

Management of terrorist offenders in the wake of terrorist attacks (July 2023)

Response from: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Terror attacks are not just for our metropolitan areas, local threats impact our communities at a very real level. In addition to our front line officers, in our region the CTPSE (Counter Terror Policing South East) Investigations team consists of specialist detectives and police staff trained to the highest standards to investigate terrorism and domestic extremism related offences, providing advice and expertise across all aspects of CT (Counter Terrorism) and domestic extremism investigation including TACT advice, preparation for pre-planned arrests, spontaneous arrest processes, forensic considerations, custody procedures, interview strategies, surveillance, seizure and viewing of computers, CCTV and other electronic media 7 days a week, working to keep local residents safe.

Self-Initiated Terrorists/Terrorism (S-ITs) continues to pose the most significant terrorist threat to the UK, as we tragically found with the Reading terrorist attack in June 2020. The management of terrorist offenders requires strong multi-agency working between prisons, policing and probation in a more intensive and enhanced way. This inspection review highlights areas of good practice, though there are many areas in need of review and oversight. As Police and Crime Commissioner, I rely on my Chief Constable to deploy resources in such a way that keeps residents safe and offenders under review based on their risk level. While the national threat level currently sits at substantial, I am not naive to the speed at which this can escalate, and the management of terrorist offenders is key as all too often, those taking out attacks have been known to wider agencies.

Early intervention will provide real prevention benefits and sustained public protection. Recent trends have shown that there has been an increase in UK terrorist attacks committed by those leaving prison, this shows the need to work in partnership across agencies. While there were no recommendations for the force or my Chief constable, I will seek assurance that the force is in a strong position in terms of supporting the management of terrorist offenders, and that we have the right resources available to continue the relentless pursuit of criminals in order to keep our communities safe.

Donna Jones
Police and Crime Commissioner

No recommendations were made for Chief Constables or Police and Crime Commissioners.