in’, there must also be clear evidence that risk is being managed effectively as an active policy, rather than being ignored or used to justify an unduly disruptive approach. For rail users to know the railway is safe from attack is likely to be of little consolation if stations are closed and train services suspended on a regular basis just in case.

5.2 Identifying where, when, or how attacks will occur remains problematic,³² but close examination of previous incidents (real or hoax, of direct or indirect applicability) is vital in terms of focusing the counter-terrorism effort. To pass the “mass transit test”, police activity within CONTEST must remain cognisant of the values of the society (and societal perceptions of risk) within which it exists. In this regard, the Protect strand of CONTEST is pivotal. Specialist policing of the railway acknowledges that terrorism and the fear terrorism generates cannot be countered through a “piecemeal” approach. Consistency enhances resilience³³—as witnessed by the rapid return to normality following incidents (real, hoax or false), or, in many cases, the absence of any visible disruption at all. In terms of risk management, the rail network cannot be viewed simply as a series of localised security challenges. Countering-terrorism (in the broadest sense) means developing a clear and inclusive philosophy of managing risk actively and communicating risk effectively³⁴. It involves working within the national strategy, but ensuring activities are proportionate, relevant and commensurate with the aims of mass transit rail travel. To date, the success of the rail industry and BTP in minimising disruption caused by “false” incidents, without taking risks that were proved

²⁸ See, for example, Kasperson, R.E. (1988) *The social amplification of risk: a conceptual framework*, in Slovic, P. (2004)

²⁹ See, for example, the description of the Bethnal Green incident in Appleton (1992).

³⁰ At Aintree, a hoax threat displaced over 60,000 people, leaving approximately 20,000 stranded because their cars were within the cordon.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool/content/articles/2006/12/01/local_history_aintree_1997_feature.shtml

³¹ The term “dread” risk was used by Slovic *et al.* to describe risks that were considered uncontrollable, subject to involuntary exposure and where there was perceived to be an inequitable distribution of risks. Their research placed terrorism in the top-five of ninety hazards—just behind nerve gas, nuclear power, warfare and nuclear weapons. See Chapter 5 of Royal Society (1992).

³² Note the comment by the Director-General of MI5, on 6 July 2005, that an attack in London was not anticipated; reported in the *Guardian* and cited in Furedi (2007).

³³ Resilience, in this context, meaning the ability to absorb an attack (or, indeed the consequences of an ambiguous incident) and continue to operate effectively.

³⁴ Effective risk communication does not imply the front-loading of masses of technical data of indeterminate interest. In many respects, the railway experience supports the adage that *less is more*.

subsequently to have been reckless, has been matched only by the effective response to confirmed acts of terrorism. Or, as Sir Richard Mottram (the former Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator in the Cabinet Office) put it:

“...the need is to have a security response that is proportionate and is not self-defeating. You have to be able to travel if the purpose is to travel”.³⁵

January 2009

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Memorandum submitted by the Home Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEST is the Government’s long-term strategy for countering international terrorism. Details of the strategy were first published in July 2006 and it is currently being refreshed. The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk from international terrorism, so that people can go about their daily lives freely and with confidence. It is divided into four principal areas of work (supported by a number of cross-cutting areas) to enable us to combat the different aspects of trans-national terrorism more effectively. These work-strands are:

- Pursue: stopping terrorist attacks;
- Prevent: stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism;

³⁵ In oral evidence taken before the Transport Committee on 3 May, 2006, published in December 2007, (House of Commons Transport Committee (2007). (Reference C)

- Protect: strengthening our protection against attack; and
- Prepare: mitigating the impact of attacks.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) was established in 2007 in the Home Office, in order to bring more cohesion and greater strategic capability to our fight against international terrorism.

OSCT's primary responsibilities are to:

- Support the Home Secretary and other Ministers in developing, directing, and implementing the UK's counter-terrorist strategy (CONTEST) across Government;
- Deliver aspects of the counter-terrorism strategy directly, such as legislation and protective security policy;
- Enable and support key structural developments, such as policing arrangements and border security;
- Manage counter-terrorism related crises through the Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR);
- Facilitate the Home Secretary's statutory oversight of Security Service; and
- Exercise oversight of / monitor, on behalf of central Government, counter-terrorist operations in the UK.

OSCT is led by a Director General and has six Directorates:

- (i) Prevent & RICU (the Research, Information and Communications Unit) is responsible for implementing strategies to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism; and for the strategic communications to support this;
- (ii) *Strategy, Planning & Change* is responsible for: setting strategic direction; programme and project management services; corporate services; strategic oversight of Police CT capability; and OSCT's Secretariat capability;
- (iii) *Prepare, Protect, & CBRNE (the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Unit)* is responsible for implementing strategies on the Protect and Prepare work-strands, as well as ensuring that science supports the delivery of counter-terrorism;
- (iv) *Law, Security and International* is responsible for: *Pursue* policy and delivery; OSCT's international engagement; interception and surveillance policy and casework; and oversight of the Security Service;
- (v) *Interception Modernisation Programme (IMP)* is a mission-critical, large-scale cross-government programme being delivered out of OSCT. IMP aims to maintain the UK's lawful Interception and Communications Data capability; and
- (vi) *OSCT Olympic Safety and Security* is responsible for producing an integrated security strategy and costed plan with the police, London 2012 organisers and other security providers, which will deliver a safe, secure, and resilient Olympics in 2012.

2. THE THREAT TO THE UK

The UK faces a serious and sustained threat from acts of terrorism. The current UK national threat level is SEVERE, indicating that an attack is "highly likely and possibly without warning".

3. THE RESPONSE: CONTEST

The Government's response to international terrorism is well developed. Our long-term strategy, known as CONTEST, has been in place since early 2003 and details were published in the July 2006 Command Paper "Countering International Terrorism: the United Kingdom's Strategy."³⁶

Over the past year, the Government has been reviewing and updating all aspects of CONTEST, based upon enhanced experience of tackling the threat, lessons learned, and the evolving international context. As different elements of this work have been completed, they have been made public: for example, the new approach to Prevent and the reviews of different aspects of protective security. The Government plans to publish a detailed account of the revised CONTEST strategy later this Spring.

The overall aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk from international terrorism, so that people can go about their daily lives freely and with confidence. To achieve this, CONTEST is divided into four main work-streams, each with its own specific objective:

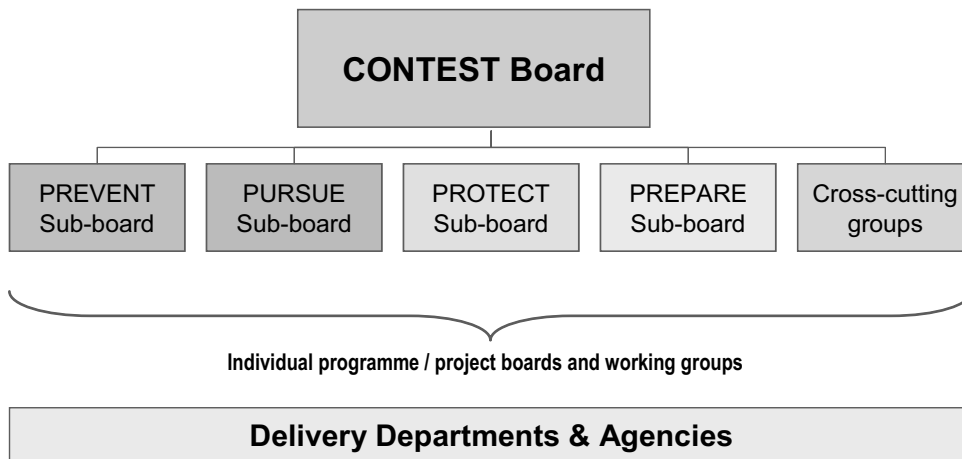
- Pursue: stopping terrorist attacks;
- Prevent: stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism;

³⁶ <http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-publications/publication-search/general/Contest-Strategy>

- Protect: strengthening our protection against attack; and
- Prepare: mitigating the impact of attacks.

The Home Secretary has lead responsibility for co-ordinating the strategy and is supported in this by OSCT.

Governance of the CONTEST Programme



Resourcing Counter—Terrorism

In 2008–09 annual spending on counter-terrorism and intelligence exceeds £2 billion, which is double what it was prior to 9/11. This will continue to rise over the CSR period to £3½ billion by 2010–11, more than triple pre-9/11 levels.

Performance Management for Counter-Terrorism

A Counter-Terrorism Public Service Agreement (PSA) has been agreed with the Treasury, which (for the first time) covers the entire UK Counter-Terrorism effort. The agreement, which is supported by the CONTEST Delivery Plans, has been developed to ensure a better focus on delivery of the key counter terrorism programmes across Government.

Local Delivery

The police’s contribution to this PSA is being measured through the APACS (Assessment of Policing and Community Safety) performance framework. Where this is in partnership with local authorities, these measures are mirrored in the national indicators which may be selected by local authorities for inclusion in their Local Area Agreements. OSCT has a key role in monitoring the success of CONTEST through PSA and associated performance measures.

4. PURSUE

The strategy across HMG

With the Police, the Security Service, and other departments across Whitehall, the Home Office is working to make it as difficult as possible for terrorists to operate in the UK and thereby reduce the threat they pose to the UK, its interests, and its allies.

The Home Office is responsible for ensuring that the police and the agencies have the powers they need and that the options for disruption are as wide and effective as possible.

Home Office responsibilities

- Legislation—Advice on existing counter-terrorism legislation and the development and management of new legislation.
- Proscription—The Terrorism Act 2000 enables the Secretary of State to proscribe organisations she believes are concerned in terrorism. Since 2006 this has included organisations which have glorified terrorism.

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- Control Orders—Preventative measures that place tailored obligations on suspected terrorists whom we cannot prosecute or deport in order to disrupt their terrorism-related activity.
 - Deportations with Assurances—negotiating Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with foreign governments to enable us to deport foreign nationals safely.
 - Terrorist Financing—Measures/policies to counter the financing of terrorism, including the development of a cross-Whitehall strategy to identify terrorist facilitators and funding operations, and disrupt terrorists' access to funds.
 - International co-operation—Advancing CT co-operation through policy development, representing the UK in international fora.

5. PREVENT

The strategy across HMG

The aim of the Prevent workstream is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. The Government's overall strategy for Prevent has undergone a refresh, led by OSCT with input from key departments, and was agreed in October 2007 by the Ministerial Committee on National Security, International Relations and Development (Sub-Committee on Tackling Extremism). Under this new strategy, delivery of Prevent will be achieved through a new strategic framework with five distinct aims and two enabling workstreams.

The five aims are:

- (i) Undermining extremist ideology; supporting mainstream voices;
- (ii) Disrupting those who promote violent extremism; strengthening vulnerable institutions;
- (iii) Supporting individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists; creating mechanisms for supporting them;
- (iv) Increasing the resilience of communities to engage with and resist violent extremists; and
- (v) Effectively addressing grievances whether real or perceived.

The two enablers are:

- (i) Developing understanding, analysis and evaluation; and
- (ii) Strategic communications.

Home Office Responsibilities

The OSCT Prevent teams have two main functions.

- leading on counter-radicalisation in order to prevent terrorism by helping individuals and groups to resist radicalisation and by disrupting the recruitment activities of extremists; and
- coordinating Prevent activity across government and works with the CONTEST Programme office to this effect.

6. PROTECT

The strategy across HMG

The Protect work-stream of CONTEST aims to strengthen our overall protection against terrorist attack. Following the incidents in London and Glasgow in June and July 2007, the Prime Minister asked Lord West, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Security and Counter-terrorism in the Home Office, to review further measures necessary to protect the public against terrorist attacks on crowded places, transport infrastructure and critical national infrastructure. He was assisted in his work on crowded places by the Hon. Member for Newark and Retford (Patrick Mercer MP).

The outcome of Lord West's reviews has enabled the Government to develop an improved Protect strategic framework based on reducing vulnerability in eight sectors: the Critical National Infrastructure; crowded places; transport; the UK Border; hazardous sites and substances; personnel security to mitigate hostile insider action; protecting individuals at risk of being targeted by terrorists; and UK interests overseas. Our protective security arrangements are kept under constant review including in the light of developments in the attack methodologies that terrorists are assessed to have the capability and intent to use.

Home Office Responsibilities

OSCT has lead responsibility for overall delivery of the Protect programme as well as specific responsibilities in the eight workstreams:

- *Crowded Places*—OSCT is leading a new work programme on protecting people going about their daily lives in crowded places.
- *The Critical National Infrastructure (CNI)*—This is defined as the infrastructure assessed to be necessary to maintain delivery of essential services to the UK. OSCT, in conjunction with the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI), is responsible for leading and co-ordinating the inter-departmental effort to protect the CNI from physical and electronic attack and the threat from insiders. Responsibility for addressing risks in particular sectors rests with the lead Government Department that sponsors that sector.
- *The transport system and its users*—The transport sector can be considered as three modes; aviation, land transport and maritime. The protective security programme for transport infrastructure is led by the Department for Transport (TRANSEC), which works closely with the Home Office and CPNI.
- *Hazardous sites and substances*—OSCT is responsible for leading this work programme. Its purpose is to reduce the vulnerability of hazardous substances (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive) to terrorist misuse and to reduce the vulnerability of those sites holding them to terrorist attack.
- *The UK Border*—The Home Office is responsible for strengthening border security against terrorism. This includes fully exploiting the CT opportunities provided by the UK Border Agency (ie from UK presence at ports overseas and visa issuing points through to inland processes including asylum, enforcement and deportation). It also involves ever-closer working between the UK Border Agency and the police, and the implementation of the e-Borders Programme which allows advance checks on travellers arriving or leaving the UK against our watchlists. Currently more than 30 million passenger movements are checked in this way, and this will rise to 100 million movements by April 2009.
- *Personnel security to mitigate hostile insider action*—OSCT, in conjunction with the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI), is responsible for leading this work.
- *Protection of individuals from terrorism*—The Home Office is responsible for protective security for public figures and their residences.
- *Reducing the vulnerability of UK interests overseas*—The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responsible for leading this work programme. It is delivered through the provision of accurate public advice on the threat from both domestic and international terrorism, the physical protection of British diplomatic premises and personnel overseas, and the development of key foreign governments' own protective capability. The Home Office is closely involved in some aspects of this work, in particular supporting capacity building overseas.

7. PREPARE

The strategy across HMG and Home Office Responsibilities

The aim of the PREPARE workstream is to ensure that the UK is ready to respond to any terrorist attack on the country and to mitigate its impact. It is part of the broader National Resilience Programme, which is led by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, and includes planning for responding to and recovering from both natural hazards and man-made emergencies. Within this programme, the Home Office is responsible for ensuring that the country is well-prepared to manage the consequences of terrorist attacks.

The objectives of the Prepare strategy are to ensure that:

- (i) capabilities are in place to enable the police and other local emergency services to respond effectively to terrorist incidents;
- (ii) operators of the UK's critical national infrastructure can continue to deliver their essential services following terrorist incidents or, where these services are disrupted, to restore them as quickly as possible; and
- (iii) national, regional and local crisis management structures are appropriately equipped and trained.

The Home Office has worked closely with the police to strengthen their ability to provide a comprehensive and coordinated policing response which can manage the consequences of a terrorist attack alongside an effective investigative response. This has drawn on lessons identified in previous terrorist incidents as well as the Home Office National Counter-Terrorism Exercise Programme.

In addition, the Home Office has put in a place a programme that is delivering a growing capacity for the police and other emergency services to deal with terrorist use of chemical, biological or radiological weapons.

The Home Office also works closely with the Cabinet Office in convening and running the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) to provide strategic direction of the Government response to any terrorist incident. The Ministry of Defence is part of this response and can provide a number of niche capabilities in support of the police if required. Our Armed Forces have specialist CT capabilities in the Land, Maritime and Air environments which can be employed in a range of scenario including, but not limited to, the types of scenarios seen in Mumbai. Decisions to use military resources in support of a police counter terrorism operation require authorisation by Ministers.

8. CROSS—CUTTING ASPECTS OF CONTEST

Several aspects of the Government's counter-terrorism activity apply to more than one strand of CONTEST and are given specific attention to ensure the cross-cutting aspects are fully effective. These include: working with partners to ensure practical implementation of our strategy at local, national and international levels; developing a substantial Police Counter-Terrorism Network—sufficient to engage in the full range of counter-terrorism policing activities; developing a security programme, closely aligned to CONTEST, to further our understanding and ability to tackle the potential terrorist threat to the 2012 Olympics; and implementing a cross-Government strategy for countering the terrorist use of the internet.

The UK's strategy for countering terrorism is supported by a number of key enablers involving science & technology and engaging key partners outside Government (including those in the private sector and academia). It is reinforced by a communications approach (led by the Research, Information and Communications Unit—RICU) with three key objectives: 1) to expose the weaknesses of violent extremists' ideologies and brands; 2) to promote and support credible alternatives; and 3) to strengthen and protect the UK government through effective communication.

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