

REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF SCHEDULE 7 A PUBLIC CONSULTATION

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Home Office



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Review of the operation of Schedule 7: A Public Consultation

“The ability to stop and examine would-be passengers at ports is an essential tool in the protection of the inhabitants of this country from terrorism ... the power is necessary in a democratic society and ... the contrary is not arguable.”

Mr. Justice Collins, December 2011¹

What is Schedule 7?

1. Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (‘Schedule 7’) is a national security port and border power. It enables an examining officer² to stop, search, question and detain a person travelling through a port/airport or the border area³. This is to determine whether that person is or has been involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism. Stopping an individual does not necessarily mean that the officer believes the person is a terrorist.
2. An examining officer may require a person to answer questions or provide certain documents. If a person refuses to cooperate with the examination, they can be detained by the examining officer for a maximum of 9 hours. (Most examinations, over 97%, last under an hour). Fewer than 3 people in every 10,000 are examined as they pass through UK borders. An examining officer may also search a person or anything they have with them. A failure to comply with requests made by the examining officer may be considered an offence under the Act.
3. A person who is detained under Schedule 7 may have the right to publicly funded legal advice and assistance, if they pass both a means and a merits test⁴.

Why is Schedule 7 necessary?

4. Schedule 7 forms a key part of the United Kingdom’s border security arrangements. Individuals engaged in terrorist-related activity travel to plan, finance, train for and commit their attacks. Examining people at ports and airports is necessary to protect public safety. Recent attempts to attack flights show that aviation remains a high priority target for terrorists.
5. The number of terrorist-related arrests that result directly from a Schedule 7 stop each year is not large - about 20 annually between 2004-2009, leading to approximately 7 convictions each year. A number of key individuals have been convicted of terrorism offences as a result of a port stop. Some of these convictions are detailed at **Annex B**.
6. Schedule 7 examinations have produced information which has contributed to long and complex intelligence-based counter-terrorist investigations. The initial examination may be several steps from a final outcome as it may take some time to draw together and develop many diverse strands of information which provide evidence of terrorist activity.

1 In R(K) v SSHD CO 10027/2011

2 Defined as “a constable, an immigration officer and a customs officer(who is designated for the purpose of this Schedule by the Secretary of State and the Commissioners of Customs and Excise)”

3 Defined as an area in Northern Ireland within one mile of the land border.

4 www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/corporate-publications-strategy/home-office-circulars/circulars-2011/007-20111/

7. Schedule 7 powers can only be used when a person is travelling through a port or border area. An important aspect of Schedule 7 is that it does not require any reasonable suspicion. The Code of Practice⁵ provides advice to officers on selection criteria based on current and emerging threats to the UK from terrorism.

8. Most major international terrorist plots have included the individuals involved travelling through international borders to plan and prepare for their attacks. There are important reasons why powers to stop and question may be particularly necessary at ports, to protect the public from attacks using aircraft; the use of ports to transport terrorist-related material; the illegal entry of dangerous individuals. People know that they are potentially subject to being searched if they enter a port with the intention of travel.

9. The Home Office believes that the introduction of a reasonable suspicion test for Schedule 7 could limit the capability of the police to detect and prevent individuals of interest passing through the UK border. There is very limited information that may be available regarding individuals who pass through our borders, some of whom will not have travelled to the UK before. This reduction in capabilities could reduce the deterrent effect to those who seek to travel in support of terrorist activity.

10. David Anderson QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorist Legislation, made the following comments on Schedule 7 in his annual review of the Terrorism Act published on 18 July 2011⁶;

“The utility of the power is scarcely in doubt ... Schedule 7 examinations [have] been instrumental in securing evidence which was used to convict dangerous terrorists.”

11. In December 2011, the legal basis of Schedule 7 was considered in the High Court in by Mr Justice Collins. In *R (K) v SSHD*, a person examined under Schedule 7 sought to claim that it was incompatible with the Human Right Act 1998 and discriminatory. Refusing permission for an application for judicial review Mr Justice Collins ruled that:

“The ability to stop and examine would-be passengers at ports is an essential tool in the protection of the inhabitants of this country from terrorism ... the power is necessary in a democratic society and, quite apart from the delay in seeking to challenge it, the contrary is not arguable.”

Why is the Home Office reviewing Schedule 7?

12. Schedule 7 is an important part of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy but there are concerns that it can operate unfairly. We are reviewing possible improvements which can be made to Schedule 7. We think these changes will maintain the protection of the UK border and continue to respect individuals' human rights. Those who have an interest in how Schedule 7 is operated can help ensure that it is used effectively, fairly and proportionately by responding to this consultation.

13. David Anderson QC has acknowledged that Schedule 7 has made a negative impact on some Muslim communities and makes a series of recommendations that should be considered to improve its operation. Many of his recommendations are in line with options for change that we have identified and address in this consultation.

5 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100419081706/http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-publications/publication-search/legislation/terrorism-act-2000/Code-of-Practice-for-Examin1.pdf?view=Binary>

6 http://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/publications/Terrorism_Act_2000_and_2006-annual_independent_review2010.pdf

Community Concerns

14. Some communities and individuals believe they are unfairly targeted by Schedule 7 examining officers because of their ethnicity or faith. Examinations can cause inconvenience and stress to the travelling public.

15. The use of Schedule 7 is informed by the current terrorist threat to the UK so certain travel routes may be given greater focus. As a result, some groups or individuals may be more likely to be examined and some regular passengers may be stopped on more than one occasion. However the statutory Code of Practice for Examining Officers and National Policing Improvement Agency Practice Advice⁷ make it clear that an individual cannot be selected for examination based solely on their perceived ethnicity or religion.

Possible Changes

16. The Home Office has identified a number of potential changes to the Schedule 7 powers in line with the Government's commitments to human rights and to ensuring that counter-terrorism powers are effective and proportionate. These are:

- **Reducing the maximum legal period of examination.** Between 1 January 2009 and 31 March 2012 only 3% of examinations continued for over one hour. Only 1 in 2000 examinations last more than 6 hours.
- **Requiring a supervising officer to review at regular intervals whether the examination or detention needs to be continued.** This may help to minimise the length of examinations and detentions.
- **Requiring examining officers to be trained and accredited to use Schedule 7 powers.** The majority of examining officers are trained to use Schedule 7. However if examining police officers were required to undertake mandatory accredited training before they used Schedule 7 it would ensure that the power was operated to consistently high standards.
- **Giving individuals examined at ports the same rights to publically funded legal advice as those transferred to police stations.** Practical difficulties may mean that detentions can be prolonged by the time taken for a solicitor to enter the restricted security area at a port. However it is important for an individual to have the right to consult a legal adviser even by telephone.
- **Amending the basis for undertaking strip searches to require suspicion and a supervising officer's authority.** Strip searches are extremely rare, but data on numbers is not currently available. The power to perform strip searches is necessary as individuals may carry a concealed weapon, device or document.
- **Repealing the power to take intimate DNA samples from persons detained during a Schedule 7 examination.** The power to take intimate samples could be removed without compromising the operational effectiveness of Schedule 7.

17. The Home Office welcomes your views on these potential changes hopes that you will provide valuable feedback and help to shape the legislation and the operation of Schedule 7 into the future.

⁷ http://www.npia.police.uk/en/docs/Schedule_7_of_the_Terrorism_Act_2000.pdf

What is being done now to improve the operation of Schedule 7?

18. In March 2010 a National Accountability Board for Schedule 7, chaired by a representative of ACPO, was established. This Board, which comprises of government, police and independent community representatives, is an advisory body to ACPO. It is able to scrutinise, challenge, offer advice and make recommendations on equality, diversity and human rights issues to support the delivery of effective policing in relation to the use of Schedule 7.

19. Oversight of the operation of Schedule 7 is provided by the independent reviewer of counter-terrorism legislation, David Anderson QC.

20. Since 1 July 2011 the Independent Police Complaints Commission has required all forces to refer all Schedule 7 complaints, in England and Wales, to the Commission prior to any investigation. The Commission may investigate the matter, supervise the investigation or refer the complaint back to the force. In Ireland, all Schedule 7 complaints are referred to the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism
Home Office
September 2012

Review of the operation of Schedule 7: Your Views

Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 is an essential counter-terrorism power. We must ensure that the operation of the powers is, in each case, necessary and proportionate. Please help us to do this by taking part in this consultation.

Question 1: Are you replying to this consultation as?

- An individual
- On behalf of an Organisation
- If an Organisation which one?

Question 2: Schedule 7 powers are important for border security but can impact on the individual examined. Please tell us if you have personal experience of Schedule 7.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 3: If you answered yes, what was your experience?

- Of being personally examined
- As a police officer using or overseeing the use of the power
- As a legal practitioner
- A friend or relative was examined
- Prefer not to say

Question 4: Which statement best describes your views about Schedule 7?

- Schedule 7 powers should be strengthened because the UK border controls are not strong enough
- Schedule 7 helps to ensure that the UK Border is effectively policed to counter terrorism
- Schedule 7 powers are unfair, too wide ranging and should be curtailed
- Don't know

PERIODS OF EXAMINATION

An examining officer should have sufficient time to conduct an examination which includes the care and treatment of the examinee e.g. to allow comfort breaks or religious observance. In some cases, the examination will be extended to carry out a search, take fingerprints and/or DNA samples or to allow an individual access to an interpreter or legal adviser. No period of examination, including detention, can last more than nine hours.

Between 1 January 2009 and 31 March 2012 only 3% of examinations continued over one hour and only 1 in 2,000 examinations lasted more than 6 hours.

Data on the length of examinations can be found at [Annex A](#).

Options for Change

The maximum length of examination could be reviewed.

Question 5: Do you think that the maximum period of examination should be reduced or stay the same?

- Reduced
- Stay the same
- Don't know

Please explain your answer

POWER TO DETAIN

During an examination the examining officer may use the power of detention at any time and will supply a Notice of Detention called a TACT 2 form, which will inform the person of their duties and rights. A person may be detained if they refuse to co-operate and insist on leaving.

Detention is different from examination. It gives the person being detained the right to free legal advice and the examiner officers the power to take biometrics.

Options for Change?

Suggestions on how the detention framework could be improved include:-

- **Requiring a supervising officer to review whether the examination needs to continue.** This could help to minimise the length of examinations and detentions.⁸
- **After a certain time (e.g. 1 hour) all examinations could automatically become detentions.** This would ensure all individuals have the same rights to legal representation after a set period and make the distinction between examination and detention less arbitrary.

Question 6: Do you think that a supervisor should review the need to continue the examination?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If yes, please describe what an examining officer should provide to make a good case to continue the examination.

⁸ For example one model is that the examining officer would need to make a case to a supervising officer to demonstrate why the examination should be further prolonged. The detention would be kept under supervision and review. However the time taken to prepare the case for review could itself lengthen the period of the examination.

Question 7: Should any examination which needs to exceed a set time limit require the person to be formally detained with the rights that go with that?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 8: What do you think should be the maximum time an examination should last before the person is formally detained?

- 1 Hour
- 3 Hours
- 6 Hours
- Should be the decision of the examining officer based on specific circumstances
- Other

SCHEDULE 7 AND LEGAL RIGHTS

Formal detention brings the right to legal advice and assistance that may be publicly funded⁹. Under the Terrorism Act 2000, this right only applies to detention at a police station but the Code of Practice indicates that access to legal advice should be given to all individuals who are detained.

Examinations may be extended because of the time taken for solicitors to enter the security area at the port, although their advice may more easily be provided by telephone.

All Schedule 7 examinations of people detained at a police station have to be video, or under certain circumstances, audio recorded. Those undertaken at a port do not need to be recorded as it may not be practical to install equipment to all locations. Examinations may be delayed if people have to be transferred to an interview room where recording facilities are available.

Options for Change?

Amend the Terrorism Act 2000 to give people examined at ports the same rights as those transferred to police stations.

Question 9: Do you think that people who are detained under Schedule 7 should have access to legal advice (which may be publicly funded) when they are detained at a port, even if it extends the period of examination (within the legal timeframe)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

⁹ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/corporate-publications-strategy/home-office-circulars/circulars-2011/007-20111/

Question 10: Should all questioning of those detained be recorded even if, due to practical considerations, this extends the period of examination?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 11: If waiting for legal advice or securing recording facilities will delay the examination do you think that the maximum period of detention should be extended?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

TRAINING OF EXAMINING OFFICERS

Schedule 7 powers are available to be used by any police officer, immigration officer or designated customs official (based at the border) but they are almost exclusively used by Special Branch officers.

There are a number of specific training and induction courses that ports police officers are expected to undergo to ensure that Schedule 7 powers are operated professionally and with awareness of potential community impacts. The vast majority of ports police officers have undergone these courses.

Options for Change?

Schedule 7 could be considered to be a wide ranging without suspicion power. If examining officers could not use the power unless they had successfully completed mandatory accredited training it may help ensure that the power was operated to consistently high standards.

Question 12: Do you think that Schedule 7 powers should normally only be used by officers trained to use them?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 13: Do you think that officers who have not been fully trained to use Schedule 7 should be able to use the powers under supervision of a trained officer in exceptional circumstances, such as after a terrorist attack or when there is intelligence to indicate an imminent terrorist attack?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

SEARCHES

The ability to examine a person as they are travelling is a good opportunity to identify those involved in terrorist activity, as they will often carry information that will be of evidential use. Many of the cases highlighted at Annex B involve individuals found to be in possession of documents and other materials connected to the preparation of terrorist acts.

During an examination an officer can search for and examine any items that may help him to decide whether the person may be involved in terrorism. The item can be kept for up to 7 days to allow for it to be examined and kept for longer if it is required as evidence.

Strip Searches: Schedule 7 allows for an individual to be strip searched. The police think that strip searches are rare, but do not keep a central record of numbers. Strip searches can be necessary as people may carry a concealed weapon, device or document through ports. There is no requirement for such searches to be authorised by a supervising officer.

The Code of Practice advises that, before an officer undertakes a strip search, he should have reasonable grounds to suspect that a person may have concealed evidence that they are involved in terrorist activity. However there is currently no reference to strip searches in the Terrorism Act itself.

Options for Change?

- Due to the intrusive nature of strip searches the law could be changed to limit their use to when there is a reasonable suspicion that the individual is involved in terrorism. This would be in line with other similar strip search practices.
- The authorisation of a supervising officer could be required before an officer is able to carry out a strip search. This would give better oversight.

Question 14: Do you think that the Terrorism Act should be changed so that the examining officer should suspect the person is carrying something that will prove or disprove their involvement in terrorism or concealing an item which may be used to harm themselves or another before being strip searched?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 15: Do you think that a supervisor should have to authorise the use of strip searches?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

THE TAKING OF BIOMETRICS¹⁰

A person detained under Schedule 7 can have their biometrics¹¹ taken. The taking of fingerprints or DNA samples may be necessary to establish whether the person is involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism. Fingerprints can also be taken to assist in confirming identity. The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 includes a requirement that the biometrics collected must be deleted after 6 months unless an independent reviewer agrees that it is necessary to keep them longer.

Three types of biometrics may be taken:-

- Fingerprints
- A non-intimate DNA sample (e.g. a hair sample or mouth swab)
- An intimate DNA sample (e.g. blood, semen, urine or pubic hair), but only at a police station with the person's consent and authority of a superintendent.

If a person provides written consent, most biometrics can be taken at a port. However, if they decline to give consent, biometrics can only be taken at a police station with the authority of a superintendent.

Options for Change?

- Biometrics (non-intimate) could be taken at port without consent with the authority of a Superintendent so that the period of the examination is not extended by having to transfer a person to a police station.
- Intimate biometric samples provide few advantages over other samples. They are particularly intrusive and the police have no evidence of such samples being needed. The Home Office believes that the power to take intimate samples could be removed from Schedule 7 without compromising operational effectiveness.

Question 16: If a person declines to provide consent should a Superintendent be able to authorise the taking of biometrics (non intimate) at a port? Please explain your answer.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 17: Do you agree or disagree that the power to acquire intimate biometric samples should be removed? Please explain your answer.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

¹⁰ The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 will restrict the circumstances when fingerprints and DNA data can be retained

¹¹ The term biometrics may include photographs, fingerprints or DNA samples.

CONCLUSION

These are the main areas where we think the way in which Schedule 7 operates could be changed to provide a better balance between security and civil liberties. However, we are keen to identify any other aspects of the power which could be improved. Please let us know what areas of the Schedule 7 powers and their use you feel need to change.

Question 18: Do you think that the examination process could be improved in any other way?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If yes, please detail how?

Question 19: Do you have any other comments that you would like to make about the use of Schedule 7?

HOW TO TAKE PART IN THE CONSULTATION

Timing

We will allow 12 weeks for the consultation in line with Cabinet Office Guidelines.

Launch Date of Consultation – 13 September 2012

End Date of Consultation – 6 December 2012

The easiest way to respond is via the online portal:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/schedule-7-review

Alternatively you can participate via the following email address:

schedule7review@homeoffice.x.gsi.gov.uk

Or by post to the following address:

Schedule 7 Review Public Consultation
OSCT Borders and Aviation Security
Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

NEXT STEPS

The feedback from the consultation will be carefully considered and the results will be collated and then published on the Home Office Website. A decision will then be taken about how any changes should be introduced.

Annex A: Data on the use of Schedule 7

Table A(1)

	April 2009 – March 2010	April 2010 – March 2011	April 2011 – March 2012 ¹²
Number of People Examined	87,218	73,909	69,109
Examinations lasting over 1 hour	2,695	2,291	2,240
Number of People Detained	486	915	681
Number of Biometrics Taken	Not Available	769	592

Table A(2)

Schedule 7 Examinations and Detentions by Self-Defined Ethnicity (2010/11)		
Self-Defined Ethnicity	Examination	Detention
White	40%	8%
Asian or Asian British	29%	45%
Black or Black British	9%	21%
Chinese or other	17%	21%
Mixed or not stated	4%	5%

Table A(3)

The table below illustrates a breakdown of the period of examination for the period April 2009 to March 2012.

Period of Examination	% of all examinations
Less than 1	97.2
1-3 Hrs	2.2
3-6 Hrs	0.6
>6 Hrs	0.06

¹² These are provisional United Kingdom wide figures and therefore differ from those included in the Home Office bulletin, which covers England, Scotland and Wales.

Table A(4)

There is no requirement for forces to report centrally details of examinations that are less than 1 hour. However, in order to provide background for this consultation four large forces have provided sample information¹³ on the length of examinations that are less than an hour.

Time	Number of Examinations	% of under the hour examinations
0 – 15 Minutes	3934	63%
16 – 30 Minutes	1544	25%
31 – 45 Minutes	534	9%
46 – 59 Minutes	257	4%

¹³ This data covered 6 months of data for 3 forces and 2 months of data from the 4th force. It amounted to 6269 under the hour examinations, slightly less than 9% of the annual national total. The forces providing the data covered air and sea ports.

Annex B

Summary of significant individuals tried for terrorist offences in England and Wales that involved examination at a UK port (from CPS open source material¹⁴)

Christian Emde and Robert Baum¹⁵

Christian Emde, 28, and Robert Baum, 23, both Muslim converts from Solingen in Germany, were examined and subsequently arrested in July 2011 entering the UK at Dover port.

A search of their rucksacks revealed a large quantity of extremist literature stored on a hard drive and a laptop computer. They were charged with having material which could be of use in terrorism on a computer and a hard-drive. The men were said to have a 'passion for guns' and their backpacks contained numerous gun manuals written in English, Arabic and German.

The men pleaded guilty to a total of five offences under the Terrorism Act. Emde was jailed for 16 months, whilst Baum was jailed for 12 months and both will be automatically deported from the UK at the end of their sentence.

Yassim Nassari

The defendant was stopped at Luton Airport in May 2006 having returned from trips to Syria and Holland. He was found in possession of a laptop on which was stored a book entitled "Verdict regarding the permissibility of martyrdom operations". Also stored on the laptop were other instructional documents including a treatise on mines, shells and explosive missiles as demolition devices and a blueprint of how to construct the Qassam artillery rocket, a home-made steel rocket used by terrorist groups in the Middle East. Police also found several graphic videos of terrorist attacks and beheadings at Nassari's home.

He was convicted under the Terrorism Act and on 17 July 2007 was sentenced to 3½ years imprisonment.

Sohail Anjum Qureshi

The defendant was stopped at Heathrow Airport in October 2006 as he was about to board a plane to Islamabad, Pakistan. He was found to be carrying a number of items that indicated that his purpose in making the trip to Pakistan was to commit acts of terrorism or assist others to do so including outdoor equipment, night vision binoculars, medical clothing, mobile phones and £9000 cash. He was also carrying a large quantity of material likely to be useful to those committing or preparing acts of terrorism and a CD that contained motivational material which the prosecution alleged he was clearly taking with him to keep his mind focused on a terrorist goal.

The defendant was charged with 3 offences under the Terrorism Act. He pleaded guilty to all 3 offences and was sentenced to 4½ years imprisonment and 3 years and 18 months (to be served concurrently).

¹⁴ <http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/prosecutions/ctd/html>

¹⁵ From open source media reporting

Aabid Khan, Sultan Muhammed, Hammaad Munshi and Ahmed Hassan Sulieman

Aabid Khan arrived at Manchester Airport from Pakistan on 6 June 2006. He was stopped by police and his luggage searched. Police found 2 computer hard drives, 16 CDs and a quantity of documents. The contents of this material showed Khan to be a significant figure in promoting the cause of violent jihad, not just in the UK but via the internet in the English speaking world, and inciting others to participate. He was a recruiter of others and evidence showed he also facilitated trips to Pakistan. The material in his possession included handwritten documents that showed his intention to take part in acts of murder and terrorism.

He was convicted of 3 offences under the Terrorism Act 2000. He was sentenced in September 2008 to a total of 12 years imprisonment.

Sultan Muhammad was a friend of Khan's and they lived close to each other in Bradford. He went on the run the day that Khan was arrested. A search of his bedroom revealed videos released by Al Qaeda groups to promote their cause; a number of compilation CDs which glorified killing and dying as a martyr; and detailed practical information about making and using various types of weapons and explosives and in addition, a video with a step-by-step guide of how to make a suicide bombers vest. He was arrested in June 2008 and convicted of a number of offences under the Terrorism Act and sentenced to total of 10 years imprisonment.

Two more of Khan's associates Hammaad Munshi and Ahmed Hassan Sulieman were arrested for terrorist offences, Munshi received a sentence of 2 years in a young offenders institute while Sulieman was acquitted.

Houria Chentouf

The defendant, a Dutch National moved to the UK in 2008. On 16 October 2008 she had flown from The Netherlands to John Lennon Airport, Liverpool. When she was stopped and her property searched shortly after her arrival at the airport a concealed USB pen drive dropped out of the right sleeve of her burqa. Following the port examination she was allowed to leave the airport but the pen drive was retained for further enquiries.

Some of the material on the pen drive included detailed information about the construction of improvised explosive devices (bombs) , a large number of documents containing guides to building electronic detonators, the uses of heat and cluster bombs, how and when to use smart bombs, the use of cruise missiles, information on fighter jets, information on martyrdom operations, pages from a terrorist tradecraft manual, documents on securing and encrypting communications via the internet and telephone, documents on setting up training camps, and a photo of a group of males one of whom was a known terrorist.

The defendant eventually pleaded guilty of two offences under the Terrorism Act 2000 and was sentenced on 2 November 2009 to 2 years imprisonment for each offence, to run concurrently.

Ishaq Kanmi, Abbas Iqbal, Ilyas Iqbal

All lived in the Blackburn area of Lancashire. The principal member of the group, Kanmi, used an internet based pro-jihadi discussion forum in January 2008 to make claim that he had established and assumed leadership of Al-Qaeda Great Britain (AQ-GB). Through the use of the forum and using a pseudonym Kanmi outlined the strategic direction and objective of AQ-GB, which included large scale attacks against Western interests, attacks on political figures and the execution of all those who oppose the Mujahideen. Kanmi claimed that if these demands were not met by the end of March 2008 then martyrdom seekers would target political leaders, naming Tony Blair and Gordon Brown as well as others.

Kanmi was arrested on 14 August 2008 at Manchester International Airport where he was due to fly out to Finland. He was found with a mobile phone, a memory card and two pen drives containing documents relating to jihad. The other pen drive contained a training video demonstrating a technique to attack airline staff from the rear of the plane using a plastic knife.

Kanmi pleaded guilty to 7 offences under the Terrorism Act 2000, and received a total sentence of five years imprisonment in June 2010.

Two further members of the group were subsequently identified by the police, Abbas and Ilyas Iqbal. Abbas Iqbal was arrested with Kanmi at Manchester Airport. He was found to be in possession of a number of spent 8mm blank shell casings in the pocket of his jacket, a mobile phone that contained jihadist imagery, a multimedia storage device containing homemade video recordings of both himself and Ilyas indicating their involvement in terrorist training. Ilyas Iqbal was arrested later the same day at work where his desk was found to contain a number of books including references to jihad.

Police searched the brothers' address and found a computer containing extremist material and material designed to incite involvement in acts of terrorism. The search also revealed a home video recording of the brothers holding machetes and simulating a beheading, an arsenal of weaponry and military equipment and array of jihadist material and live ammunition.

Abbas Iqbal and Ilyas Iqbal were both convicted of offences under the Terrorism Act and respectively received three years' and 18 months' imprisonment.



Home Office

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