



Protective Security Operations

Dear Faith Leader,

Terrorism threat level increased to Severe

As you are no doubt aware by now, on 3rd November 2020 the UK national terrorism threat level was increased from **SUBSTANTIAL to SEVERE** - meaning an attack is 'Highly Likely'. This is a precautionary measure in response to the events in France and Austria and not based on any specific threat.

The decision to increase the assessment from Substantial – meaning an attack is likely – to one of Severe - meaning an attack is highly likely - is made by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC). This is an independent body of experts who evaluate available intelligence alongside terrorist capability and intentions.

The festive period is fast approaching and despite the obvious impacts of the coronavirus pandemic the United Kingdom Government recognises that crowded places and in particularly on the eve of another lockdown remain an attractive target for terrorists who have demonstrated that they are likely to target such locations. The timings of the recent attacks occurred the day before their respective national lockdowns. There is a realistic possibility a second national lockdown will mobilise individuals to conduct attacks on crowded places, our night time economy, and faith communities in the UK prior to the restrictions being imposed.

Our level of commitment remains when it comes to protecting our communities and our officers and staff will as always, continue to monitor the threat locally and respond appropriately. We are committed to working with local communities, business, and faith groups across London to provide reassurance and seek their continued support to keep London safe. We have activated the established planning mechanisms across London which will lead to enhanced protection and preparedness. In response to the increase in threat level we will begin to increase our levels of visible patrols and implement other security and protection measures. Some of this will be an uplift in visible patrols utilising both specialist and front line deployments to certain places and locations, which the public can expect to see over the coming days.

These places being those that are, easily accessible, regularly available and which offer the prospect for an impact beyond the loss of life alone. Therefore, the protection of Crowded Places is not only the responsibility of Government agencies but that of all those who have responsibility for the ongoing management and maintenance of public spaces and streetscapes.

The Government and the Mayor's Office continue to support the National Crowded Places Programme which is delivered through The Home Office, NaCTSO and Protective Security Operations (PSO). They will continue to support and encourage Counter Terrorism Security Advisers (CTSA) and Counter Terrorism Protect Officers (CTPOs) and Local Authority partners in delivering proportionate protective security advice at crowded places across London.

As you will be aware the national crowded places model was reviewed in 2018 in response to the tempo and nature of attacks experienced in London and across the U.K. The review identified that we needed to expand our reach into the new areas of work outlined below.

1. **Aggregated Areas.**
2. **Public Realm Space,**
3. **Grey Space.**
4. **Events (Open Air).**
5. **Transport Hubs.**

Below is from a statement made on 3rd November by Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu, UK head of Counter Terrorism policing:

“Overnight, we heard the terrible news of another terrorist attack in Europe – this time in Vienna, where four people were killed.

Our thoughts are with all of the victims, their families and loved ones of the recent attacks both in Austria and France, as well as all of the emergency service personnel who continue to respond to and investigate these atrocities.

At this time, there is no intelligence to link any of these attacks to the UK, and officers from Counter Terrorism Policing continue to work closely with our international partners and will of course provide any assistance where we can.

However I do urge the public to remain vigilant and to report any suspicious activity to police. Now, more than ever, we need communities to stand together and reject those who seek to sow division and hatred between us. We need communities and families to bring to our attention anyone they perceive may be vulnerable, a danger or escalating towards terrorism”.

Anyone with information is urged to contact police by calling 0800 789 321 or by visiting www.gov.uk/ACT

“Whilst we want the public to remain alert, they should not be alarmed by this change in threat level. We have a variety of established operational tactics that are tried and tested, to ensure that the UK is both well prepared and protected from the threat of terrorism.

Since 2014, when the threat level was last changed from substantial to severe, we have continued to build on our capability and enhance security arrangements against the backdrop of a consistently high level of threat. Officers work day and night to protect the public and keep them safe from the threat of terrorism and this will not change.

Thank you”

Thank you for your continued engagement and please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the team, if you require further information.



Derren Parsons- Chief Inspector

Counter Terrorism Protective Security Operations

Physical Security (PSU) | CT Security Advisor (CTSA) Unit | Engagement & CT Protect Officer teams | Testing & Exercise



To strengthen the protection of London and Londoners From terrorist attack