HM Government

CONTEST
The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism:

Annual Report for 2014

Cm 9048

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The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism:

Annual Report for 2014

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2015

Cm 9048

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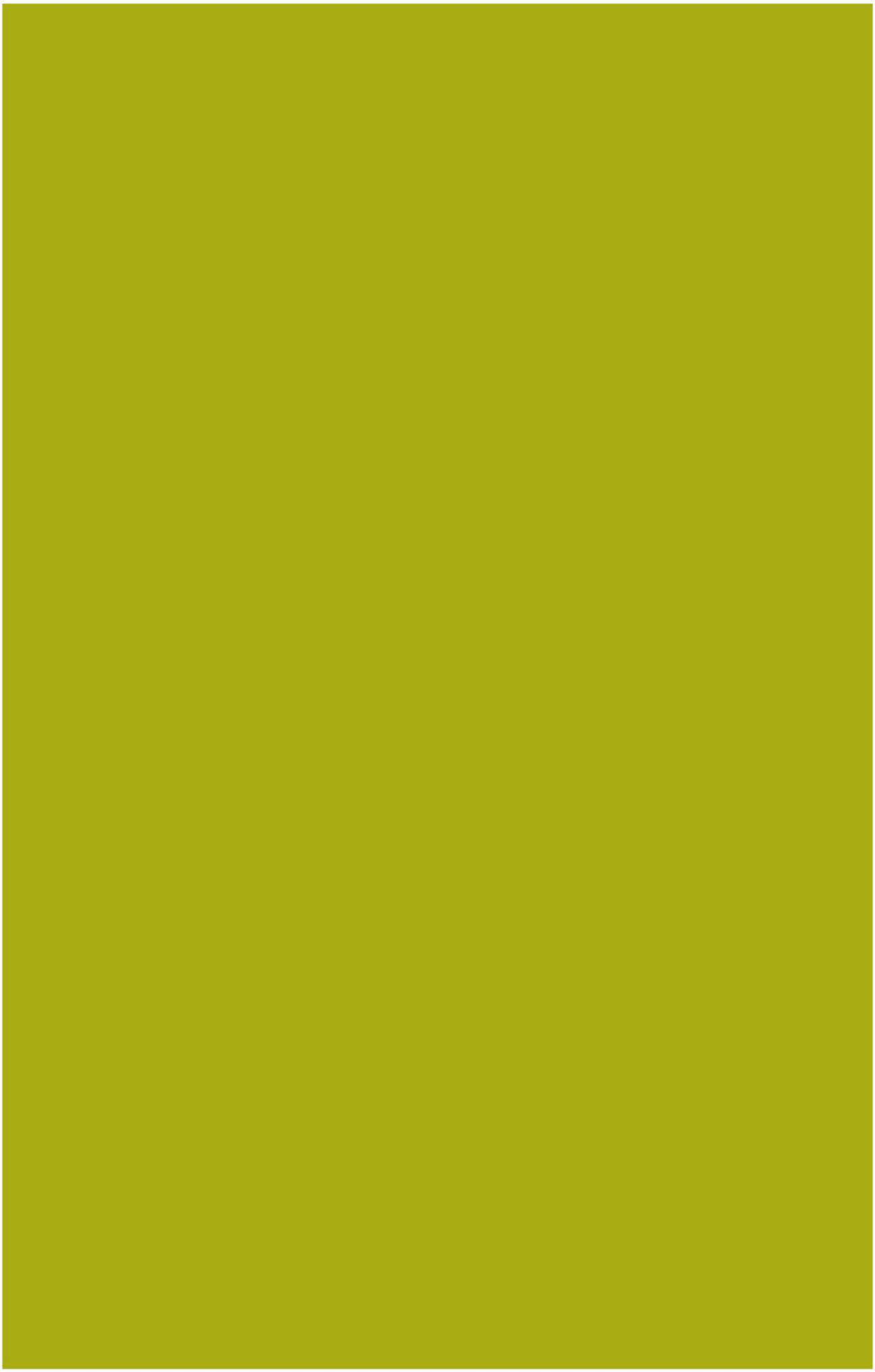


Foreword by the Home Secretary

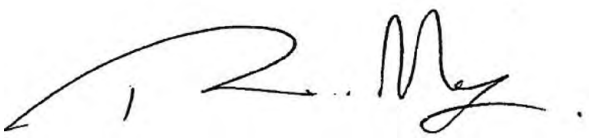
There were no successful terrorist attacks in Great Britain last year, but 2014 was nevertheless an exceptionally challenging period for counter-terrorism in this country.

In August the threat level, which is set by the independent Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, was raised, mainly as a result of developments in Syria and Iraq, where the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has emerged as the most brutal and violent of the terrorist groups operating in that region. The barbaric murder of two British and other hostages in Syria, apparently by an ISIL member closely connected to this country, underlined the threat posed by that group to British nationals overseas and in the UK.

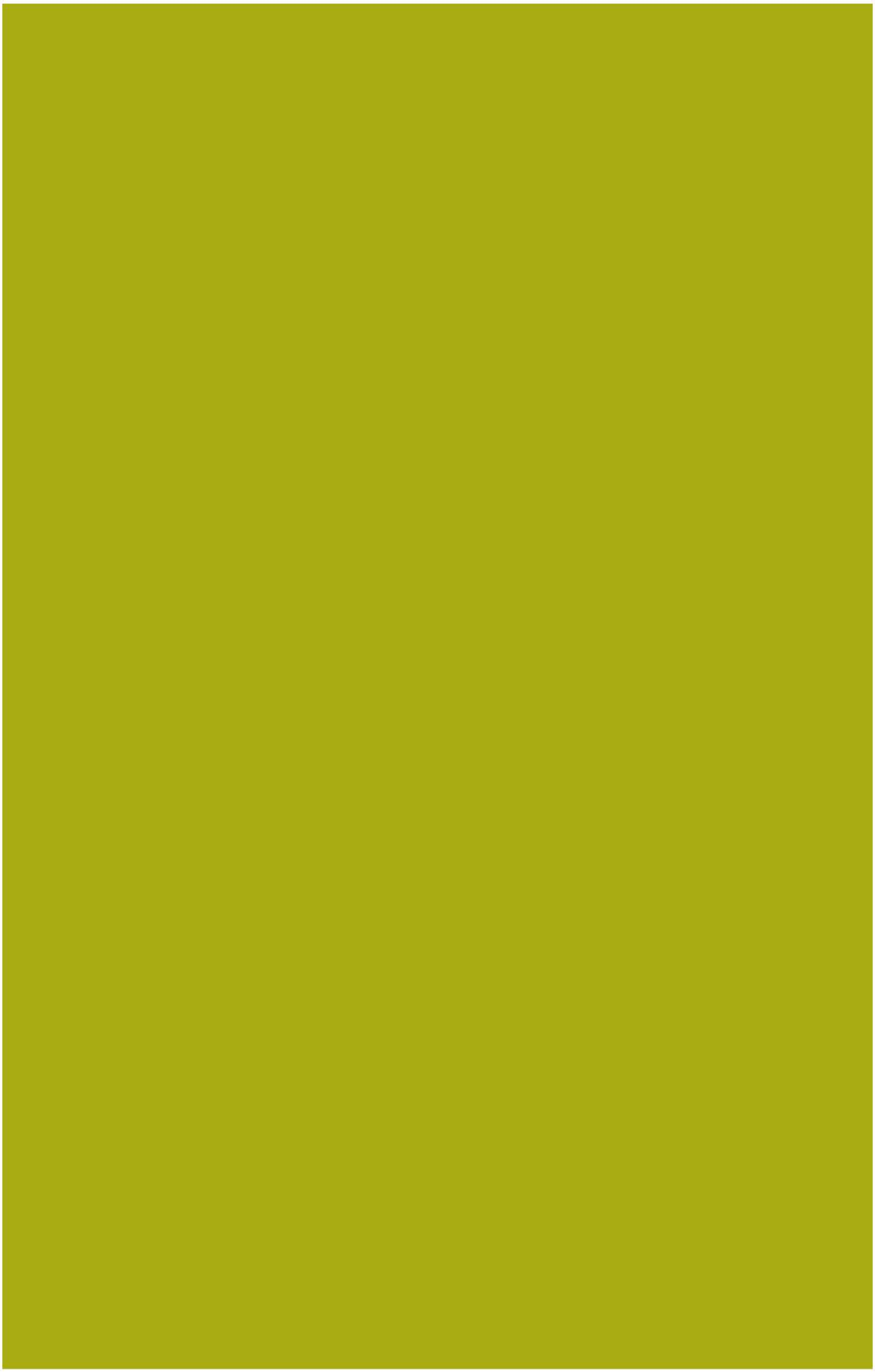
A terrorist attack in this country is now highly likely. The series of attacks and disrupted plots we saw across Europe in 2014 and this year show how the threat we face is changing. Some involved people who had travelled to Syria and Iraq. Others appear to have involved people encouraged by terrorist propaganda to conduct attacks in their own countries, often using relatively unsophisticated methods.

The police and security and intelligence agencies continue to do extraordinary work to disrupt terrorist threats to the UK and our interests, but we must ensure they continue to have the powers and capabilities they need. That is why this Government has brought forward legislation to address a number of the specific challenges we are currently facing. We have also provided additional funding for the security and intelligence agencies and police to increase their investigative resource; and for the expansion of the cross-Government Prevent programme to tackle the ideology that feeds, supports and sanctions terrorism.

The recent terrible events in Paris and Copenhagen served as a tragic reminder that 2015 will be no less challenging. While our strategic response to the changing threat will continue to evolve, I am confident that the strategy provides the right foundation for our counter-terrorism work.



Theresa May MP
Home Secretary



PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2011, the Government published a new version of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, and committed to providing an annual update on our counter terrorist work. This report covers the period from January to December 2014. The report does not cover Northern Ireland Related Terrorism (NIRT), responsibility for which lies with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The Home Office leads on responding to the threat from NIRT to Great Britain.

The threat from terrorism

1.2 The frequency of terrorism around the world and the number of fatalities from terrorist attacks continue to increase. In 2013 (the latest year for which published statistics are available) there were nearly 12,000 terrorist attacks in 91 countries – 40% more than in 2012.[1] Just over half of all attacks occurred in three countries: Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

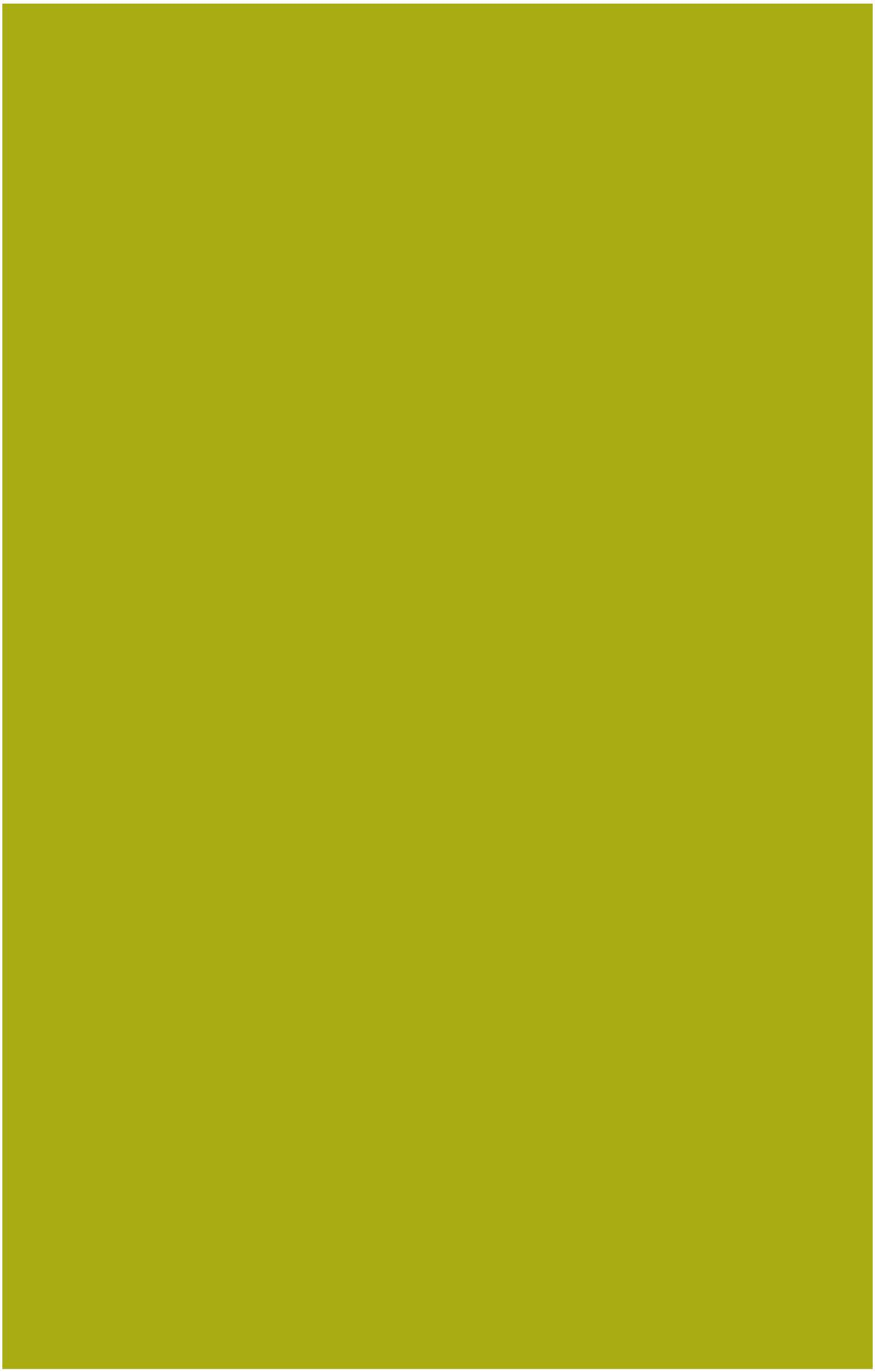
1.3 In August 2014, the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre raised the UK threat level to 'SEVERE' from 'SUBSTANTIAL', meaning an attack in the UK is highly likely. The principal threat continues to come from militant Islamist terrorists, notably in Syria and Iraq. ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syria are now supported by foreign fighters from the UK and other European countries. About 600 people with extremist connections are among the many Britons who have travelled to the region from the UK. Many have now returned here. Some are likely to have received combat experience and other terrorist related training. Terrorism is being fuelled by an unprecedented quantity of extremist and terrorist propaganda.

1.4 Al Qa'ida core, its affiliates and regional extremist groups also continue to pose a threat to the UK and our interests overseas. Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen, Al Shabaab in East Africa, Al Qa'ida in the Maghreb (AQM) as well as other terrorist groups across North and West Africa, have all committed to trying to attack Western interests. Some of these groups have pledged allegiance to ISIL.

1.5 Terrorist tactics continue to change. Though many groups still aspire to conduct large-scale attacks, others now advocate attacks which are simple, and can be conducted by people acting on their own. Kidnap for ransom continues to be exploited by a range of extremist groups, either as a propaganda tool or because such activity is a key source of revenue.

1.6 The principal terrorist threat to Great Britain continues to be from Islamist terrorism. However, in February 2014 there were several attempted postal attacks by Dissident Republicans on army recruitment centres in England, a reminder that the threat from NIRT to Great Britain continues. There is also a threat from far right terrorism across the UK, though it remains low in comparison with the principal threats we face.

[1] Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) – http://www.start.umd.edu/news/majority-2013-terrorist-attacks-occurred-just-few-countries



PART 2: OUR RESPONSE

2.1 The CONTEST strategy is intended to deal with all forms of terrorism and continues to be based around four main areas of work which together enable us to reduce the threats we face and our vulnerabilities:

- ***Pursue:*** the investigation and disruption of terrorist attacks;
- ***Prevent:*** work to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and extremism;
- ***Protect:*** improving our protective security to stop a terrorist attack; and
- ***Prepare:*** working to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover from it as quickly as possible.

2.2 While the 2011 strategy remains a sound framework for our counter-terrorism work, our strategic objectives and priority activities have continued to evolve to respond to changing threats.

PURSUE

2.3 The purpose of Pursue is to stop terrorist attacks in this country by detecting and investigating terrorist threats. There were no successful terrorist attacks in Great Britain in 2014. However, at least three major terrorist plots[2] in this country were disrupted over the course of 2014. In the twelve months to June 2014, there were 239 terrorism-related arrests in Great Britain; 82 people were charged with terrorism related offences and 29 with other offences. 32 of the people charged with terrorism-related offences have already been prosecuted; 29 of these have been convicted. Overall numbers of terrorism arrests have increased by around a third since 2010, with a significant increase in arrests relating specifically to Syria and Iraq to 165 in 2014. There were 13 terrorist convictions related to Syria and Iraq in 2014.

2.4 At the start of 2014, our Pursue objectives were to:

- ensure that counter-terrorism powers remain effective and proportionate;
- improve our ability to prosecute and use immigration and nationality powers against people for terrorist related activity;
- increase capabilities to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist threats;
- ensure that confidence in the work of partner agencies is maintained through effective oversight; and
- work with other countries and multilateral organisations to enable us to better tackle the threats we face at source.

[2] DG Security Service speech to RUSI, January 2015 – https://www.mi5.gov.uk/home/about-us/who-we-are/staff-and-management/director-general/speeches-by-the-director-general/director-generals-speech-on-terrorism-technology-and-accountability.html

Effective and proportionate counter-terrorism powers

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act

2.5 Measures in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act strengthen our Pursue powers and capabilities to tackle specific threats relating to Syria and Iraq, including providing additional means to disrupt the travel of foreign fighters to and from the region, as well as improving our ability to manage them on their return. The Act also includes significant measures to strengthen aspects of our Prevent and Protect work. More detail on the Act is provided on page 13.

Prosecution for terrorist offences committed overseas

2.6 We have also introduced measures in the Serious Crime (SC) Act to enable us to prosecute two more terrorist offences when committed overseas and strengthen the admissible evidence for the prosecution case in Syria and Iraq-related cases.

Immigration and nationality powers

2.7 Immigration powers provide an important tool in disrupting terrorist activity, where we cannot prosecute and convict people suspected of terrorism in court. In 2014 we continued to use immigration powers to deprive dual nationals of British citizenship on 'not conducive to the public good' grounds. We excluded 15 foreign nationals from this country on national security grounds and 15 on grounds of 'unacceptable behaviour' including 'hate speech'. We have also used proscription powers: the Home Secretary proscribed 11 terrorist organisations in 2014, six of which are involved in the Syria crisis, including ISIL and its affiliates. At the time of publication, there are a total of 11 proscribed groups linked to Syria.

Capabilities to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist threats

Additional funding to tackle the terrorist threat relating to Syria and Iraq

2.8 The Government has responded to the increase in the threat, particularly in relation to Syria and Iraq, by providing an uplift in counter-terrorism funding, primarily for 2015/16. In November, the Prime Minister announced £130m of additional counter-terrorism funding, the majority for further investigative resources for the security and intelligence agencies and police.

Interception and communications data

2.9 Communications data (the who, where, when and how of a communication but not its content) is a vital tool in the investigation of crime and safeguarding the public. Interception of the content of communications is also critical to the preservation of national security and for the prevention and disruption of serious crime. Rapid changes in technology, and increasing use of internet communications by society in general as well as greater awareness of the opportunities it presents for the criminal community, mean data is not always available to the police and security and intelligence agencies when it is needed to investigate specific terrorist related activity. Without action, crimes enabled by email and the internet will increasingly go undetected and unpunished. As a result, activity to preserve the ability of the security, intelligence and law enforcement agencies to obtain communications data and to intercept communications within the appropriate legal framework has continued to be a high priority.

2.10 The Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act (DRIPA), which received Royal Assent in July 2014, was emergency legislation introduced into Parliament in response to a European Court decision

in April 2014 which made the EU Data Retention Directive (DRD) invalid. The UK's previous data retention regime was based on the DRD. DRIPA provides a legal basis on which domestic communications companies can continue to retain certain types of communications data. The Act also made clear that any company providing telecommunications services to customers in the UK must comply with their obligations to undertake interception or provide communications data in response to lawful requests, irrespective of where those companies are based. It clarified the definition of a communication service provider to put beyond doubt that it includes those providing internet and cloud-based services. DRIPA did not extend powers; instead it provided existing powers with a clear legal basis. Provisions in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (see page 13) also provide important new communications data capabilities. But neither DRIPA nor the later Act addressed the wider capabilities of the police and security and intelligence agencies to access communications data. This was the area the Draft Communications Data Bill sought to address, but there was no coalition agreement and therefore no majority to take this Bill through Parliament.

2.11 The Prime Minister has made clear that the issue of communications data will need to be revisited after the election. The Government's deliberations will be informed by the findings of a review of the operation and regulation of investigatory powers which the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, David Anderson QC, is now undertaking. The review was established by DRIPA and requires the Independent Reviewer to consider such matters as: current and future threats to the UK; the capabilities needed to combat those threats; the effectiveness of existing legislation and the case for new or amending legislation; and to complete a report by 1 May 2015.

Terrorist Finance

2.12 The Government seeks to make the UK a hostile environment for terrorist financing by acting against fundraising and the movement of terrorist finance in and out of the UK and encouraging other countries to do the same. A key tool in our counter terrorist finance response is our ability to deprive funds to suspected terrorists, by freezing their assets and their ability to access finance, through the United Nations Al Qa'ida Sanctions Regime, the EU asset freezing regime and our own domestic legislation (Terrorist Asset Freezing Act 2010). These frameworks prohibit making funds or economic resources available to individuals and entities designated under these regimes. In 2014, nine new domestic asset freezes were imposed on individuals and, as of 31 December 2014, 80 accounts of those designated under the various regimes were frozen.

Royal Prerogative powers

2.13 Where prosecution is not possible, we have continued to exercise a range of powers to disrupt terrorist activity. Under Royal Prerogative powers we are able to cancel or refuse British passports to individuals who seek to travel to engage in terrorism-related activity. Over the course of 2014 these powers were used 24 times.

Effective oversight

2.14 We remain committed to ensuring that powers and capabilities available to the police and security and intelligence agencies are necessary and proportionate and subject to effective oversight.

2.15 In November the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) of Parliament

published a report on the intelligence relating to the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in 2013. This was the first ISC report published since its remit was expanded through the Justice and Security Act 2013. The report illustrated the rigorous public scrutiny that is now applied to the activities of the intelligence agencies in this country. The Government's response was published in February 2015.[3] (An ISC report on privacy and security was published in March 2015, outside this reporting period.)

2.16 David Anderson QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, published his fourth annual report on the Terrorism Acts in July 2014.[4] He has been clear that we need to continue to consider the UK's counter-terrorism laws in the context of the rapidly changing threat. The Government's full response was published on 12 March 2015.[5]

2.17 As an addition to the statutory oversight arrangements, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act includes a power to enable the creation of a Privacy and Civil Liberties Board to support the Independent Reviewer and extend existing oversight measures.

2.18 Authorisations to intercept the content of an individual's communications are subject to independent scrutiny by the Intelligence Services Commissioner, Sir Mark Waller QC, and the Interception of Communications Commissioner, Sir Anthony May QC, while the Chief Surveillance Commissioner, Sir Christopher Rose, oversees the use of covert surveillance. Each published annual reports[6] in 2014.

2.19 Our work with other countries and multilateral organisations to tackle terrorist threats is addressed on page 18.

3 Government response to the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament Report on the Intelligence Relating to the Murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby, published 26 February 2015 – https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-isc-report-on-intelligence-on-the-murder-of-fusilier-lee-rigby

4 The Terrorism Act in 2013, Report of the Independent Reviewer on the Operation of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Part 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006 by David Anderson QC, published July 22 2014 – https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/the-terrorism-acts-in-2013-july-2014/

5 Government response to the annual report on the operation of the Terrorism Acts in 2013, published 12 March 2015 – https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-annual-report-on-the-operation-of-the-terrorism-acts-in-2013

6 Report of the Intelligence Services Commissioner for 2013, The Rt Hon Sir Mark Waller, published 26 June 2014 – http://intelligencecommissioner.com/docs/40707_HC304IntelligenceServicesCommissioner_Accessible.pdf
2013 Annual Report of the Interception of Communications Commissioner, the Rt Hon Sir Anthony May, published 8 April 2014 – http://iocco-uk.info/docs/2013%20Annual%20Report%20of%20the%20IOCC%20Accessible%20Version.pdf
Annual Report of the Chief Surveillance Commissioner, the Rt Hon Sir Christopher Rose, published 4 September 2014 – https://osc.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Annual-Report-of-the-Chief-Surveillance-Commissioner-for-2013-2014-laid-4-September-2014.pdf

COUNTER-TERRORISM AND SECURITY ACT 2015

Following the increase in the terrorist threat level in August 2014, the Prime Minister announced new legislation to ensure that the police, and security and intelligence agencies, have the appropriate legal powers and capabilities they need to tackle Syria and Iraq related terrorist threats, including the ability to stop people travelling to fight in the region.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 adds to existing powers by: disrupting the ability of people to travel abroad to fight, and to return here; enhancing our ability to monitor and control the actions of those in the UK that pose a threat; and combating the underlying ideology that feeds, supports and sanctions terrorism.

The Act contains the following measures:

- **Temporary Passport Seizure**: providing the police with a new power at the border to seize temporarily (initially for 14 days, extendable with court permission to a maximum of 30) the passports and other travel documents of outbound individuals suspected of intending to travel to engage in terrorist-related activity;
- **Temporary Exclusion Order**: temporarily disrupting the return of a British citizen suspected of involvement in terrorist activity abroad, ensuring that their return is managed by the police;
- **Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMS)**: the legal threshold for imposing a TPIM notice has been raised to the 'balance of probabilities'. The regime now includes powers to: relocate a subject, restrict a subject's travel outside the area where they reside, require a subject not to meet with organisations or other persons specified and prohibits them from acquiring/holding a firearms license, offensive weapons or explosives. The maximum sentence for breaching a TPIM travel measure has been increased from five to ten years;
- **Internet Protocol Resolution**: amending DRIPA to improve law enforcement agencies' ability to identify which device or individual is responsible for sending a communication on the internet;
- **Border Security:** enhancing aviation, shipping and international rail security, with provisions relating to passenger data, authority to carry (i.e. 'no fly' schemes) and security and screening measures;
- **Prevent**: creating a duty on a range of Government organisations working with the public, including the police, local authorities, prisons, schools and universities, to prevent people being drawn into terrorism;
- **Channel**: putting Channel – our existing voluntary programme for people at risk of radicalisation – on a statutory basis, to ensure it is delivered consistently nationwide;

- **Amendments to Terrorism Act 2000**: amendments regarding measures preventing reimbursement of ransom payments made to terrorist organisations; and the scope of the power for examination of goods at or near ports; and
- **Privacy and Civil Liberties Board**: to enable the creation of a board to support the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation on privacy and civil liberties issues.

The legislation was introduced to Parliament on 26 November 2014 and received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, having received cross-party support. The measures are now being implemented by the police, MI5 and others. Urgent secondary legislation required for some new powers will be considered by Parliament in March, prior to the General Election. Guidance to the many organisations affected by the new Prevent duty was published for consultation on 18 December 2013. Revised guidance will be published in March following the approval of Parliament through the affirmative resolution procedure.

PREVENT

2.20 ISIL and some other terrorist groups are increasingly trying to inspire lone acts of terrorism (mainly in non-Islamic countries) and to encourage young people to join terrorist groups overseas. Their tactics make preventative work even more important. We continue to implement the main aspects of the strategy published in 2011 but the changing nature of the threat has required a change in emphasis.

2.21 Our key objectives under Prevent have been to:

- respond to the ideology of extremism and terrorism and the threats we face from those who promote it;
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- work with specific sectors where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

2.22 In 2015 we made a significant step by placing Prevent on a statutory footing; this will increase the consistency of its delivery across England, Wales and Scotland.

Challenging extremist and terrorist ideology

Restricting access to and the availability of terrorist material

2.23 ISIL is using social media in an unprecedented quantity and frequency, including personalised messages from UK and other foreign fighters and propaganda from the organisation. Removing terrorist material remains a high priority. A dedicated police unit – the Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) – continues to refer content which breaches UK terrorism legislation to the communication industry. If companies agree that it breaches their own terms and conditions, they remove it.

2.24 On the key issue of removing material of this kind, our cooperation with social media platforms is working well. The volume of unlawful content removed by internet companies has increased significantly to 46,000 pieces in 2014. Content relating to Syria and Iraq now represents around 70% of the CTIRU caseload. In March 2014 we launched a new way for the public to report terrorist material; public referrals have tripled since then. We are encouraging other states to adopt this approach, possibly using a new facility at Europol.

Disrupting propagandists

2.25 Radicalisation does not only happen online. Effective prevention depends upon and needs to be coordinated with the disruption, and where possible the arrest and prosecution of people engaged in radicalisation and distributing terrorist propaganda. We have also continued to use the powers available to the Home Secretary to exclude propagandists from this country and to proscribe organisations which provide a platform for extremist and terrorist ideology. We continue to work closely with local authorities and, in particular, with further and higher education to ensure that extremist speakers are not allowed to operate unchallenged in these sectors.

2.26 We have also been working with the internet industry in the UK to see whether their filtering products provide an effective tool for their customers to protect themselves and their children from content which is not illegal but is extremist and which can have a harmful impact on vulnerable people.

Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism

2.27 Our focus in this area is now on preventing people from travelling to Syria and Iraq in connection with extremist and terrorist activity; and (where there are no grounds for prosecution) managing the risk from those who have returned.

2.28 Community organisations, local authorities and the police are training frontline staff who may come into contact with people considering travel. We are providing parents and young people with advice and mentoring for vulnerable people. We have directed our projects to respond to the threat in Syria and Iraq. For example, we have trained frontline staff in over 120 schools in priority areas to address the risk of travel. Many community-based organisations in this country and overseas have taken a lead in developing their own response to terrorist propaganda. Where they do not have the means to do so we have provided support. In July the Home Secretary backed 'Families Matter', a national campaign led by a community organisation aimed at deterring young people from travelling to Syria and Iraq and encouraging family members of those who might be about to travel to seek help.

2.29 Literature setting out the dangers of travel has been widely distributed to mosques, travel agents, port and money transfer bureaux across the country. The Charity Commission has disseminated 200,000 leaflets and 30,000 posters in five languages on how to 'support Syria safely' by giving to registered charities, and has also issued advice to approximately 40,000 charities and other interested parties about the risks of conducting convoys to Syria.

2.30 Where specific concerns have been raised and individuals consent, the multi-agency Channel programme can provide tailored support, to people identified as at risk of radicalisation. There have been over 2000 referrals to the Channel programme since April 2012; hundreds have now been offered and have received support.

2.31 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, placed Channel (in England and Wales) and the Prevent Professional Concerns programme (in Scotland) on a statutory footing. Channel programmes already exist in every local authority area and in most areas the local authority and other partners already work effectively together to support people at risk of radicalisation and getting drawn into terrorism. Placing the programmes on a statutory footing intends to secure effective local co-operation and delivery in all areas so that people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism are supported in the best possible way.

2.32 Of the more than 600 people with extremist connections who have travelled to Syria and Iraq around half have now returned. The agencies and the police are responsible for assessing the threat that they may pose and for investigating people who have or may have broken the law. Where prosecution is not appropriate, as a matter of course we consider preventative options including referrals to Channel or other forms of support mechanisms. For people who have returned from Syria and Iraq our Prevent work is closely coordinated with the operational activity of the police and agencies.

Working with sectors where there are risks of radicalisation

2.33 Prevent activity in local areas relies on the cooperation of many sectors to be effective, including local government, health, education, prisons, youth justice, immigration and charities. We have a network of dedicated Prevent co-ordinators in 30 priority Local Authority areas and are supporting important projects in a further 14 areas. More

than 180 local projects have been delivered, including education, internet safety, and work with families, reaching over 55,000 people since early 2012.

2.34 But local co-operation on Prevent has not always been consistent across the country. In line with the recommendations of the Extremism Task Force (ETF), set up by the Prime Minister after the terrorist murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act provides for a new statutory duty on certain bodies (including local authorities, the police, prisons, probation providers, schools, colleges and universities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The starting point for all authorities specified in the duty will be to produce an assessment of the risk of radicalisation in their area, institution or body and, where a risk has been identified, to develop an action plan to address it. The new duty does not change the 2011 Prevent strategy, but is intended to ensure its consistent and effective implementation. The effect will be to establish a higher and uniform standard for our Prevent work across more sectors in all parts of the country.

2.35 The ETF also concluded that the Charity Commission required new, stronger powers to stop the abuse of charities. A draft Protection of Charities Bill which would strengthen the Commission's powers has been subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. We have also increased funding to improve the Commission's ability to tackle the risks from extremist and terrorist abuse in the charitable sector.

2.36 The effect of events in Syria and Iraq has been to significantly increase the number of arrests for terrorist-related activity in this and other Western European countries. Numbers in prison for terrorist related activity (though sometimes for short sentences) are rising.

2.37 As of February 2015 there were 201 terrorism-related offenders in custody and a further 53 under probation supervision. But there are also around 600 prisoners who have given cause for concern because they have exhibited extremist behaviours which could indicate that they are vulnerable to extremist messaging or that they present a risk of influencing or radicalising others. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has continued to tackle extremist behaviour both through targeted disruptive activity and interventions; and through standard and dedicated offending behaviour programmes. Last year around 750 offenders also completed 'Tarbiyah', a course designed to provide prisoners with a better understanding of Islam.

Dealing with extremism

2.38 The 2011 Prevent Strategy made clear that preventing terrorism requires challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas that are also part of terrorist ideology. And Prevent also means intervening to try to stop people moving from extremist groups and behaviour into terrorist related activity. But extremism can cause many other harms apart from terrorism and this was clearly illustrated during the year in the so called Trojan Horse episode where individuals who espoused, sympathised with or failed to challenge extremist views gained influence over a small group of schools in Birmingham.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

International collaboration across every area of our counter terrorist work is vital to our success. The scope and content of collaboration has also changed with the developing threat in Syria and Iraq and in particular the movement of thousands of foreign fighters from Europe.

The core of this collaboration is the exchange of operational information by and between agencies and policing. We are continuing to build security and justice capacity overseas in countries where UK interests are most at risk from terrorism, including through Justice and Human Rights Partnerships. Our training has helped other states to disrupt terrorist planning linked to the UK, as well as improving the evidential and human rights standards of counter-terrorism investigations overseas.

The UK has had a Prevent programme for longer than many of our overseas partners and has taken the lead in promoting the Prevent concept and identifying key Prevent projects. Many other countries now have Prevent programmes; we are sharing ideas and expertise and learning from one another. Some aspects of our Prevent work (notably activity with social media companies) may be best dealt with in partnership with our allies. The UK is co-Chair of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) 'Countering Violent Extremism' group and provides technical assistance to the GCTF Prevent related 'Hedayah Centre' in the United Arab Emirates. In September the Prime Minister set out a range of UK proposals and initiatives for additional action against extremism within the UN, including a founding donation to the Global Communities Engagement and Resilience Fund.

Following recent terrorist attacks in Europe we are at the forefront of European work to collect and share more information about people travelling to Syria and Iraq (notably though Passenger Name Records) and to do much more to control the movement of firearms across Europe. We are working with countries in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa to develop their counter-terrorism expertise, infrastructure and legislation. This includes enhancing emergency response capabilities and aviation screening. Some of this work is conducted in close collaboration with our own expert security industry (page 21 refers).

We continue to use the UN and EU sanctions regimes to help disrupt terrorist organisations and individuals, as well as to send out strong political signals internationally. For example, working with the Nigerians in the wake of the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping, we successfully delivered, under the UN Al Qa'ida Sanctions regime, the politically significant listings of Boko Haram and Ansaru.

We have also secured a United Nations Security Council Resolution on action against ISIL and supported the resolution on foreign fighters. These resolutions have proved crucial in setting a firm basis for subsequent coalition action, and our focus is now on pressing for the implementation of practical measures, under these agreements, to help disrupt flows of finance, people and materiel to ISIL.

PROTECT

2.39 Throughout 2014 we have seen a persistent terrorist threat to aviation. Border security and border systems play a crucial role in deterring and disrupting terrorist activity, including the threat posed by returning foreign fighters. In addition, the attacks which we have witnessed in recent months – most notably in Paris – have highlighted the challenges we now face in protecting busy urban areas (known as 'crowded places'), certain communities and individuals and have again required a change in our approach.

2.40 In 2014, our Protect objectives were to:

- strengthen our border security;
- reduce the vulnerability of our transport network;
- increase the resilience of our critical infrastructure; and
- improve protective security for crowded places and people at specific risk from terrorism.

Strengthening our border security

2.41 Our highest Protect priority was and remains border and aviation security. Our investment in data analytics has improved our understanding of complex travel patterns and our ability to identify and address threats to the UK. We have developed better targeting technologies that have improved our ability to scrutinise cargo for explosives, firearms, money and drugs. We will continue to invest in our border detection systems.

2.42 Through this year the National Crime Agency (established in October 2013), has developed a more sophisticated border operation, in conjunction with Border Force and the counter terrorist community. Our technology and information addresses multiple threats, not just terrorism.

2.43 The analysis of information about people and goods is central to border security. We now process advance passenger information (i.e. the bio-data included on a passenger's travel document) for around 180 million individual journeys annually, both to and from the UK.

2.44 We are able to collect some Passenger Name Records (PNR is information necessary to enable reservations to be processed and may include how travel was reserved and paid for, contact details, seat numbers and travel itinerary) particularly for flights between the UK and outside Europe. PNR is very important to the police and security and intelligence agencies, particular in the context of foreign fighters. Collecting PNR inside Europe is not yet on a clear legislative footing. An effective EU Directive on PNR is therefore urgently needed and the UK has repeatedly lobbied in its support at the European Parliament, the Commission and the European Council. The absence of such a Directive continues to significantly weaken the European counter terrorist effort. Home Office, Police and Department for Transport continue to work closely with airlines to identify potentially high risk travellers, in particular young and vulnerable people intending to go to Syria.

Reducing the vulnerability of the transport network

Aviation Security

2.45 Terrorist groups (particularly those in Yemen and Syria) remain determined to attack civil aviation. We continue to improve UK aviation screening capability by further rolling out security scanners and exploring new detection technology. But aviation security is not just about screening in the UK;

we also rely on security at airports overseas. Since July 2014 we have been working with a number of other countries and airlines to apply additional security screening of passengers flying to the UK.

2.46 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act extends the legal basis for authority to carry ('no fly') schemes, improves the electronic connectivity between carriers and our border systems (so that we can provide instructions to a carrier to remove a passenger prior to departure) and establishes a civil penalty for carriers that fail to comply with requirements to provide data.

2.47 Our Pre-Departure Checks Scheme uses the analysis of passenger data to identify individuals who pose a terrorist or terrorism-related threat from flying to or from the UK. We have again prevented a small number of individuals who pose a threat to the aircraft itself from travelling here. We have improved the effectiveness of the pre-departure check scheme by operating a testing and review regime.

Maritime Security

2.48 The UK National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS) published in May 2014 set out the important work underway across Government to mitigate security risks to UK maritime interests both at home and overseas.

Rail Security

2.49 We are completing the final stages of the installation of hostile vehicle mitigation measures at some of the most crowded railway stations across Great Britain. We are also working closely with the rail industry to ensure that they integrate appropriate security features and products into their designs as part of their programme to upgrade and develop new stations, such as Birmingham New Street and Crossrail. This is part of DfT's multi-billion pound investment programme in the rail network, to help reduce the vulnerability of the network and potential impact of an attack.

Resilient infrastructure

2.50 We have strengthened controls on access to readily available hazardous materials, ensuring it is more difficult for terrorists to use them to conduct attacks. The introduction of a new licensing regime in September 2014 allows us to check people wanting to purchase substances that can be made into explosives. We have also worked with major internet retailers to encourage more responsible online sales of hazardous substances and we have received very significant and constructive support.

2.51 We have updated our definition of Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and have added new sectors, which means that we are continuing to address our key areas of risk and vulnerability. We have a more comprehensive approach to protecting CNI, looking at all risks, from flooding to cyber attack to terrorism. Our most critical sites have been assessed by Government and physical security measures put in place. We are also improving emergency response arrangements at key sites in the energy sector.

Crowded places and people at specific risk from terrorism

2.52 We continually review and adapt our approach to the protection of 'crowded places', transport systems and public figures in the light of changing terrorist threats and tactics. Following the increase in the threat level and recent events in Paris, we have increased protective security, including armed vehicle patrols and more visible policing. The police have increased protection and reassurance to Jewish and Muslim communities.

ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORT FOR OUR SECURITY INDUSTRY

Following recommendations in our White Paper 'National Security Through Technology', in 2012, we have strengthened our relationship with our security industry. Domestically we have taken steps to put the UK at the forefront of the global security export market, including by:

- appointing a senior responsible officer role of Director of Security Industry Engagement for the security industry, located in the Home Office and working closely with UKTI;
- launching a Security Exports Strategy in February 2014;
- establishing a Security and Resilience Growth Partnership (SRGP) in May 2014 with the aim of establishing a new approach to the innovation, promotion and delivery of UK security capabilities; and
- launching the Security Innovation and Demonstration Centre in December 2014 to provide a facility for Government to work with industry on the development of innovative responses to security challenges and showcase products to potential customers.

Further work will include the creation of a UK 'security brand' (i.e. a hallmark of excellence in the UK security industry to provide reassurance to customers) and an online 'exports portal' to provide UK companies with readily accessible information on overseas markets (e.g. political and regulatory environments) to help them do business.

UK counter terrorist work is highly regarded overseas. We are frequently approached for advice and assistance. Where possible we want to help, either through a Government assistance programme or in partnership with our security industry. We have:

- signed security memorandums of understanding or similar agreements with five countries (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Brazil) to broaden and deepen security relationships between our respective countries;
- progressed similar agreements with two further countries (Japan and Mexico); and
- developed opportunities for the UK security industry to support future Olympic and Paralympic Games hosts (Brazil and Japan) in delivering a secure games.

PREPARE

2.53 Recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Ottawa and Sydney were a stark reminder of the level of damage and destruction that can be caused by an individual or small group and the multiple challenges which they can pose for our emergency response. So we continue to review and adapt our response capabilities to address new types of threat. We have long had detailed plans for our response to a range of incidents, including firearms attacks and are well prepared. But we must be able to deal with relatively unsophisticated attacks by people who may have returned from Syria or Iraq, or may merely have been inspired by events there.

2.54 In 2014, our priority Prepare objectives were to:

- continue to build generic capabilities to respond to and recover from a wide range of terrorist and other civil emergencies;
- improve our preparedness for the highest impact risks in the National Risk Assessment; and
- improve the ability of the emergency services to work together during a terrorist attack.

Building capabilities

2.55 Throughout 2014 we have reviewed UK preparedness to the wider consequences of major civil emergencies to ensure that we have identified and resolved any gaps in our response. We have found that there are high numbers of appropriately trained staff and other specialist assets to respond to a large number of casualties, while the telecommunication systems used by emergency responders in the UK allow effective communications in most response scenarios, and even if failure should occur there are fall-back systems in place that allow transmission of information to continue.

Preparing for the highest impact risks

2.56 In December we agreed a new programme to strengthen our capability for responding to incidents where chemical, biological or radiological materials are used. We have put more emphasis on life-saving activity by those who are first on the scene of an incident, followed by more work by trained and equipped contamination specialists. This new approach relies on fewer specialist emergency responders but more effectively protects the public.

The emergency services

2.57 Since the findings of the Coroner's Inquest into the 7/7 attacks in London, we have improved the joint response of the emergency services to any major or complex incident, including terrorist attack, ensuring they work together effectively to save as many lives as possible. Our Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) concluded in September 2014. JESIP trained over 11,000 priority police, fire and ambulance service personnel, notably to improve crucial areas of communication between the services and contribute to more effective joint decision making. The emergency services are already successfully applying JESIP principles in a range of non-terrorist incidents.

2.58 The JESIP principles of effective joint working have now been applied to our well-established capabilities to respond to terrorist attacks using firearms. We have improved our police firearms capability over the last three years and this capability has been tested in live incidents and is exercised regularly, including scenarios that are similar to recent overseas incidents.

CONCLUSION

The Government continues to invest in our counter terrorist work to ensure that it remains fully effective. We are satisfied that is the case.

CONTEST continues to provide a sound framework, but the rapid change in the extent and types of terrorist threat we face has meant that much of our work has had to change too. That process has been set out clearly in this report and will continue.

We have taken action to ensure that law enforcement agencies have the powers and capabilities they need to respond effectively. We have increased the scale and impact of our Prevent work. We have continued to strengthen our border and aviation security, both overseas and in the UK. We have revised the ways our emergency services work following a terrorist attack. We have developed our international collaboration.

A terrorist attack in this country may well be 'highly likely' for some time to come. However, we have a world class counter terrorist effort sustained by highly capable, expert, committed and dedicated people in and outside Government. We are in the best shape to deal with the challenges we now face.

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