

CONTEST STRATEGY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The new strategy for countering international terrorism was announced by the Home Secretary on 24 March 2009. The "CONTEST" strategy builds on the successes of the existing policy and provides the basis for a coordinated approach to counter terrorism.
2. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of this strategy and determine a suitable local response.

BACKGROUND

3. For the first time, the Government has set out a full and as open an account as possible. The strategy provides a detailed account of the history of the terrorist threat to the UK and UK interests and the underlying factors which have led to the emergence of the terrorist threat we face today. It indicates how the threat may evolve in the next few years.
4. The strategy then sets out principles which provide the basis for the Government's response. They include a determination to place human rights and core values at the heart of all the Government's counter terrorist work in this country and overseas. The strategy also emphasises the need to address the longer term causes of terrorism as well as its immediate symptoms.

FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEW STRATEGY

5. The new strategy retains the framework of the old - four main areas of work entitled **Pursue, Prevent, Protect** and **Prepare**. But each of these areas has been updated and the document provides much more detail about specific objectives and programmes.
6. The comprehensive programmes of action in the strategy include:
 - **Pursue** strategy which makes use of new resources, which the Government has made available to the agencies, police and the counter terrorism network, to investigate and disrupt terrorist networks here and overseas and to prosecute those responsible.

- **Prevent** strategy rolled out since last year that reaches more people - nationally, internationally and locally - than ever before, with clear objectives (reflecting our better understanding of the causes of radicalisation), supporting programmes, dedicated staff and funding. This aspect of the 4Ps
- **Protect** strategy which will further strengthen our borders, consolidate work on our critical national infrastructure and improve the protection of the crowded places where we work, live and play. We will continue to provide security advice to sports venues and shopping centres and expanded protective programmes for air, sea and rail transport security.
- **Prepare** strategy that will enable us to respond effectively to new types of threat and to recover from any terrorist attack faster than ever before, making use of the resilience network developed in this country in the past few years.

7. The strategy also includes a number of cross-cutting initiatives, new work to counter the threat of terrorist attack using chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive devices (CBRNE).
8. The revised strategy contains separate entries covering specific subjects of interest. They include terrorist finance, conflict reduction, cross-Government work in Afghanistan/Pakistan, work on connection with terrorism and the internet and counter terrorism related communications.
9. The strategy describes in some detail how CONTEST is delivered, taking into account the greater resources and the wider range of people working in counter terrorism. It sets out the roles for the many Government departments now engaged in this area and for local and regional government, and identifies future scientific and technical priorities and sets out the basis for closer work with the private sector. The strategy also explains the cross-cutting roles of the police and armed forces.
10. The document outlines an international response to the threat, describing in each area the international work the Government will be undertaking to support domestic programmes.
11. The strategy takes into account the greater resources and the wider range of people working to address the terrorist threat to ensure we are all working together to deal with the new challenges presented by international terrorists. It is the first time that the Government have set out a strategy so comprehensively for stakeholders and the general public.
12. The development and implementation of the strategy will be assisted by Counter Terrorism Local Profiles (CTLPs) which will focus on the Prevent workstream in the shorter-term. CTLPs are intelligence assessments that specifically focus on the threat from violent extremist activity within a Basic Command Unit (BCU) area. They

aim to identify where violent extremist activity is or has the greatest potential of occurring and provide suggested recommendations to address any risk.

INSPECTION OF PROTECT

13. The remaining CONTEST theme – ‘Protect’ – will be subject to inspection in late June/early July 2009. The thematic inspection will focus on the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and will not be undertaken in all forces.
14. The terms of reference will include, for example, fieldwork visits and interviews with Counter Terrorism Units and police authorities.

OPTIONS/RISK

15. The Government has made it clear that there is an ever-present risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. Unknown.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. Unknown.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

18. The Prevent element of the strategy aims to challenge extremist ideology and support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists. This has a potential impact on our diverse communities.

CHILDREN ACT 2004

19. Not applicable.

CONCLUSIONS

20. It is imperative that the Police Authority is aware of the Contest Strategy and in particular that the issues are being implemented locally by the police and partners as appropriate. In addition, Members need to be assured that the relevant mechanisms are in place locally to facilitate this implementation.
21. The new national framework should encourage greater partnership working at the local level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

22. It is recommended that Members:

- i. Discuss the key content of the Contest Strategy; and
- ii. Receive assurances that the key issues from the strategy are being implemented locally by police and partners as appropriate.

KEVIN SHARP
Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Paul Wainwright, Strategic Development Manager
(Corporate Business)

Telephone: (01482) 334888

Background Papers: HM Government OSCT:
Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare (March 2009)