



UK Government

The Government Response to the Annual Report on the Operation of the National Security Act 2023 in 2024 by the Independent Reviewer of State Threats Legislation

December 2025



Government of the United Kingdom
Home Office

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

December 2025



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ISBN 978-1-5286-6137-9
E 03512966 12/25

Printed on paper containing 40% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office



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By Email Only

16 December 2025

Dear Jonathan,

Review of the Operation of Parts 1 and 2 of the National Security Act 2023 and Schedule 3 to the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019 in 2024.

Thank you for your first annual report as the Independent Reviewer of State Threats Legislation (IRSTL). Your review of our State Threats legislative framework has been conducted in considerable depth and detail. I am very grateful for the high-quality analysis that you continue to bring to this important role.

The National Security Act 2023 is a game-changing update to our powers. We now have a modern set of laws to tackle today's threats, making the UK an even harder target for those states who seek to conduct hostile acts. As you know, this Act brings together vital new measures to protect the British public, modernise counter espionage laws and address the evolving threat to our national security. It has provided our world class law enforcement and intelligence agencies with new and updated tools to tackle modern threats. These tools are already proving to be more effective than was envisaged during the passage of the legislation, with ten people charged to date. Four people have already been convicted under the offences of assisting a foreign intelligence service, accepting a material benefit from a foreign intelligence service, preparatory conduct and unauthorised access to a prohibited place.

Your report provides a valuable overview of the legislation's early implementation, and I welcome your decision to allow the Act time to embed before offering more substantive recommendations, also noting the wide variety of recommendations you made in your standalone review that the previous Home Secretary commissioned from you earlier in the year. The three recommendations you have made—on the publication of official statistics, the extension of Independent Custody Visitor oversight, and the safeguarding of protest rights near prohibited places—are well-considered and align with our shared commitment to transparency, accountability, and proportionality.

I note your invitation for the Government to clarify the scope of section 3 of the National Security Act 2023 (assisting a foreign intelligence service). Your example of the taxi driver illustrates the importance of prosecutorial discretion, and we will keep this under review moving forward.

Your report arrives at a time when the threat landscape is evolving rapidly. As the Director General of MI5 outlined in his speech last year, and his recent update on this on October 8th, hostile activity carried out by states is becoming more sophisticated and persistent. The National Security Act 2023 equips our agencies with modern tools to meet these challenges, and your independent scrutiny helps ensure that these powers are used effectively and responsibly.

I am particularly grateful for your emphasis on increased public messaging, judicial oversight, and the careful application of offences such as sabotage and foreign interference. These are critical areas where your insights will help shape our future approach.

Your work plays a vital role in reinforcing the integrity of our national security framework. I look forward to continuing our collaboration and to receiving your next report.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dan Jarvis', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dan Jarvis MBE MP
Security Minister
Cabinet Office and Home Office

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978-1-5286-6137-9