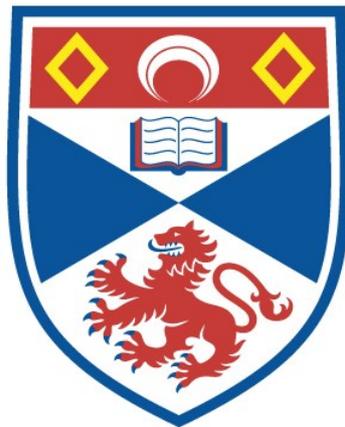


ASSESSING COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGIES THROUGH A MIXED  
METHODS RESEARCH DESIGN: THE CASE OF CONTEST IN THE UK

Erika Brady

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews



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# Assessing Counter-Terrorism Strategies through a Mixed Methods Research Design: The Case of CONTEST in the UK

Erika Brady



University of  
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

at the University of St Andrews

May 2021

## **ABSTRACT**

The study of counter-terrorism has developed considerably since the terrorist events of 9/11 in the US, with a growing interest in understanding which strategies and polices are working and which are not. However, the complexity and challenges of the topic have resulted in research which is dominated by single method, secondary source studies rather than the generation of original empirical research with novel approaches to the methodology. This thesis sets out to address these concerns through the development of a complex research design based on primary sources such as interviews and public opinion polls as well as the documents of government and other relevant agencies and entities which form part of the counter-terrorism landscape. It seeks to better understand the impact of CONTEST, the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, and it looks at all four workstreams in order to obtain a full and holistic understanding of the performance of the strategy. Further, this thesis presents an analytical model to apply an additional quantitative dimension to the research, further addressing a lacuna in the field. Ultimately, this thesis finds that CONTEST is working appropriately within the reasonable expectations of any government strategy. The analytical model, however, provides additional nuance across the four workstreams and shows that not all of these are performing at the same level across the six themes of Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perception, Events and Goals. The findings of this thesis are highly significant to the field of counter-terrorism. Not only do they provide deeper understanding of CONTEST than has previously been presented, but the mixed methods and multi-dimensional approach presents interesting insights not previously apparent in single method studies. Further, the model which is developed allows for the ongoing quantitative exploration of CONTEST and other counter-terrorism strategies, particularly those which fall under the Criminal Justice Model.

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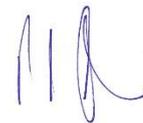
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All in all, however, I dedicate this thesis to my son, Isaac, in the hope that it inspires him to work hard and persevere to fulfil his dreams and to understand that he can achieve whatever he sets his mind to.

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## List of Abbreviations

BAME:	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CONTEST:	COuNter TErrorism STrategy
CP:	Coding Project (NVivo)
CPS:	Crown Prosecution Service
FOI:	Freedom of Information
GTD:	Global Terrorism Database
IRTL:	Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation
ISC:	Intelligence and Security Committee
OSCT:	Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism
SOI:	Subject of Interest
TPIMS:	Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures
XRW:	Extreme Right Wing

The Government (capitalised): UK Government

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction and Outline

When the Twin Towers were attacked in September 2001, it seemed to many that the world had changed irreversibly. Those killed in the four attacks were from a broad spectrum of countries, and no one seemed safe. The notion of an existential threat was perpetuated by world leaders in order to gain support for what became known in common parlance as the ‘War on Terror’, a decidedly erroneous term which could never fulfil its promise of victory over what is, essentially, an emotion<sup>1</sup>. Even if taken as a tactic, it seems unlikely that terrorism can ever be defeated through warfare alone. In tandem with this, many have argued that terrorism fundamentally changed on that day, referring to the phenomenon as ‘new terrorism’. While this is predominantly a media or political perspective, some scholars have explored the impact the 9/11 attacks had on the course of terrorism and its study (see Hoffman 2002; Enders & Sandler 2005; Crenshaw 2008; English 2019) noting a highly complex number of impacts and implications of both that day and the decade preceding it<sup>2</sup>. At that moment, it seemed like a new threat had reared its head. However, as time has progressed, the events of 9/11 have not been truly indicative of a trend of growing threats and dramatic events by Islamist<sup>3</sup> radicals, at least not in the West. Rather, the four coordinated attacks were, at least to date, a one-off event in terms of scale, impact and daring. Ultimately, the threat from terrorism is decades, if not centuries, old. While it has ebbed and flowed in terms of tactics, motivations and scale, it could be argued that terrorism itself, at its core, never fundamentally changed. However, there is an argument to be made that the events of 11 September 2001 did fundamentally impact *counter-terrorism* and its study, and the subsequent shifts in

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<sup>1</sup> The Cambridge Dictionary (online) refers to ‘terror’ as “extreme fear”, and further notes it as “extreme fear, or violent action that causes fear” (dictionary.cambridge.org).

<sup>2</sup> Islamist terrorism (a form of religious terrorism whose followers seek to establish a Sharia state, more of which is explained below) appeared to be on the rise throughout the 1990s, perhaps connected with the end of the Cold War and the related withdrawal of USSR troops from its invasion of Afghanistan (1979 to 1989). During this time, Al Qaeda began its self-proclaimed ‘war’ against the West (“the far enemy”). The group was populated by experienced fighters known as the Mujahideen who had flocked from the Middle East to Afghanistan to help the Muslim population fight the Russian invasion and led by Osama Bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi with strong Islamist views. Attacks carried out by the group during the decade preceding 9/11 included the bombing of the World Trade Centre in 1993, the coordinated bombings of US embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) in 1998 and the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000, all of which presaged the growing threat from Islamist terrorism.

<sup>3</sup> Terminology within the field of terrorism (and indeed counter-terrorism) is inconsistent and challenging, often with either a careless disregard for the impact of the term used or with a specific narrative goal. Islamist terrorism has also been referred to as Jihadist or Islamic terrorism, as well as the term often used by the Government of ‘international terrorism’ (discussed further below in section 1.3). There are, however, nuanced differences between these terms. For example, Islamists seek to establish a Sharia State usually with but potentially without violence, whereas Jihadists believe that this Sharia state can only be achieved through Jihad or ‘violent struggle’ (for further exploration of this topic, see Sedgewick 2015; Hamid & Dar 2016). For consistency, this thesis will refer to Islamist terrorism, except where it is more relevant to use another term or when citing another source.

how to respond to such attacks have been both lauded and criticised. They are nearly always controversial (see Crelinsten 2009).

Depending on a country's specific circumstances, and indeed the type of government, a counter-terrorism strategy can be militarily focused or one of criminal justice, or indeed some mix of the two. It can focus on prevention measures<sup>4</sup>, on stopping terrorist plots and arresting would-be terrorists, or on deterrence measures, building up infrastructure and resilience to terrorist attacks. Alternatively, it can focus on the international dimension, both soft (diplomatic) and hard (military) activities. Generally speaking, most countries apply, out of necessity, a combination of both domestic and international policies and strategies. Terrorism transcends borders, and so counter-terrorism strategies need to have multiple approaches both within a territory and without. In liberal democracies, counter-terrorism strategies need the buy-in of the majority of the population to work effectively but can easily be seen as government over-reach by those targeted by counter-terrorism policies as well as by critical observers and commentators. There may be some justification in this viewpoint. Inherent opportunism tied up with political power struggles have framed the threat from terrorism since the start of this century as the existential conflict of our time without truly understanding the implications of these statements. For this reason, many of the policies implemented in the early noughties have been rolled back quietly and adapted to address what had started out as an ill-considered attack on whole 'suspect' communities. Further, the actions some governments took in this regard, lacking much real insight and failing to explain the complexities of Islam specifically and Muslim populations more broadly, resulted in Muslims feeling targeted and non-Muslims feeling scared. The challenge of getting an appropriate balance between safeguarding the population while treating all ethnic groups and communities and levels of society fairly and transparently should not be underestimated (see Hickman, Thomas, Silvestri & Nickels 2011; Pantazis & Pemberton 2009). Not only do governments need to engage in activities domestically and internationally to truly protect their populations and interests; they also need to consider the complexity of the problem in regard to the multifarious types of terrorist activities and groups, not all of which can be clearly identified through minority demographics and which can therefore be more insidious.

An example of this can be found in the growing concerns and awareness around far-right extremism<sup>5</sup>. This was not really on the 'terrorism' radar throughout the nineties and early noughties when the events of 9/11 effectively pushed the narrative towards the Islamist threat. Islamist terrorist attacks are audacious, targeting the soft underbellies of democratic societies such as bars and restaurants and

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<sup>4</sup> This is the controversial 'pre-crime' world where practitioners try to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism before an attack is carried out or the person commits a crime. Further discussion on this is presented in Chapter 4 and again briefly in Chapter 5.

<sup>5</sup> As with other forms of terrorism, terminology regarding far-right extremism is inconsistently applied. Both CONTEST 2018 and the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) apply the term 'extreme right wing' or XRW and so this will be used throughout the remainder of the thesis, except where it is more relevant to use another term or when citing another source.

Christmas markets, and are carried out by those who wish to undermine societal freedoms, so the politicians say, and who hate “our” democratic values (see Bush Address to the Joint Session of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress 2001; CONTEST 2018). Terrorists themselves have been classified as freedom fighters, mentally ill and criminal masterminds in an effort to exhort particular responsive policy support from the populations under perceived attack. However, extreme right wing (XRW) terrorism is increasingly on the security service’s radar and, particularly in the US, the significant impact of this type of terrorism should not be underestimated, even if XRW events are not currently as attention-grabbing as Islamist terrorist events. Further, the challenging terminology of the past which reflected on ‘Islamist *terrorists*’ and ‘far-right *extremists*’ diluted the impact of these activities, both conceptually and legally. There seems to be an imbalance in dealing with these ‘categories’ of individuals and minority groups highlight this in their criticism of counter-terrorism strategies. This imbalance of terminology has been changing in recent years however, with a watershed moment for the UK being the proscription of National Action (an XRW group) in 2016.

This context is important, as it highlights the fact that terrorism as a phenomenon is complex, diverse and can become the ‘poster-boy’ for almost any cause, both just and unjust. It can also ensure certain counter-terrorism activities are supported by populations in countries where that kind of support is considered necessary. Yet, not only do these activities allow governments to enact counter-terrorism policies directly; they can also impact issues such as social cohesion, poverty policies, education, immigration and even military operations. When populations are afraid, certain elements often respond negatively. A significant rise in XRW terrorism in response to these issues, as has been highlighted above, justified particularly by a fear of and a need to protect themselves from the ‘other’, seems to have grown considerably over the past decade<sup>6</sup>. What is essentially a method of fighting for those that are weaker than the state, has become a powerful manipulative tool of the state itself, the ‘bogeyman’ that allows governments to take sometimes dubious actions in order to protect their populations. However, if counter-terrorism activities are not perceived to be effective, people can take ‘justice’ into their own hands and this has partly been the fuel for XRW groups.

Of course, the perceived ineffectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies does not only result in the rise of extremist groups. Civil society groups who aim to hold the Government to account also thrive when perceived injustices arise as a result of Government activities. While the argument can be made for the challenging job the Government has in addressing terrorism and extremism issues, the critics and voices of those who feel victimised is an essential element of how researchers can truly understand the efficacy of counter-terrorism. The voices of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (also known as BAME communities) provides an important contribution to the complex landscape of counter-terrorism

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<sup>6</sup> See various interviews and statements of Neil Basu, Commissioner Specialist Operations of the MPS and lead of the National Chiefs Council for Counter Terrorism Policing, including: Sandford 2018; Counter Terrorism Policing 2019; White 2020.

impacts and public oversight. Even the criticisms, however, are complex, and research on the topic has made it clear that most academic criticism and certainly community criticism is directed at Prevent specifically rather than the CONTEST strategy as a whole (see Thomas 2010; Birt 2009; Cetin 2016 as well as multiple publications by MEND, Liberty and CAGE<sup>7</sup>).

The world of counter-terrorism is believed by the public to be shrouded in secrecy and conspiracy theories (see Bartlett & Miller 2010), often linked to the perceived lack of transparency central counter-terrorism agencies are associated with, such as MI5 in the UK, the DGSE in France and the CIA in the US. Many people associate the activities of counter-terrorism practitioners as built purely on the intelligence gathered by these agencies, with teams of people riffling through citizens' data in an attempt to stop a terrorist attack. Counter-terrorism is associated with espionage, under-cover police and breaches of human rights. Popular media, in all forms, seems to relish propagating these notions<sup>8</sup>. The government activities referred to above, as well as this 'popular' messaging, has greatly impacted people's perception of the threat and what is needed to feel safe. CAGE provides an interesting example of this. In 2017, it published a report titled "Blacklisted: The secretive Home Office Unit silencing voices of dissent" (Cage 2017). It claimed to "[provide] a unique insight, for the first time, of opaque units that work as part of the government's counterterrorism policies, the Extremism Analysis Unit (EAU) and the Research Information and Communications Unit (RICU). These two units, in particular, assist the government in its Prevent strategy, by conducting research and coordinating propaganda" (ibid). While this scrutiny might be a welcome insight into the workings of the Government, there are also issues. For example, the image of the front page of the report is quite problematic as it appears to present itself as a Home Office document, with the name in large print at the centre of the page and the symbol of the Home Office set above it. How this is perceived by the readership is going to have an impact on how they trust the Government to carry out counter-terrorism activities, and these kinds of reports, which might have valid commentary and criticisms, undermine the legitimacy of their argument by the fear-mongering and dramatic approach they seem to take. Before the publication is even read, the reader has been primed to react negatively to the information within. However, the world of counter-terrorism is far more complex than the 'intelligence-focused' approach outlined above and the negative narratives presented to the public by entities such as CAGE. A one-dimensional understanding of the immense challenges and complexities faced by the counter-terrorism community does a disservice to the work that has been achieved by the various agencies involved in preventing or countering terrorism around the world.

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<sup>7</sup> Mend stands for Muslim Engagement and Development and its website can be found at <https://www.mend.org.uk/>; publications by Liberty (a long-established civil liberties organisation) can be accessed at <https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/>; and publications by CAGE (a civil society organisation which seeks to oppose state discrimination) can be located at <https://www.cage.ngo/>

<sup>8</sup> Examples include the TV shows *Homeland* and *Spooks* and this phenomenon is further discussed in Reigler (2010).

The study of counter-terrorism policy has been a more recent development of broader terrorism studies. While publications addressing the issue can be found from decades ago (see Hewitt 1984; Cotler 1998), the field remains underdeveloped. There has also been a more recent push towards exploring counter-terrorism<sup>9</sup> from a domestic perspective, rather than an international (i.e. military or diplomatic) one, and in recent years a growing selection of publications have attempted to explore and explain the phenomenon (Baker 2011; Alati 2018; Belanger & Szmania 2018). The impact of terrorism itself appears to be felt more acutely around the world with each passing year and tactics and methods used by terrorists, as well as motives and modus operandi, are far from stagnant. Instead, they adapt to the availability of resources and technology. Counter-terrorism, to have any chance at meeting this challenge, needs to do the same. Yet, although governments have developed, and continue to develop, counter-terrorism strategies, external oversight<sup>10</sup> is highly limited and learning opportunities appear to be rare. Reasons such as ‘national security’ are often cited as explanations of why third parties cannot evaluate these strategies in any depth. However, third party evaluation is crucial to assess what is working, has worked or could potentially work in the future. Without some form of evaluation, how can we know that a particular policy has worked better than what had been implemented (or not implemented) before? Much of the time, the information as to whether or not a policy is successful comes from the government itself, an institution with a vested interest in proving that it is doing everything in its power to protect the people and is successful at that. The need for independent analyses of counter-terrorism strategies is essential, and, as much as it is possible, empirically-based analysis as well as a multi-dimensional understanding of counter-terrorism strategies and the threat they are designed to address needs to be incorporated into that analysis, in order to provide a more complete understanding of the state of the field. The need for academic rigour cannot be over-emphasised, and what research does exist tends to lean towards practitioner-based projects. While these projects provide real and useful insights into counter-terrorism strategies, the added depth provided by academic studies which are peer reviewed and systematic in how data is analysed and findings observed is a much-needed dimension currently lacking (this point is discussed further below).

This thesis explores the impact<sup>11</sup> of counter-terrorism activities on both terrorist activity and on public confidence in the counter-terrorism apparatus, focusing in particular on the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST (COuNter Terrorism Strategy). In this project, the UK was deemed to

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<sup>9</sup> Otherwise referred to as ‘anti-terrorism’ and as already mentioned, this issue will be discussed further below.

<sup>10</sup> Here, ‘external oversight’ means oversight that comes from agencies and individuals who are not associated with governments, particularly academic oversight. This issue becomes drawn along a line of what data is classified and what data is not classified and this issue can even impede parliamentary oversight conducted by some committees.

<sup>11</sup> The terminology used throughout this thesis reflects challenging definitions of complex activities. Some of the key terms are explored further in this chapter and are reflected on again in Chapter 5. This apparent repetition of conceptual reflection is deemed as necessary because there are two levels of analysis taking place. The first level reflects on the overall goal of the thesis, combining all elements for analysis which will be presented in the concluding chapter. This connects with the analysis carried out in Chapters 3 and 4. The second level reflects the achievable goals of the analytical tool developed in Chapter 5 which requires a more focused and measurable understanding of these concepts. This results in an overall exploration of ‘impact’ throughout the thesis, but a more focused analysis of performance in the analytical model.

be an appropriate case study in light of the established nature of its counter-terrorism strategy, originally implemented in 2003, as well as the anticipated exposure to review and analysis this type of strategy would involve. Through a mixed methods exploratory research design, this multi-dimensional analytical study seeks to understand whether the UK Government (hereafter referred to as ‘the Government’) is achieving its fundamental goal of reducing the “risk to the UK and our interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence” (CONTEST 2011, p.6; 9; 15; 17; 40; 119). The research undertaken in this study aims to contribute to the existing literature on the assessment of counter-terrorism policy, an underdeveloped area, particularly in terms of methodological rigor. By combining multiple research tools in a mixed method approach, this study constructs a robust methodological framework for the assessment of counter-terrorism policies and tests this framework on various thematic aspects of CONTEST through the development of an analytical tool.

The remainder of this chapter provides a brief overview of CONTEST, as well as some context on the threat the UK has faced and is facing from terrorism. Following this, a section clarifying some fundamental concepts and definitions is presented to assist the reader in understanding the assumptions taken throughout the thesis. The research questions are also addressed here. Following this, the chapter presents a literature review in order to better assess the broader context over the past 20 years as well as the current state of the art in terms of counter-terrorism research and the evaluation and assessment of counter-terrorism strategies. This is structured in an inverse pyramid style, with ‘state of the field’ publications first, followed by general counter-terrorism publications and concluding with publications on CONTEST itself. Each section is presented chronologically, with older publications analysed prior to the exploration of more recent books and articles. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the methodological considerations of the thesis. It presents the rationale for the over-arching research design and outlines the primary methods used throughout the thesis. Following this, Chapter 3 explores the qualitative findings of the Data and Trends theme of the research, while Chapter 4 presents the qualitative findings of the Perspectives theme of the research. An overview of the development of an analytical model which was created to further analyse the findings of the qualitative research, as well as the interpretation of the findings of this tool through its scoring mechanism, is the subject matter of Chapter 5. Finally, Chapter 6 puts forward some conclusions to the thesis as a whole, connecting the qualitative research and findings with those of the quantitative tool, resulting in a fully triangulated, multi-dimensional exploration of counter-terrorism in the UK. It is intended that the tool which is developed can be applied to a broad array of counter-terrorism strategies in future research, and therefore a section on the opportunities for future research raised in this thesis is also outlined in the conclusion.

## 1.2 An Overview of CONTEST

CONTEST<sup>12</sup> is a highly interesting strategy to explore for several reasons. It already includes established measures for success (in the 2011 version) and attainable goals, applied to each of its four sub-sections<sup>13</sup>: PREVENT, PURSUE, PROTECT, PREPARE. In addition, CONTEST has been in existence for a number of years: created in 2003 as an internal governmental strategy, it was first released to the public in 2006, with subsequent editions published in 2009, 2011 and 2018. The 2011 edition also committed the Government to publishing annual reviews. These were presented in a similar format to the primary strategy documents, making comparisons easy, and were published in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 (reflecting data from the previous year). The extensive period over which CONTEST has developed allows the researcher to explore themes and data over time<sup>14</sup> and presents an interesting example through which to explore the impact of counter-terrorism strategies. Connected to the strategy itself, although not a part of it, a significant amount of terrorism legislation is also in place, providing the police and security services with powers to pursue terrorists and prevent terrorist activity. This legislation feeds particularly into Pursue, but controversially became an issue for Prevent in 2015 when a statutory duty was placed on certain frontline agencies (e.g. education and health) to report radicalised behaviour. This highly controversial move came about around the time of the newly developed Counter-Extremism Strategy (2015), a separate strategy to CONTEST but one which had some overlap with the Prevent workstream. This was an attempt to focus on what had consistently been seen as the weak link in CONTEST, that of Prevent<sup>15</sup>, and followed on from the announcement of a new Extremism Bill in May 2015. This complex system of policy development, responsive to changing trends in terrorism and existing for over 17 years, provides genuine opportunities for understanding the trends and impacts of counter-terrorism activities.

The concept of CONTEST was developed in 2002, but the underlying principles and legislation for the strategy stretch back before the events of 11 September 2001 to the time when the UK's most formidable terrorist threat came from the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Yet, while learning has apparently taken place, resulting in the various updated versions of CONTEST, it should be noted that CONTEST itself

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<sup>12</sup> Primary documents relating to CONTEST are available in the following collection on the Gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/contest>

<sup>13</sup> These sub-sections are called interchangeably 'limbs' or 'workstreams' or the 'four P's'. This thesis will primarily refer to them as 'workstreams'.

<sup>14</sup> This thesis does not purport to undertake a robust time-lapse analysis of CONTEST, although the research might be considered to fall somewhat into this category.

<sup>15</sup> The controversy here is that CONTEST has been designed as a holistic, multi-dimensional counter-terrorism strategy, which, in the traditional sense, is focused on hard domestic measures such as policing, infrastructure protection and event mitigation. While it had been acknowledged since its creation that the process of radicalisation also needed to be addressed, Prevent has settled uncomfortably within the hard counter-terrorism world. The Counter-Extremism Strategy of 2015 was intended to address this issue in completion, while acknowledging that extremism and terrorism are separate issues which have the potential to impact on each other, but not the inevitability of that outcome. It also came about from an increasing concern of the impact of ISIS on the radicalisation of British citizens, and what was perceived as an increasing trend of extremist rhetoric online.

does not address republican<sup>16</sup> terrorism associated with Northern Ireland in any significant detail, other than to provide context on the threat. In the 2018 strategy document, the Government stated, “CONTEST addresses all forms of terrorism that affect the UK and our interests overseas, with the exception of Northern Ireland related terrorism in Northern Ireland, which is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland” (CONTEST 2018, p.20). Instead, CONTEST focuses on other forms of terrorism, with the document stating “[t]he threat from Islamist terrorism remains the foremost and most significant. Extreme right-wing terrorism is a growing threat, and in 2016 we proscribed an extreme right-wing terrorist group, National Action, for the first time ...” while acknowledging “... Northern Ireland related terrorism remains a serious threat, particularly in Northern Ireland itself” (CONTEST 2018, p.19). For this reason, while terrorist activity in Northern Ireland has resulted in the UK experiencing the highest number of events in the EU<sup>17</sup> when it was a member, it will not be covered in any particular detail in this thesis in light of its general exclusion from CONTEST itself, aside from some contextual analysis in Chapter 3.

Some public-facing analysis on CONTEST has already been carried out by the Government. The Annual Report of Contest of March 2015 stated: “[t]he Government continues to invest in our counter terrorist work to ensure that it remains fully effective. We are satisfied that is the case” (CONTEST: Annual Report 2015, p.23). Further, the report goes on to say that “[a] terrorist attack in this country may well be ‘highly likely’ for some time to come ... We are in the best shape to deal with the challenges we now face” (ibid.). This is not an unbiased report and is presented from the Government’s perspective. It provides no metrics as to why it is “satisfied” that its “counter terrorist work ... remains fully effective”. Confidence is one thing, but without any data behind it to back up that claim, it rings quite hollow.

The report of July 2016, based on data from 2015, showed a shift in focus and an acknowledgement that a new and updated strategy was both necessary and imminent to deal with the new threat posed by ISIS<sup>18</sup>. Providing an overview of the activities of ISIS and its threat to the British public, it noted the ultimate need to “adapt and change”, despite the “proven” successes of CONTEST to date. In light of

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<sup>16</sup> In this third type of terrorism which impacts on the UK, we again see a significant challenge in the terminology. Over the many decades in which this form of terrorist activity has been in existence, it has been called separatist terrorism, IRA terrorism and republican terrorism. The fact that unionist terrorism also takes place seems less important in much of the popular narrative. This thesis will rely on the term ‘republican terrorism’, except where it is more relevant to use another term or when citing another source.

<sup>17</sup> See annual TE-SAT reports for in-depth information on terrorist events throughout the EU (formerly including the UK), accessible at <https://www.europol.europa.eu/tesat-report>

<sup>18</sup> The organisation known as the Islamic State has progressed through a variety of names as it has developed, and these are used without consensus by different experts and organisations. Initially set up as the branch of Al Qaeda in Iraq, it broke ties with that organisation and first named itself Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). This was followed by the name the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It has also become commonly known as simply the Islamic State, thought to be a propagandist move to indicate the Caliphate as applying beyond the Middle East. It is also known as ISIS in the Arabic-speaking world, which is an acronym for the Arabic phrase “al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa’al Sham” (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant). Apparently, this title is not viewed favourably by the organisation because it is similar to the Arabic words ‘Daes’ or ‘one who crushes something underfoot’ and ‘Daehes’, translated as ‘one who sows discord’. For the purposes of this thesis, the term ‘ISIS’ will be used unless referring to another source through direct quotation.

this, the report states “[t]hat is why we are currently reviewing CONTEST – to ensure the highest priorities are given the right resources, and that government departments and agencies have a unified approach. We will publish an updated strategy later this year” (CONTEST: Annual Report 2016, p.5). Further, the Government acknowledged that its “primary duty” is to “protect the public” and it believed that “[t]his Annual Report demonstrates our continuous efforts in the UK and overseas to ensure that remains the case” (ibid.). Again, there is little or no data provided to back up any of these statements, and it is clear that they are given from the perspective of a government. However, that is not to say that these reports are not useful. Rather, they provide strong provocation to evaluate the various policies through empirical data and quantitative methods. Patterns can emerge from reviewing the various annual reports which have been issued to date. To support this work, this thesis will also consider the various reports of the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (IRTL)<sup>19</sup>, in addition to a number of parliamentary committees whose remit addresses counter-terrorism. A number of other entities have carried out reviews following successful terrorist events over the years, as well as on other ad-hoc but related areas, and these also form part of the data used for this thesis. All of these documents will go some way to establishing a baseline for this study and will enable the review of CONTEST.

However, as mentioned above, the analysis of CONTEST to date has been carried out primarily at a governmental level or at the government’s request. The aim of this research will be to develop a more independent and effective methodological approach to assess the effectiveness of policy without the burden of a government-biased agenda. Government research aims to assure and reassure the public, as can be clearly seen from the excerpts of the Annual Reports above, and will focus primarily on the successes, mitigating any failings which may be mentioned in the reports. While the findings of the annual reports allude to areas to be improved, any shortcomings are tempered by explanations of what is being done and what can be achieved in the future. Additionally, the reports contain no clear metrics or measurables to illustrate or support claimed outcomes and how they have been achieved. This thesis seeks to address this issue although, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, the challenge of measuring counter-terrorism performance, let alone impact, is significant.

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<sup>19</sup> The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation’s role “is to inform the public and political debate on anti-terrorism law in the United Kingdom. [This is done] in the regular reports that are prepared for the Home Secretary or Treasury and then laid before Parliament, in evidence to parliamentary committees, in articles and speeches, in media interviews and debates, in posts on this website and via twitter (@terrorwatchdog). The uniqueness of the role lies in its complete independence from government, coupled with access based on a very high degree of clearance to secret and sensitive national security information and personnel” (Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation website). Additional information, as well as the entire collection of public reports, is available at <https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/>

### 1.3 Context: Terrorism as it Impacts the UK

CONTEST was designed to address terrorism in the UK, initially with a focus on what has become known as ‘international terrorism’<sup>20</sup>. However, with increased activity in the UK from XRW groups, additional attention has been paid to this form of terrorism in the most recent 2018 version of the strategy. Designed to deal with the terrorist threat to UK citizens both on UK soil and abroad, CONTEST formed the UK’s strategy to fight the ‘War on Terror’, although military action lies predominantly outside of its purview<sup>21</sup>. Additionally, the term ‘War on Terror’ has been referred to less and less over the years in UK counter-terrorism circles, consistent with the strategy developing a domestic focus. While the threat from Islamist terrorist organisations and individuals inspired by them obviously persists, some distance has been placed between the strategy and the notion of a war. This is not to say that the UK does not carry out military action against terrorist groups abroad, but less attention is paid to these activities, at least in terms of CONTEST. This is probably for the best as early rhetoric implied an astounding over-simplification of what is an immensely complex issue. Early on, politicians tried to convince populations that the ‘War on Terror’ could actually be won, that the terrorists could be defeated and that it was an existential threat posed by forces of evil (with the Western alliance, assumedly, the forces of good) (See speeches Bush n.d.; Blair 2001). This might have been acceptable just following the events of 9/11 when the scale of the attacks seemed incredible and the extent of the threat was largely unknown. However, over time it has become clear that attacks like those of 9/11 are not set to become a regular occurrence but rather a rarity if not a single isolated event. Twenty years later, and the ‘war’ continues to be fought, although largely out of the headlines. Few in the UK seem to regard the idea that a ‘War on Terror’, a clearly unwinnable concept, is being fought. The idea that terrorism is an asymmetrical conflict<sup>22</sup> is important to remember, and the resources, training and secrecy required to carry out such large-scale attacks is simply not feasible on a regular basis. The events of 9/11 may have been spectacular, but the attacks drew the wrath and attention of the superior military power of the West, and led to a backlash against, not only the terrorists, but large numbers of

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<sup>20</sup>‘International terrorism’ is another term for ‘Islamist terrorism’ and is routinely used in the UK to differentiate between ‘republican terrorism’, carried out by groups such as the IRA and considered to be domestic, and Islamist terrorism, generally considered to be sourced in the Middle East. The term ‘international terrorism’ is becoming problematic, however, as an increasing number of ‘home-grown’ Islamist terrorists are plotting and conducting attacks around the world within their own countries. The influence of groups such as ISIS provides some legitimacy to the term ‘international’ but scholars have made strong arguments for both sides of the debate. See Jackson 2007 for more information on the Western approach to terrorism classification and discourse. See also MI5 website (<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/international-terrorism>) for a rationale of their use of the term ‘international terrorism’.

<sup>21</sup> This is a controversial issue as some academics consider a military dimension to be an essential component to a fully functioning counter-terrorism strategy. CONTEST does reflect on the international and military dimension, but does so at a distance, indicating that the military element of counter-terrorism is a connected, but ultimately separate strategy. They are tangentially connected through the regular publication of the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review, available at Gov.uk.

<sup>22</sup> An asymmetrical conflict is one where one side is superior in strength to the other such as is the case between a state and a terrorist organisation.

civilian populations living in Afghanistan and Iraq<sup>23</sup>. While not the subject of this thesis, there should be little doubt of the radicalising potential of the West's attacks in the Middle East region. It is this process of radicalisation which has led to some of the most impactful Islamist terrorist attacks across Europe in the last few years, including in the UK (see Bin Laden 2002; Husain 2007; Schmid 2013a; Keenan 2017). However, it should be noted that the individuals being radicalised are not only living in the Middle East, and social media has helped to radicalise large numbers of disenfranchised individuals who disagree with the Western society's ideals and foreign policies but have received no official training or orders from an Islamist organisation. This hatred has been nurtured by ISIS (See Carter, Maher & Neumann 2014; Awan 2017) as well as Al Qaeda.

While initially Al Qaeda was the dominant Islamist group, recent years have seen a focus on the splinter group called ISIS. Al Qaeda has not disintegrated as a group and the threat from this organisation continues (see Zimmerman 2017; Gunaratna 2018). It is, after all, considered by many experts to be playing the 'long game' (Lister 2015) while ISIS tried to play the 'short game' by establishing a caliphate and seizing territory. However, while ISIS was the first terrorist organisation to establish a caliphate across Iraq and Syria, it lost that territory to an extensive alliance of superior military power. It has now all but disappeared in this region but indications are that it has established itself in South Asia while it rebuilds (Liow 2014; Abdul Hamid 2016; Henkin, Boyd & Martin 2020) and its affiliates continue to operate in countries around the world such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabaab in Somalia. However, the challenge now is ISIS' extensive reach through social media and the individuals around the world who have carried out attacks on their own homelands rather than trained militants of the organisation itself. Many of these individuals have never been to Syria or met a member of ISIS, and there seems to be a growing trend of individual attacks carried out with what is considered 'unsophisticated' weapons such as vehicles and knives (Eden 2020). These cannot be classified as lone wolves<sup>24</sup>, as they associate themselves as part of ISIS, and so the classifications of terrorists, painstakingly compiled over years of research have been, once again, confounded (although not completely dismantled) (Byman 2017).

While the biggest threat in the UK from terrorism comes from Islamist terrorism, it would be remiss not to mention, again, the growing threat from the XRW terrorism. In many ways, this particular threat is even more complex as there is a broad spread of motivations behind these individuals' radicalisation. Predominantly white individuals, it is not truly possible to focus on a particular 'visible'

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<sup>23</sup> This backlash took place for essentially different reasons in each country. Afghanistan was seen as a failed state which harboured terrorists and provided them with safe haven. As Al Qaeda was allowed to operate from the country with the permission of the Taliban, it was the focus of the US's response to the attacks of 9/11. The controversial move towards Iraq was a complex and ultimately unjustified attempt to prevent Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction. See Khattak (2011) for an exploration of this topic.

<sup>24</sup> A 'lone wolf' is the term which has been applied to individuals with no apparent connection to a terrorist group but who commit terrorist acts. The terminology and definitions are challenging, as it is rare that any individual acts completely alone when carrying out a terrorist attack. See Feldman 2013; Hamm & Spaaij 2017.

or ‘minority’ community. Anti-immigration and anti-establishment in many cases, the activities of these individuals are across several political platforms, and Islamist attacks just add fuel to their fire (see Berntzen & Sandberg 2014; Koehler 2016). CONTEST does address this form of terrorism, but again, the ultimate focus has been, and continues to be, from Islamist terrorism. It is this complex landscape of terrorism that CONTEST finds itself working against.

## 1.4 Research Questions

This thesis sets out to answer the following research question: Is CONTEST, as a counter-terrorism strategy, achieving its self-proclaimed goals<sup>25</sup> and are the various activities which sit under CONTEST improving through ongoing learning and oversight?

Additionally, the need to develop an empirical and innovative research design drove the examination of whether a mixed methods research design provides a superior analytical framework for understanding counter-terrorism activities and impacts as compared to a single method analysis<sup>26</sup>?

Further exploration of the topic was carried out throughout the research process and included the development of an understanding of the support, or lack of support, for the activities of CONTEST among practitioners and the public as well as seeking to understand whether the fundamental principles of transparency and ongoing assessment can be observed throughout CONTEST.

## 1.5 Definitions and Concepts

The complex nature of counter-terrorism, and indeed terrorism itself, has resulted in significant controversy over central concepts. For this reason, it is appropriate to establish what is understood by some of this terminology to further assist the reader and improve the clarity of argument. However, while some publications have focused solely on these concepts (see Richards 2015; Schmid 2004; Schmid 2011), this is not the intention of this thesis, nor would it be efficacious to do so here. A brief insight into the concepts of primary importance is therefore provided.

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<sup>25</sup> The 2011 CONTEST publication is used as the source in terms of these goals. This is because much of this thesis analyses the period of time for which the 2011 publication was valid. The 2018 version, while considered to some extent in this thesis, was ultimately published too late in the research phase to be of significant analytical use. Further, as the 2018 version is currently in effect, it is more difficult to assess progress towards goals.

<sup>26</sup> Superior in this case means “...of higher rank, quality or importance ... excellent of its kind: BETTER” (Merriam-Webster). Superior is therefore taken to be the appropriate term to convey the idea that mixed methods research provides higher quality and better analysis to that of single method research.

The first two concepts to be addressed are those of “terrorism” and “counter-terrorism”. Various governments and scholars have attempted to define these terms, but consensus remains a distant hope. Governments focus on the legal framework of the concepts, allowing for counter-terrorism activities to be carried out within the accepted framework of the legal system and governance norms. Academics tend to go down the rabbit hole trying to provide either nuanced understandings or broad underpinnings that can apply across the spectrum. These definitions, while contributing to the field, have not gained much traction and certainly no consensus.

An example of one such attempt can be found in Anthony Richards’ article titled “Conceptualizing Terrorism” in which he focused on the development of a definition which could be applied in a more focused way with elements common to all forms of terrorism. He suggested the following as a definition: “terrorism is the use of violence or the threat of violence with the primary purpose of generating a psychological impact beyond the immediate victims or object of attack for a political motive. This, in my view, is common to all acts of terrorism” (Richards 2014, p.230). This definition received mixed reviews but is undoubtedly one of the most substantial contributions to this research in recent years. This is just one example of a broader collection of scholarly activity which attempts to allow for better understanding of terrorism (See Crenshaw 2000; Ganor 2002; Schmid 2013; Carver 2016).

Additionally, the UN has struggled for years to develop a universally accepted definition of what terrorism is, to better coordinate member states’ counter-terrorism activities.<sup>27</sup> Without a common definition, any member state can call almost any act of violence an act of terrorism. An over-used, but nonetheless relevant, phrase holds true: one man’s freedom fighter is another man’s terrorist.

What is most important for the research of this thesis, however, is the Government’s definition<sup>28</sup> of terrorism as it will be the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy that the study focuses on. This definition was adopted as it allows for greater insights into the impact of CONTEST. This is the case because the measures of success identified by the Government have clearly had a profound impact on the design and implementation of CONTEST. Therefore, using the Government’s definition of terrorism provides a solid foundation for exploring and assessing the various counter-terrorism measures which have been

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<sup>27</sup> As well as UN General Assembly Resolution 49/60, which was adopted in 1994, UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004) also makes an attempt to define the concept. Further, the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directive published a document (undated) which called for a definition among other issues (available at: [https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2006\\_01\\_26\\_ctcd\\_lecture.pdf](https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2006_01_26_ctcd_lecture.pdf))

<sup>28</sup> As will be discussed below, the Government uses the legal definition of terrorism, which is presented in the Terrorism Act 2000. To this researcher’s understanding, this is the only definition used by the Government and is certainly the definition used in terms of CONTEST. However, as will be noted throughout this thesis, many other agencies are also involved in the activities of CONTEST and it is quite possible, if not highly likely, that varying definitions of terrorism are applied in these contexts. For clarity and consistency with the goals of the research, the legal definition, used by the Government, will be the definition applied throughout the thesis.

implemented by the state. This definition of terrorism can be found in the Terrorism Act 2000, and provides the following:

*“(1) In this Act “terrorism” means the use or threat of action where—*

*(a) the action falls within subsection (2),*

*(b) the use or threat is designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and*

*(c) the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.*

*(2) Action falls within this subsection if it—*

*(a) involves serious violence against a person,*

*(b) involves serious damage to property, (c) endangers a person’s life, other than that of the person committing the action,*

*(d) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public, or*

*(e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.*

*(3) The use or threat of action falling within subsection (2) which involves the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not subsection (1)(b) is satisfied.*

*(4) In this section—*

*(a) “action” includes action outside the United Kingdom,*

*(b) a reference to any person or to property is a reference to any person, or to property, wherever situated,*

*(c) a reference to the public includes a reference to the public of a country other than the United Kingdom, and*

*(d) “the government” means the government of the United Kingdom, of a Part of the United Kingdom or of a country other than the United Kingdom.*

*(5) In this Act a reference to action taken for the purposes of terrorism includes a reference to action taken for the benefit of a proscribed organisation.” (Terrorism Act 2000, GOV.uk)*

Defining counter-terrorism is also challenging, not least because of the multiple established classifications for describing a government’s counter-terrorism actions. However, with CONTEST’s clear focus on domestic issues and the criminal justice system, this thesis explores the strategy from a domestic perspective, while acknowledging that there are international elements which contribute to its efficacy, or indeed, lack thereof. Again, a number of scholars have attempted to provide deeper understanding of the concept of counter-terrorism (see Omelicheva 2007) but consensus is elusive.

The Government does not specifically define counter-terrorism, but throughout the various publications of CONTEST (2006, 2009, 2011 and 2018) it refers to actions taken within counter-terrorism purviews. What can be seen from these ‘definitions’ and reflections is less an explanation of the concept of counter-terrorism, and more an overview of the various tools at the disposal of the government which are classified under counter-terrorism (this can be seen in ‘Table of Contents’ of the Terrorism Act 2000).

The political echelons within the UK also divide the strategy, even within the domestic framework, into hard and soft elements. Andrew Hammond supplies the following observation: “For the United Kingdom, however, the battle for ‘hearts and minds’ has from the outset been as important, if not more so, as the hard power elements of the campaign against terror” (Hammond 2008, p.219). He goes on to quote former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair as saying: “our response to the September 11 attacks has proved to be even more momentous than it seemed at the time. That is because we could have chosen security as the battleground. But we did not. We chose values ... We knew that you cannot defeat a fanatical ideology just by imprisoning or killing its leaders” (ibid.). For the purpose of this thesis, domestic activities which sit primarily within the criminal justice system will be explored.

To explore the other important concepts in this thesis, it was deemed appropriate to present them under specific guiding questions. These are presented below.

*What aspect of counter-terrorism strategies are being explored in this thesis?*

Throughout the interviews, terms such as success, effectiveness and impact were used and it is common to use these terms interchangeably. However, understanding the appropriate term to apply in this case is important as these terms can mean different things, albeit at times they are interconnected in their explanations. Success, for example, can be considered as: "the achieving of the results wanted or hoped

for” (dictionary.cambridge.org). Of course, the problem then becomes, what is meant by the word ‘achievement’. To achieve is to “to succeed in finishing something or reaching an aim, especially after a lot of work or effort” (dictionary.cambridge.org). It is not always easy to understand one term without relying on another, and this interconnectivity of terminology makes it more difficult to be precise when asserting what it is a researcher is attempting to do.

The definitions of success and achievement above require the completion of something in order to understand whether it has achieved or accomplished its goal or aim. This is not usually possible with public policy, and, in the case of counter-terrorism, many of the policies and programmes are ongoing and therefore indicators of success are not observable. This has the result of eliminating this term from the consideration of this thesis. Looking at counter-terrorism as a successful, or indeed failing, strategy would not provide the data and understanding sought for in this research. While the term is used throughout this thesis when reflecting on other sources or on the interviews which were conducted, it is not the goal of this research to measure the success of counter-terrorism strategies.

On the other hand, effectiveness is described as “the ability to be successful and produce the intended results” (dictionary.cambridge.com). This seems a little more applicable, as it allows for flexibility in understanding the progress toward achieving goals or aims. However, the term ‘effectiveness’ also suggests at the least a correlational link between, in this case, the strategy and the outcome. The complex nature of counter-terrorism, and indeed the challenge of carrying out experiments in real time in order to ascertain this link, make measuring the effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies challenging. Any type of tool which could be used to obtain insights into this issue, such as surveys, would also be based on individual biases (see Chapter 5 for additional exploration of the issue of bias). Therefore, while effectiveness is closer to what is being sought for in this thesis, it is not particularly in line with what is achievable in terms of the model.

Impact is a useful concept to explore. It is defined as “to have an influence on something” (dictionary.cambridge.org). While some might consider this to require almost causal connections, the stance of this thesis is that that is not necessarily the case. However, the challenge is in connecting the strategy as the cause, and the outcome as the effect. Not only is this incredibly challenging, where in the case of Prevent, for example, it is almost impossible to know for certain if going through the Channel process truly prevented someone from committing a terrorist crime, but it is also difficult to ascertain if it was the strategy or the specific counter-terrorism measure that was the cause. A simple example can be seen in the activity of arrests. These have been going on before CONTEST was a strategy, so can the arrest of an individual accused of terrorist activity be connected to the strategy specifically or the legislation providing the police with the power of arrest or the simple activity of arrest as part of the criminal justice system? It is not easily answered. However, in a less restrictive sense, this project does explore the impact of counter-terrorism in the UK. In particular, the impact of

CONTEST on perceptions is relatively clear, and the thesis also explores the various attacks that have taken place which have had an impact on legislation and various measures (such as airport security). Therefore, when taking the thesis as a whole, this term is an applicable framework. However, it should be highlighted that the challenges identified above are still relevant, and for this reason, impact is not considered to be an inappropriate term to use for the analytical model. However, the thesis as whole sets out to understand, through a mixed methods and multi-dimensional approach, the impact of counter-terrorism in the UK.

What can be used to describe what is specifically being explored in Chapter 5, in terms of the analytical model, is 'performance', which can be understood to be "how well an activity or job is done" (dictionary.cambridge.org). This is a little easier to apply, as it not only precludes the requirement to have an end point (through the implication that the performance is ongoing) but it can also provide a moderate level of measurement, based on the subjectivity of the researcher. For the purpose of the model specifically, this term was deemed the most appropriate. With specific reference to Chapter 5, therefore, an assessment of the performance of counter-terrorism strategy is sought through the development of an analytical tool - a model.

*What type of activity is undertaken in this thesis?*

In terms of what is being carried out, there must also be some clarification of understanding. Again, several terms are used throughout this thesis, reflecting the sources being relied upon, but it is important to highlight the two levels of analysis: the overall thesis and the specific analytical model developed in Chapter 5. While it is essential to understand what is being done in terms of the model, it is also important to understand what framework the thesis is developed within. Therefore, two of the more dominant terms will be explored here, with rationale provided for the chosen frameworks.

The first term is an assessment. An assessment is described as "the process of considering all the information about a situation or a person and making a judgement" (dictionary.cambridge.com). This definition is less applicable to the model but is somewhat appropriate in terms of the thesis as a whole. However, while independent assessment of programmes and strategies is, of course, possible, it is usually carried out with the support of the entity in charge of the programme or strategy. Access to specific data and individuals is given, and the process is generally more collaborative. In this 'best case scenario' the findings of the evaluation do go back into the system for ongoing learning and improvement. This thesis explores some of these evaluations, also termed 'reviews', including the Lord Harris Report of 2016 and the Anderson Report of 2017. These were conducted at the request of the agencies being evaluated, and significant access to data and individuals was provided. Further, subsequent status reports were published providing updates on how the recommendations were being

implemented. Unfortunately, this level of review was not possible for this thesis and, while the Home Office expressed support for the research (see Appendix A), it was not forthcoming with the required data. However, as much open-access information as possible was considered, as well as a select number of interviews of practitioners in various aspects of counter-terrorism in the UK, and the model is intended to apply the findings from these considerations and apply informed judgements on the counter-terrorism strategy in the UK.

The second term, an evaluation, is subtly different to an assessment. It is defined as “the process of judging or calculating the quality, importance, amount, or value of something” (dictionary.cambridge.org). While both of these definitions have elements of what is conducted within this project, ultimately, there is a quantifiable element, and application of ‘value’, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that this thesis is not an evaluation but is far more accurately described as an assessment.

It is finally important to reflect on the timescale of the project. This was also a challenging issue and required certain decisions be made. The main timeframe for the research undertaken in this project was 2000 to 2018. The starting year was decided in light of the publication of the Terrorism Act 2000 setting out the UK’s subsequent understanding of terrorism and terrorist activities. The end year was decided on for a number of practical purposes. Counter-terrorism is a constantly evolving phenomenon and additional data could be gathered up to the point of submission of this thesis. Clearly this is not practical, and an end point was needed. Given the fact that various publications are published based on data from the preceding year (an example of this is the Global Terrorism Index where the report of a given year is based on the data available for the preceding calendar year), complete data was only available until 2018. Further, it was decided to focus on the CONTEST 2011 in light of the challenge of analysing the just-published 2018 version. While CONTEST 2011 was intended to be valid until 2015 only, the significant delay in the publication of CONTEST 2018 meant that the 2011 publication was, in reality, relevant from 2011 until 2018. This allowed for better analysis in light of longevity, completeness and activities to be measured against goals. One caveat to be mentioned is that the research on foiled events is presented from 2013 to 2020 in light of the availability of data and the absence of clear ‘calendar year’ data. The way that the information is presented, through informal media interviews, makes it more appropriate to look at the data up until the time of the most recent data reveal, October 2020 (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.2 on ‘Foiled Plots and Failed Attacks’ as well as Appendix G for further clarification).

The examples mentioned above are an insight into the challenges of establishing criteria within research: whether it is the establishment of a definition for what terrorism is, the understanding of what effectiveness or impact is, or the methods through which counter-terrorism functions. These definitions provide a simple baseline for this thesis, and other concepts will be explained as and when appropriate.

## 1.6 Literature Review

The fields of terrorism and counter-terrorism are well-established (although counter-terrorism is a relatively recent field of research), and the literature has been growing over the years, particularly since the events of 9/11. This section aims to provide some context for the rest of the thesis, looking at both counter-terrorism more broadly and CONTEST more specifically.

As mentioned above, attempts have been made in the UK to provide some sort of assessment of the various counter-terrorism activities in place. The establishment of the IRTL, an office that has been in place since the 1970s, is one of the more visible examples of this. In addition, a number of parliamentary committees and some independent bodies (such as CREST and RUSI) have reviewed aspects of counter-terrorism strategy, with varying levels of detail. For example, reviews carried out by the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) omit classified details in the public-facing versions of their reports. Other committees do not have access to classified information, and their reports tend to be more open, albeit more restricted in their detail. Some of the most impactful reviews come about following a successful terrorist event, and these can provide valuable insights into what worked or did not work in terms of these events. Examples include ISC reports such as the “Report on the Intelligence Relating to the Murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby” and Lord Anderson’s report titled “Attacks in London and Manchester March – June 2017, Independent Assessment of MI5 and Police Internal Reviews”, both of which are explored in more detail below.

Yet, while these reviews are based on professional interpretations and are largely practitioner-based, what has been done to address this issue from an academic perspective? Indeed, these reviews, while containing findings and recommendations, are not usually systematic enough to be classified as evaluations, as has been defined above. As will be demonstrated below, academics have lamented the lacuna in both terrorism and counter-terrorism research of systematic and empirical academic studies grounded in robust methodological frameworks. This is no less the case in the UK.

To date, the vast majority of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies are based on secondary research such as books and articles written by other experts in the field, both academics and practitioners. While this has added to the literature in positive and significant ways, increasing and broadening the debate since 9/11, there has been an often-acknowledged lack of studies generating and compiling original data. However, this state of affairs is changing and, more recently, some attempts have been made by scholars in the specific area of counter-terrorism evaluation although largely from a qualitative perspective. Certainly, recent years have shown more impressive and valuable attempts to address this issue, and while we are still some way from having a robust literature collection on this subject, there is every hope that each attempt will push the literature in this area forward.

Before one can proceed with addressing this lacuna, it seems necessary to first of all review the current state of the art. Through researching this thesis, publications were accessed on the state of the field, on counter-terrorism more broadly (often with a US leaning) and on CONTEST itself. It would be both unnecessary and futile to include more than a small selection of these publications here, but each of the sources explored below has provided important insights and valuable understanding of the topic of counter-terrorism more broadly and the evaluation of its strategies and policies more specifically. A brief overview of the state of the art is presented below before moving on to a more in-depth look at the literature on counter-terrorism. Following this, a brief review of literature on CONTEST itself is provided. The publications are presented chronologically in order to show the development of both the literature and the views on that literature over time. An additional short and more refined literature review on methodology can be found in Chapter 2.

### **1.6.1 State of the Field** <sup>29</sup>

When researching for this thesis, a number of publications were located which looked at the existing literature on counter-terrorism, and terrorism, more broadly. Mariya Y. Omelicheva (2007) looks at how to address the dearth of systematic data available on states' responses to terrorism. The article starts out by highlighting the flaws in the current data, noting the emphasis on descriptive studies and stating “[r]egrettably, the number of studies based on the systematic empirical analyses aimed at accounting for differences and similarities in a broad range of counterterrorism policies across multiple cases have been disappointingly limited” (2007, n.p.). She recommends the use of event data, where certain information is coded in a particular way, allowing for content analysis to be carried out on governments' counter-terrorism activities. Following further data treatment to improve validity, she argues, “[t]he measures of the scope can be used for testing the effectiveness of various types of counterterrorism policies, as well as for ferreting out factors that steer governments toward the adoption of certain kinds of responses to terrorism” (ibid).

Frank Foley and Max Abrahms contributed a paper to The International Studies Encyclopaedia in 2010. The scope of this paper is broad, covering both terrorism and counter-terrorism. This review focuses on the latter. The authors note that “[t]he literature on state responses to terrorism has produced many works of descriptive analysis and policy prescription. Less research has been done on the sources and effects of counterterrorist policies” (Foley & Abrahms 2010, n.p.). They note the dominance of policy-

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<sup>29</sup> This section looks at publications on both terrorism and counter-terrorism, with an emphasis on the latter. However, there is occasionally an overlap between the two fields, with some authors considering counter-terrorism almost as a sub-field of terrorism. For example, Schuurman's 2020 article explored below is titled 'Research on *Terrorism*, 2007-2016...' (emphasis added) while clearly also looking at counter-terrorism literature and including a number of counter-terrorism-focused publications within the literature of the document.

makers in driving the questions asked of the phenomenon and, while this might be seen as positive engagement, it has also resulted in a literature that “has followed policy trends rather than developing empirically grounded theories” (ibid, n.p.). They go into depth in terms of the types of studies that have been carried out, including methodological frameworks. In particular, the following statement was deemed to be of interest to this research: “A recurring question is whether democracies are striking a good balance between effectively combating terrorism and upholding liberal values (for seminal statements of the problem, see Wilkinson 1986, 2006; Pedahzur & Ranstorp 2001)” (ibid, n.p.)<sup>30</sup>. This is a central part the analytical model which is developed in Chapter 5, as the expectations of both the populations and policy-makers in a liberal democracy drive the decisions made in terms of counter-terrorism, and thus how we explore and assess the strategies. This may be different for other governmental structures. Foley and Abrahms do highlight some positive efforts in addressing the lacuna in more robust studies stating “... the few methodologically explicit empirical works on counterterrorism effectiveness are a welcome addition to the case studies and thematic policy discussions that tend to dominate the literature. Such empirical works are still all too rare” (ibid, n.p.). In a final wistful reflection on the development of both terrorism and counter-terrorism studies, they state that, while “... in the study of terrorism there is a rapidly growing literature featuring theoretically informed and methodologically aware debates on the causes and consequences of terrorist violence” this has not been the case for the study of counter-terrorism (ibid, n.p.). This publication provides valuable insights into the state of the fields of both terrorism and counter-terrorism and exposes the challenges and gaps in existing literature. While not contributing a new methodology or original research, being a contribution towards an encyclopaedia, this publication is useful for understanding where the field currently stands.

Developing on from this, Todd Sandler provides additional insights, albeit in a similar ‘literature review’ manner as part of his ‘Introduction to the Special Issue’ of the *Journal of Peace Studies*. He notes that there have been empirical studies in the past which analysed “the effectiveness of counter-terrorism policies” among other terrorism-related topics (Sandler 2011, p.280). However, what is particularly interesting about the small selection of studies he has highlighted is the extensive time period over which they were published. The oldest article was published over 40 years ago in 1978, followed by a gap of 15 years to the next publication, a gap of 13 years to the next publication and a gap of five years to the most recent article (at least at the time of his writing). It should be noted that this thesis makes no claim that these are the only publications on this topic. However, this threadbare spread of highlighted articles indicates that there is a clear under-representation of empirical studies on

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<sup>30</sup> Foley and Abrahms refer to the following publications here: Wilkinson, P. (1986) *Terrorism and the Liberal State*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan; Wilkinson, P. (2006) *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.; Pedahzur, A., and Ranstorp, M. (2001) A Tertiary Model for Countering Terrorism in Liberal Democracies: The Case of Israel. *Terrorism and Political Violence* (13) (2), 1–26.

the effectiveness of counter-terrorism policies and a clear need for this research to be undertaken, even if only when taking small steps forward. It should also be acknowledged that Sandler's article was published in 2011, and there may have been a potential increase in these studies since then. That being said, as will be addressed further down in this literature review, Cynthia Lum, Leslie Kennedy and Alison Sherley noted in 2006 the lack of empirical studies in their seminal review publication and this balance appears to have changed but little, as indicated in Foley and Abraham's encyclopaedia entry reviewed above. Indeed, the more recent exploration of the topic carried out for this thesis also found relatively few studies of this kind.

Several articles have been published reflecting on the state of the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism (see Schuurman 2019; Schmid & Forest 2018; Silke & Schmidt-Petersen 2015). These publications look at the gaps in the field and identify areas for improvement. Publications of this kind have proven helpful to scholars looking to address lacunae in the research, serving a specific purpose for the field. However, while they highlight topics to be addressed and improved - in particular, it seems that methodological approaches are under-represented - they do not go into critical and analytical depth, this not being the purpose of the papers. While these publications identify areas for improvement, they also lament the dearth of studies in these areas applying robust and systematic empirical data. In particular, Bart Schuurman's 2020 publication identifies a number of critiques which have been presented over the years, including "... an overreliance on secondary sources, and the associated predominance of the literature review method, have seriously hampered the development of empirically-grounded insights and the ability to falsify the myriad potential explanations for terrorism that have been put forward" (Schuurman 2020, p.1011). Further, he noted that, particularly following the attacks of 9/11, "... terrorism research was still marred by a lack of methodological complexity, a dearth of primary data, and few dedicated scholars" (ibid, p.1013). This observation is not unique, nor does Schuurman purport it to be so. However, his publication is of particular interest here, given its contemporary nature, and indicates a disheartening lack of real progress in these areas. Of all the issues with terrorism research noted by him, he states that "[a]rguably the more pressing issue has been the field's tendency to rely too heavily on secondary sources of limited detail and uncertain accuracy, principally newspaper articles, and associated research methodologies" (ibid, p.1013). Schuurman is not simply presenting these criticisms, however, but acknowledges why this dearth of methodological rigor exists. For example, in terms of terrorist attacks, journalism is often the first to report on the events (ibid, p.1013) and therefore the reliance on media sources, while not as robust as a peer-reviewed article, is necessarily the first stop for an academic looking to understand events. This type of behaviour, which seems to have become acceptable in the field, has led to a lack of studies which rely on "substantial empirical validation [that is] necessary to advance academic knowledge" (ibid, p.1013).

The publications explored above demonstrate that there is an ongoing need for more robust methodologically founded studies, based on empirical research. Plenty of studies exist, particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks following which significant increases in academic focus resulted. However, the reliance on a ‘literature review’ style of scholarship, where researchers focus on others’ studies (secondary sources), has led to a one-dimensional approach to the topic of terrorism, and indeed counter-terrorism. This thesis seeks to address this critique and provide an empirical study based on original findings and utilising a mixed method approach.

### **1.6.2 Counter-Terrorism Policies and Effectiveness**

One of the foremost publications in the area of counter-terrorism evaluation was conducted by Cynthia Lum, Leslie Kennedy and Alison Sherley in 2006. They applied the Campbell Systematic Review<sup>31</sup> to evaluate the effectiveness of various counter-terrorism policies. In the summary to their report, they presented their research objectives as aspiring to “determine the effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies from the available social scientific research literature using systematic review methods” and “to stimulate debate about the cost-effectiveness of expenditures on counter-terrorism measures” (Lum, Kennedy & Sherley 2006, Summary Page). Their findings were summarised as follows: “There is almost a complete absence of high-quality scientific evaluation evidence on counter-terrorism strategies; What evidence there is does not indicate consistently positive results – some counter terrorism interventions show no evidence of reducing terrorism and may even increase the likelihood of terrorism and terrorism-related harm” (ibid, Summary Page). They describe the implications for researchers as follows “[m]ore of the research on terrorism and counter terrorism needs to be empirical and evaluative using scientific principles and different types of methodology” (ibid, Summary Page). Lum et al leave the reader in no doubt as to the state of the art at that time. There was an urgent need for policy makers and researchers to embark on robust analysis of counter-terrorism policies in order to evaluate which policies are successful and which are not. One would think that, fifteen years later, a wealth of such research would have been conducted, but this is not the case. As attested to in the ‘State of the Field’ section above, there continues to be a serious under-representation of replicable, empirical research in the area of counter-terrorism evaluation, and instead, the analysis of others’ works is compounded by an apparent hesitation to undertake what is a challenging area of research by all accounts.

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<sup>31</sup> The Campbell Collaboration “is an international social science research network that produces high quality, open and policy-relevant evidence synthesis, plain language summaries and policy briefs.” They go on to say a “systematic review is an academic research thesis that uses a method called ‘evidence synthesis’, which can include meta-analysis, to look for answers to a pre-defined question. The purpose of a systematic review is to sum up the best available research on that specific question. Reviews can also show when there has not been enough research carried out, and where more research is needed.” (<https://campbellcollaboration.org/>)

Richard English, in his seminal work 'Terrorism: How to Respond' (2009), delves into the area of what governments and policy-makers should do to address terrorism issues, leaning heavily on the lessons available from the past. Among several recommendations, English suggests that "effective public policy in relation to terrorism might be more achievable if policy-makers reflected on a careful analysis of relevant historical experience" (English 2009, p.118). He goes on to say that "scholars have a serious role to play in providing such careful analysis" and "... scholars in this field have a duty to put together a coherent and practical argument concerning what would, in fact, be the best response to terrorism, whether in crisis moments or between them" (ibid.). This analysis could not be more appropriate in the current climate, and it is hoped that that this thesis will address the issues raised in English's book, or at the least lay the groundwork for scholars to make "coherent and practical arguments" with regard to how policy makers should proceed. Indeed, one of English's suggestions which appears quite telling in the current climate is that "[w]hile attempting to end those conflicts which can be ended, and while accepting that we will have to live with some form of terrorism, we must try to diminish its level: to contain, thwart, frustrate, reduce, and limit terror in all the ways that we can. And a key piece to this process is the avoidance of over-militarization" (ibid, p.127) (see also Foley 2013; Gearson & Rosemont 2015 for discussion on CONTEST as a non-military counter-terrorism strategy).

Alex P. Schmid and Rashmi Singh, in 2009, wrote of the War on Terror: "The fact that there are no metrics to measure success and failure in the War on Terror is complicated by constantly shifting goalposts, seen in not only a progressive redefinition of its overall timeframe but also in its ostensible goals" (Schmid & Singh 2009, p.34). While this specific research does not look to the War on Terror, and more than 10 years have passed since this observation, it seems that the fundamental lack of metrics to measure success continues to bedevil the research of the field of counter-terrorism. They point to the general and vague statements of governments, none of which are "quantifiable or comparable measures of success or failure" (ibid, p.36). They compare the ideas of victory in war with that of terrorism, explaining the challenge with the latter over the former. In particular, Schmid and Singh state that "not only is the damage caused by terrorism harder to estimate than that caused by traditional warfare, but the differences in time periods over which terrorist versus military threats exist also serves to further complicate the estimation of success in counter-terrorism campaigns" (ibid, p.42). They reflect on Daniel Byman's<sup>3233</sup> and Nadav Morag's<sup>34</sup> approaches to measuring success and failure in the US and Israel respectively, and these two studies provide admirable insights into what can be viewed as such in terms of counter-terrorism. Indeed, "... one can certainly argue that both approaches are innovative in that they not only study the problem of metrics from a more nuanced, holistic and sophisticated angle, but also that they generate metrics based on empirical analysis that can be extrapolated from case-

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<sup>32</sup> Daniel Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), p. 52.

<sup>33</sup> Daniel Byman, 'Scoring the War on Terrorism', *The National Interest* (Vol. 72, Summer 2003).

<sup>34</sup> Nadav Morag, 'Measuring Success in Coping with Terrorism: The Israeli Case', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (Vol. 28, No. 4, 2005), p. 307.

specific scenarios into wider contexts, such as the War on Terror” (ibid, p.46). Further, they look at the idea of the ‘Thomas Theorem’<sup>35</sup> stating, “For students of International Relations this law boils down to the position that politics is driven as much by ideas as it is by power and interests. Irrespective of the level of analysis, ideas are socially constructed. In other words, ideas are based upon, and impacted by, perception(s) of reality” (ibid, p.52). This reflects on research carried out for this thesis, and has driven the determination to represent, not only data, but perspectives also. Schmid and Singh’s chapter is also interesting in that it acknowledges that opinions obtained through propaganda and media are important in understanding the successes and failures of both terrorists and counter-terrorism strategies. This is reflected in this thesis as well. Schmid and Singh state “[t]hese indicators not only mitigate the lack of foolproof datasets and provide a context for the numbers generated by our hard indicators, but in addition allow us to account for and investigate the perceptual dimension of terrorism. Methodologically this involves evaluating the reactions of significant audiences through available and collected opinion polls data as well as reports and editorials from select print media sources” (ibid, p.58). The multi-faceted project on which this chapter bases its premise is undoubtedly a hugely important step towards understanding the complexity of counter-terrorism strategies through multiple methods straddling both qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, it does this in terms of the War on Terror. The research carried out for this thesis looks at these aspects from an updated perspective, a decidedly focused and domestic approach which has its own strengths and shortcomings. Nonetheless, Schmid and Singh’s chapter provides an inspiring example of what can be explored in terms of counter-terrorism strategies and their complex and daunting natures.

Frank Foley, in his book ‘Countering Terrorism in Britain and France’ (2013) provides fundamental insights into the counter-terrorism policies of these two countries through a comparative exercise of the two disparate systems. The focus of Foley’s work is on the structure of government bodies as they relate to counter-terrorism, and he makes the argument that “British counterterrorist agencies display a set of formal organizational routines, while their French counterparts’ routines are informal in nature” (Foley 2013, p.73). How this may have changed in light of the attacks in France since 2015 or the attacks in the UK in 2017 remains to be seen, but the implementation in France of a state of emergency following the November 2015 attacks (originally for three months but extended several times), as well as President Hollande’s consideration and subsequent rejection of the option to alter the French constitution to increase the powers of the state during a state of emergency, may fundamentally impact the institutional process under these extreme conditions. In his conclusion, Foley says the following: “Even if it can kill on a war-like scale, terrorism is a crime – not an act of war. This is the conviction of those responsible for British and French counterterrorism. In their bid to show that intelligence, police and criminal justice

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<sup>35</sup> “It is not important whether or not the interpretation is correct – if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” - William I Thomas, *The Child in America Behavior: Problems and Programs* (New York: Knopf, 1928).

(rather than military) measures are capable of dealing with the most radical forms of terrorism, they have created more flexible and preventive legal regimes, expanded their intelligence operations and established more muscular forms of policing” (ibid, p.316). This observation is important and addresses the ongoing theme in the literature of counter-terrorism as a military strategy, a criminal justice strategy or a combination of the two. Foley’s ultimate understanding of what makes an effective counter-terrorism strategy is immensely helpful to this thesis. He states that it “needs to be able to monitor, investigate, capture and prosecute the adversary in order to prevent attacks, imprison those who pose a threat, and reduce levels of terrorist activity. But it must do all this without raising the political temperature in a way that could contribute to radicalization” (ibid, p.317). No easy feat.

Aaron M. Hoffman and William Shelby (2017) look at “effective counterterrorism” from an academic viewpoint and show some interesting insights perhaps evidencing the need for multiple approaches to the research in order to attain more comprehensive and useful understanding of the actual working of counter-terrorism strategies. Further, Hoffman and Shelby’s article reflect on the understanding of counter-terrorism strategies leading to a more confident population. This links with the research conducted for this thesis, specifically the category of Transparency in the model through which CONTEST is analysed in Chapter 5. They focus on the psychological aspects of counter-terrorism, while applying empirical approaches to their research. Their research is approached through two questions “...whether information about effective counterterrorism increases people’s (1) confidence in the ability of governments to protect them from future attacks and (2) intention to approach terrorism-affected areas” (Hoffman & Shelby 2017, p.621). They go on to describe the methodology of their research as relying on “aggregate data on public opinion”, consistent with EPPM (Extended Parallel Process Model)<sup>36</sup>. In particular, they use laboratory experiments as a means of solving previously existing issues of correlation and use ANOVA to analyse the data. What the methodology of this study shows is that there is an ever-broadening scope of methods and tools which can be applied to counter-terrorism studies. While there may still be a prevalence of literature review studies, some movement away from these are showing the growing commitment of scholars to understand the complexities of counter-terrorism on multiple levels. All in all, the three studies conducted in Hoffman & Shelby’s research project suggest that “... information about effective counterterrorism can increase confidence in the capacity of governments to meet terrorism’s challenges” (ibid, p.627). The authors note that “[t]he experiments also cast doubt on the idea that counterterrorism necessarily increases feelings of insecurity ... The ability of governments to respond to terrorism effectively may play a role in determining the degree to which people experience insecurity at all” (ibid, p.627). As previously mentioned, this study

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<sup>36</sup> “Scholars in health communication often turn to the Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM) of fear appeals (Witte 1992, 1994; Witte and Allen 2000) to distinguish successful fear appeals from unsuccessful ones.” (Hoffman a Shelby 2017, 620)

is a welcome quantitative contribution to the field and indicates an effort to expand on the methodological constraints previously identified in the field of counter-terrorism.

Chapter 6 of Martha Crenshaw and Gary LaFree's 2017 book 'Countering Terrorism' discusses the challenges of measuring counter-terrorism effectiveness. In addition to providing insights into the various challenges of this area of research, the authors go through a list of previously suggested methods of understanding this effectiveness, which include interrupted time series, meta-analysis of existing studies and ecological studies. They note that "Conceptualizing and measuring the effectiveness of policies and practices aimed at countering terrorism are tasks that are if anything even more difficult than conceptualizing and measuring terrorism itself" (Crenshaw & LaFree 2017, p.192). They go on to say that "it is hard to construct a strategy on the basis of open-ended goals and extremely complex measures of progress toward meeting them" (ibid, p.192). However, in terms of the perceived challenges governments therefore face in convincing publics that the counter-terrorism measures in place are working, this thesis has not necessarily found this to be the case. The research carried out for this project indicates that, overall, the public does believe counter-terrorism strategies to be effective. Of course, this omits the vocal minority of people who consider the contrary to be true, and this issue is not something that will be explored in much depth in this particular study. Crenshaw and LaFree state that "Research and policy on counterterrorism could certainly be improved by providing clear and systematic measures of counterterrorist policies implemented and their effectiveness" (ibid, p.193). However, the authors take the US' counter-terrorism strategy as their basis of analysis and, while at times the understandings this raises can be applied more broadly to other counter-terrorism strategies, this is not always the case. For example, in terms of generalizability, they reflect on the oft touted statement that 'you can't prove a negative'. This has been taken to be true in the broad counter-terrorism field. On the other hand, they note that "it is not easy to know the government's overall goal, the desired end state" (ibid, p.167). This researcher would argue that this might be the case in the US, but one of the advantages for researchers in the UK is a relatively clearly presentation of goals and indications of success, at least in the 2011 version of CONTEST. Whether these are achievable is a separate issue. This emphasises the importance of looking at various counter-terrorism strategies in depth as individual stratagems, but also highlights the challenge of developing a 'one-size fits all' analysis for counter-terrorism more broadly.

### **1.6.3 CONTEST and the UK Counter-Terrorism Landscape**

When it comes to looking more specifically at the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, Andrew Staniforth's significant contribution to the field titled 'The Routledge Companion to UK Counter-Terrorism' (2013) is a good place to start. In particular, his account of the initial development of CONTEST as a strategy,

led by Sir David Omand, is helpful in establishing why the strategy was developed in the way that it was. He describes Omand's identification of the first steps in developing the strategy as being to establish "ends, ways and means" and he goes on to say, "[f]rom identifying these key issues, counter-measures could then be constructed, but such a strategy could not be so bold as to state that it could stop terrorist attacks" (Staniforth 2013, p.268). Staniforth goes on to describe the challenges of developing a counter-terrorism strategy. He notes that "[d]evising a counter-terrorism strategy is complex because free and democratic society offers terrorists the same freedoms in which to operate, and a counter-terrorism strategy must preserve the very freedoms that the terrorists wish to exploit ... In the post-9/11 era, governments across the world have devised counter-terrorism strategies considering three broad responses which include the use of the military, criminal justice and, more recently, community based models" (Staniforth 2013, p.269). He follows this on with a more detailed analysis of the three responses, as well as the four workstreams of CONTEST. He also provides an overview of several reviews of the strategy which is both relevant and interesting to the research here. These reviews are important contributions to the evaluation of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, regardless of whether they have been conducted through qualitative or quantitative means. Again, the UK's strategy is a very interesting one to analyse precisely because there is an element of self-assessment, flawed and heavily criticised as it may be. Staniforth, in a chapter titled 'Counting the Cost' and in a sub-section titled 'Measuring success' notes that areas for reflection and improvement have been identified. He quotes a police practitioner's reflection on what could have been done differently in terms of Prevent, stating: "ACC Wright explains how: the police service has been instrumental in tackling numerous Prevent issues across all five strands of the [CONTEST] strategy, yet this has, occasionally, left many partners in our wake. The 'can do' culture of the police has sometimes had the impact whereby Prevent initiatives that may have been more effectively taken forward by partners have been subsumed by the police. Looking back, collaboration would have been a better option from the outset in most circumstances" (Staniforth 2013, p.329). This is important within the context of this thesis, as learning is considered an important theme of the analytical tool developed in Chapter 5. This account provides an insight into ongoing reflection that is taking place among the various actors functioning within the strategy. While not quantifiable data, it certainly counts for something that this type of analysis is being undertaken, although, whether changes are being made and practically implemented remains to be seen. Again, this is happening at the practitioner level, and academic analysis seems wanting in the area of learning and whether or not improvements and adjustments have been made. Instead, the studies this thesis identified provided criticism or praise but not a balanced and empirical analysis of the significant grey area that lies between the two.

John Gearson and Hugo Rosemont's 2015 study attempts to provide an alternative contribution to the study of CONTEST. They note that, "[w]hereas past scholarly contributions on this subject have tended to offer either supportive or highly critical appraisals of various aspects of British CT law and policy,

this article offers a fresh way of assessing CONTEST, focusing its analysis on the cohesiveness of the strategy itself, in the context of wider discussions on what actually constitutes ‘strategy’” (Gearson & Rosemont 2015, p.2). In a follow on to this, they note that “[j]udgments on the state of contemporary British CT policy tend toward either high praise or significant criticism” and “not a single account to our knowledge has previously sought to evaluate in any detail the potential strengths and weaknesses of CONTEST as an overall strategy” (ibid, p.3). This issue, in this researcher’s view, indicates a fundamental problem, as it implies an absence of unbiased analysis reflecting the reality of a complex public strategy. Neither high praise nor significant criticism alone will help ensure an effective counter-terrorism strategy and this thesis, through a multi-faceted research strategy, seeks to address this apparent gap looking, if you will, at the ‘good, the bad and the ugly’ of the CONTEST strategy as a whole as well as through its individual workstreams. Gearson and Rosemont’s paper provides important insights into the effectiveness of CONTEST but, much like the studies it reflects on, it does not provide any quantifiable insights. While clearly moving the research forward, its conclusions manage to simply highlight strengths and weaknesses based on the authors’ perceptions. They state that the UK’s “approach has essentially been a pragmatic and reactive one—while this is clearly not to be discouraged in addressing immediate or urgent issues, the effectiveness of the approach in addressing longer-term components of the strategy (such as counterextremism) is suffering” (ibid, p.4). Ultimately, one of the main issues with this article is its assumption that a military component was required for CONTEST to truly be considered a strategy. Yet, the ideal end point in terms of preventing terrorism and stopping attacks, this thesis argues, is to arrest and successfully prosecute the perpetrators. This sets it firmly in the area of a crime-fighting strategy, and while international elements of counter-terrorism may require a military approach, the focus of CONTEST consciously on domestic issues makes it no less of a strategy.

The study of Kieran Hardy (2015) looks at the idea of resilience in terms of counter-terrorism, focusing in particular on the workstreams of Prevent and Prepare. He notes that resilience “describes the capacity to absorb the impact of a shock or disturbance and to recover in its aftermath” (Hardy 2015, p.90). However, Hardy’s research uncovers a more fluid use of the term within the various CONTEST publications, raising another definitional demon to grapple with in addition to the long-standing ‘terrorism’ and ‘counter-terrorism’ ones. He notes that “[d]iscussions about the meaning of the term and its attendant benefits and dangers need to be grounded in context – in the laws, policies, procedures and methods which determine the shape and operation of resilience-building efforts on the ground” (ibid, p.90). Because of the changing understanding of what resilience is, he believes that “...resilience-building measures ... have significantly blurred the lines between coercive and non-coercive approaches to crime prevention ... the 2008 [published in 2009] strategy generated significant suspicion and resentment because it included resilience-building projects in an otherwise coercive counter-terrorism agenda” (ibid, p.89). In showing the problems that use of the term ‘resilience’ can raise, he

identifies that “the concept appears to be particularly problematic when it shapes community responses to politics, religion and ideology, and less problematic when it helps communities respond to isolated harms. This is important because the existing literature has focused heavily on emergency response procedures ... whereas little if any attention has been paid to resilience in the context of countering extremism” (ibid, p.91). This reflects similar findings identified in the research carried out for this thesis which highlight the importance of terminology and the impact it can have on the understanding of various aspects of the strategy. In a final point, Hardy notes that, “resilience-based policies can generate ongoing fear in populations. In the context of emergency response procedures, they may contribute to ongoing civil anxiety about terrorist attacks. In the context of countering extremism, they contribute to an ongoing fear that individuals will be targeted with counter-terrorism interventions for expressing controversial ideas. In the latter case, these dangers could be avoided if communities were encouraged to adapt and transform in response to political and religious diversity, rather than isolate and exclude those whom the state considers to be a ‘shock’ or ‘disturbance’ to the community” (ibid, p.91). In light of this pressing issue, and in terms of future research, Hardy notes that “scholars should carefully inquire as to whether policy strategies are in fact designed to build resilience, or whether governments are invoking the term while in fact pursuing other objectives” (ibid, p.91). Hardy’s study highlights the challenges facing counter-terrorism strategists, as well as the vastness of specific study focuses available to scholars to improve our understanding of counter-terrorism impacts.

Finally, in 2020 Dylan Aplin and Marian Brooke Rogers undertook a review of Project ARGUS - a simulation exercise based in the UK which aims to provide training to different public-facing areas to ensure increased preparedness in the case of a terrorist attack. Following the provision of an overview of the project, as well as a slew of other training projects focused on different areas of the economy<sup>37</sup>, the authors proceed to provide an overview of the methodology of the study, which included pre- and post- training event questionnaires, delayed follow up questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The research concluded that while participants looked positively on the exercise, the implementation of learning was far more complex with issues such as ‘time’ and ‘cost’ providing challenges to practical implementation of the training. The authors carried out statistical testing of the results, although these are not well explained in the thesis. What is interesting is that this study appears to be the first academic analysis conducted of Project ARGUS since its inception in 2007. Clearly, a need for ongoing research on the topic and improvement to meet the changing landscape of terrorism is needed. They state, “[t]he product has not been found wanting in terms of realism, relevance and the way in which it has served to move beyond the old and limited constituency of participants in preparedness and emergency

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<sup>37</sup> As context regarding the various training projects which are in place in the UK, Project ARGUS is focused on the retail sector, while, for example, Project Griffin focuses on security and reception staff. Both of these projects, through their varied sector focus, provide training to people in different areas of the economy. This shows a clear understanding for the need to provide nuanced training to people in multiple jobs and circumstances on how to mitigate a terror attack as well as respond to it.

planning, to address the new normality of international terrorism” (Aplin & Rogers 2020, p.179). The authors recommend, among others, that evaluation take place as well as certification, which would improve the efficacy of the programme and encourage compliance. This study was interesting for this thesis as it showed the potential for the application of quantitative study on counter-terrorism activities. However, outside of the basic survey and interview analysis, the quantitative element of the thesis was under-explained and indicates that further studies should be made on this topic as well as on the other exercises noted by the authors.

## **1.7 Final Introductory Comments**

This literature review has provided an overview of the most relevant literature addressing the field of counter-terrorism more broadly, as well as the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy more specifically. It also provides some insights into significant gaps in the field and the slow progress of research over the past four decades, particularly in terms of methodological diversity, philosophical underpinnings, empirically-based primary source studies and balanced insights into the field. While many more publications built on the understanding gleaned through this analysis, the above selection proves sufficient for this thesis to expose the challenges to undertaking research on the impact of counter-terrorism strategies. However, it also provides insights into the opportunities still available to the determined researcher and this thesis uses these opportunities to build an informed, multi-dimensional research project based on a mixed methods research design where both qualitative and quantitative tools are applied to the analysis of, in particular, CONTEST.

## **Chapter 2: Methodological Considerations**

### **2.1 Introduction and Outline**

The methodological design of many projects addressing counter-terrorism, as can be seen from the literature explored in Chapter 1, focuses on either qualitative or quantitative methodological approaches. However, the oft-identified challenges of studying counter-terrorism can be better addressed, this researcher argues, through a flexible world view and through a mixed methods approach. The complexity inherent in counter-terrorism requires a complex approach to analysis and this is best achieved through taking a pragmatic approach to the understanding of the world, as well as by looking at the micro (through qualitative methods) and macro (through quantitative methods) levels. Indeed, the analytical tool developed in Chapter 5 applies micro, meso and macro levels within its framework. As this combination has not been undertaken previously, this research will at least make a first step in filling this gap in the field of counter-terrorism research. While it is likely to draw criticism from purists, those who believe that research should be approached through either qualitative or quantitative research methods, the argument is made that holding to traditional approaches in studying counter-terrorism has resulted in one-dimensional studies that have stalled the progress greatly needed in the field.

The methodological framework presented in this chapter is central to the structure of this thesis. Rather than utilising a traditional qualitative research design or quantitative research design, this research applies a mixed methods approach which allows for a more holistic analysis of what is a highly complex and dynamic government strategy. It is the mixed methods framework that drives the empirical aspects of the research and ensures that the thesis can appropriately address the lacuna in the academic research of counter-terrorism strategies.

This chapter's objective is to provide some insights into the current methodological considerations for counter-terrorism scholarship generally and for this thesis specifically. First, current methodologies in relation to research of counter-terrorism strategies are briefly explored, and this is followed by the specific methodology of this thesis. This final section will be presented in two parts: an overview of the chosen mixed methods approach is provided, including the merits and the challenges of this methodology; and an overview of the specific methods applied to the research is then described. For clarification purposes, the methodological considerations regarding the quantitative tool are not addressed here but are instead presented in Chapter 5 along with the findings.

## 2.2 Methodological Considerations

### 2.2.1 Current methodological approaches to counter-terrorism research

Research on counter-terrorism is growing, but the methodologies applied to the research tend to be singular and limited to qualitative or quantitative research. A limited number of studies were located on counter-terrorism that applied a mixed methods research design and this is one of the significant gaps that exist in the field (See Klein et al 2019 as a rare example of such an approach). Additionally, by focusing on one aspect of a counter-terrorism strategy or another, as is usually the case with CONTEST for example, or by speaking very generally to broad global trends, it is difficult to truly understand the complex results and impacts of each counter-terrorism strategy. Combining a multi-level study of counter-terrorism, through quantitative and qualitative methods, allows for a new understanding of counter-terrorism strategies and their potential impact.

In order to situate the decisions made in terms of the methodology of this thesis, it is a useful exercise to first explore, contextually, the current research related to this field.

A good attempt at providing a robust and systematic research project was undertaken by Donald Holbrook. While he focused on extremism and not counter-terrorism, his methodology was systematic and contributed to an otherwise under-developed methodology type for this general area<sup>38</sup>. Holbrook undertakes a discourse analysis of language used around extremism in an effort to try to identify different “‘gradients’ of content” (Holbrook 2015, p.57). He attempts to convert what is taken to be a highly “subjective and relative” (ibid, p.58) term, extremism, into a clear and understandable framework. In justifying his approach, Holbrook discusses the nuances inherent in extremist messaging which require “systematic, testable and repeatable tools of measurement” (ibid, p.58). Further, he indicates that “standardised and systematic grading may offer ways in which to compare discourses from different extremist cohorts...” (ibid, p.58). This is an important part in the rationale behind the approach taken in this thesis, where the development of a model is intended to provide a standardised and systematic approach to understanding various core aspects of counter-terrorism strategies. While acknowledging the limitations of his research project, namely the subjectivity of decisions made in terms of grading extremist content, Holbrook nonetheless makes a positive impact on moving research in this area towards a more systematic methodology.

Kai M. Thaler discusses the application of mixed methods in the study of conflict. One of the rare examples of mixed methods research in this area, Thaler’s research focuses on the benefits afforded to

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<sup>38</sup> It is appropriate to mention here that many of the studies located through this research applied interesting or relevant methodologies but were predominantly focused on one narrow element of counter-terrorism, on more militaristic interventions or on terrorism itself rather than counter-terrorism. Nonetheless, it was considered appropriate to look at methodologies of interest, even if they applied to related areas of study rather than counter-terrorism itself.

the study of social and political conflict through the application of mixed methods research. He states that “[t]his article argues that MMR [mixed methods research] increases our leverage on complex puzzles in the study of violence and conflict and is likely to reward scholars who use this approach with valuable empirical insights that will aid in theory testing and development” (Thaler 2017, p.59). Thaler provides convincing arguments for the combined application of qualitative and quantitative research, identifying that each type of research works best on different levels – micro and macro – and thus the combination of the two types can only positively contribute to our understanding of conflict. This also applies to the understanding of counter-terrorism strategies and, while challenging, it is worth engaging further with this methodology. Thaler describes the usefulness of qualitative micro level research in understanding social and individual level violence while quantitative macro level investigations shed light on the broader picture. This too is a useful baseline for the study of counter-terrorism strategies. By looking only at the state or macro level, important undercurrents of understanding are missed at the micro level. Thaler categorises the studies he has looked at throughout his paper into three areas: integrated, complementary and supplementary (ibid, p.66). He states that “In each of these types, evidence from one method can be used either to enhance evidence from another in an additive manner, adding additional weight to the scale in favor [sic] of a particular argument, or it can be used for confirmation, to test propositions generated using one method in order to confirm or disconfirm hypotheses” (ibid, p.66). In particular, this thesis applies what Thaler would classify as “connected complementary” where “the presentation of findings from the second method consciously relates the findings to those of the first method” (ibid, p.66).

Overall, while interesting publications on mixed methods are available and, by all accounts, are growing in popularity among the social sciences, there continues to be a scarcity of these methodologies in terms of counter-terrorism research. Challenges abound with this type of methodology, but the advantages are equally prevalent. Further, while acknowledging this complexity, it was deemed appropriate to at least explore the applicability of conducting a mixed methods research project on counter-terrorism strategies. This ultimately drives the primary goal of this research, identified in Chapter 1.

In looking at the benefits of the two mainstream categories of research design, Thaler points out that “[q]uantitative research appears more useful for capturing patterns in the variation of violence and conflict and understanding its distribution and correlates. Qualitative research appears more useful for understanding motivations, experiences of violence and their psychosocial effects, or capturing the processes of violent and conflictual situations. Given these different strengths, it is important when using mixed methods to be clear in defining the concepts and variables that each method is capturing” (ibid, p.69). There are clearly advantages to combining these two methodological categories when researching a phenomenon as complex as counter-terrorism. However, the challenges are equally important to understand, particularly when it comes to the robustness of the findings. In particular, the

combination of the two approaches results in a ‘smart’ approach where hard numerical data and softer qualitative data result in more balanced, but perhaps less concrete, outcomes. In line with this, “...researchers should be clear about the potential differences between what each method is measuring. Following this line of argument, Ahram (2009, p. 6)<sup>39</sup> cautions us to view mixed methods as only “complementary, rather than corroborating,” if concepts are being stretched across methods” (ibid, p.69).

### **2.2.2 Methodological approach to this research project**

Creswell provides an excellent overview of the various uses for quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies. He notes that, depending on the problem being explored, different approaches are necessary. Some might require a quantitative approach, such as when exploring “the utility of an intervention”, while others require a qualitative design, where “... a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it” (Creswell 2009, p.18). He goes on to say that “[q]ualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. This type of approach may be needed when the topic is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample of group of people, and existing theories do not apply with the particular sample or group under study” (ibid, p.35). This particularly applies to the research carried out for this project; the qualitative research was carried out first, exploring CONTEST to provide an in-depth understanding of the strategy, followed by the application of the learning from that stage in the development of an analytical tool.

The decision to utilise a mixed methods approach to this research as opposed to a more traditional, single methodology, was made in consideration of a number of factors. First was the complexity of the task at hand. Both terrorism and counter-terrorism, are complex and highly challenging concepts which defy clear and unanimous definitions. They adapt over time and space depending on the ideologies and motives of those using terrorist and counter-terrorist tactics. To date, traditional studies have left gaps in understanding these issues, and a new perspective was required. Secondly, while there would be an advantage to studying the UK’s counter-terrorism policies solely through a quantitative lens, one must question how far any analysis could go without both exploration (qualitative methods) and explanation (quantitative methods). Numbers must be interpreted, and numerical data on its own cannot fully expose the nuance of counter-terrorism policies. Several studies have been undertaken highlighting the challenges and lacunae of counter-terrorism research, but do not themselves attempt to undertake the study (see Horgan & Braddock 2010; Adams, Nordhaus & Shellenberger 2011; Munich & Spencer

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<sup>39</sup> Thaler (2017) is citing: Ahram, A. (2009) Making Mixed Methods Work: The Challenge of Conceptual Stretching in Causal Analysis, APSA 2009 Toronto Meeting Paper, SSRN.

2006; and Christmann 2012). While these studies add to the literature, they are limited in how much further they can take the evaluation of counter-terrorism and, as mentioned previously, there is an admitted under-representation of empirical study around the subject of counter-terrorism policy evaluation. The logical conclusion was that a complex phenomenon requires a complex research project to analyse it, and a mixed methods strategy would provide a valuable framework through which to explore counter-terrorism policies.

The purpose of utilising a two-phase, exploratory mixed methods study was to first explore themes and patterns of counter-terrorism policies under CONTEST through interviews, public opinion polls, databases and secondary source analysis and then use the findings of this first phase to develop an analytical tool through which to further understand the findings. It was hoped that this tool would be applicable to counter-terrorism strategies more broadly, although this project would focus on the UK's counter-terrorism strategy.

The first phase of the research was a qualitative, systematic exploration of counter-terrorism policies in the UK. This was obtained through the collection of data from both primary and secondary sources. Throughout the entirety of the research, no single aspect of CONTEST was focused on; rather, all four workstreams that sit under the CONTEST strategy were studied. Themes emerging from this qualitative data were then developed into categories which could be used in the development of an analytical tool through which to explore the impact, or more specifically performance, of counter-terrorism both thematically and numerically and in a systematic way. Developing this tool, based on in-depth knowledge of the UK's CONTEST strategy as a case study, allowed for the measurement<sup>40</sup> of the individual impact of the four workstreams of CONTEST, the outcomes of the categories themselves as well as the overall impact of the strategy. Thus, CONTEST was evaluated in the multi-dimensional spectrum and the overall findings of both stages were considered at a meta-level.

There are a number of different mixed methodology 'typologies' which have become, to some extent, standard, although the variations and combinations are not exhaustive. These typologies "help researchers decide how to proceed when designing their [Mixed Methods] studies. They provide a variety of paths, or ideal design types, that may be chosen to accomplish the goals of the study" (Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009, p.139). A number of criteria can be assessed and answered in the development of a mixed methods research design, and the answers to these questions relating to the criteria can direct the researcher as to which methodology to use. This thesis uses a sequential exploratory design, as it would most likely benefit the research of this study.

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<sup>40</sup> As will be explored in Chapter 5, the ability to provide measurable findings from the model developed is problematic as the decision-making process regarding scores is largely subjective. Nonetheless, it is argued that the transparency on how the scoring is applied, as well as the fact the scoring is based on informed decision making, somewhat offsets this issue. Further, the model is a useful stepping stone towards a robust and effective measurement tool and progressing research in this area.

Sequential<sup>41</sup> was chosen as the ‘type of implementation process’ for several reasons, not least the fact this type of process is beneficial to studies that have limited resources attached to them. The selection of this implementation process served a practical purpose given the fact that a single researcher with limited resources was working on the project. With the restrictive time-frame of the project to be considered, it seemed sensible to approach the research in phases, with the results of the first phase contributing to the research of the second phase. Sequential research design is also a useful approach when undertaking exploratory studies.

The function of the research was exploratory for a number of reasons. Early on in the research process it became clear that a significant number of publications relating to CONTEST were available as open-access, and yet much of the data behind these documents were classified. This would prove challenging when trying to develop a measuring tool, and so a better understanding of CONTEST as a whole, including the inter-functionality of its moving parts as well as the threat landscape of the UK would be needed before moving forward with a measurement tool. For this reason, an exploratory design was deemed to be the most useful and appropriate in these circumstances. By using the first phase to explore appropriate themes to focus on, what areas would have accessible data and what patterns could be further examined, it would be possible to formulate a quantitative tool in the second phase of the research.

The research was designed in two phases, with the first phase concluding before the commencement of the second phase. This would mean that some findings would be made in each chapter of the first phase, providing stand-alone and useful insights into data and perspectives regarding counter-terrorism and the threat landscape in the UK. These findings would inform the design of the second phase, presented as its own chapter, which would produce its own findings. A meta-analysis of the findings of the entire study would then be presented in the concluding chapter. The importance of both the qualitative research and the quantitative research meant that neither phase received priority and the research conducted was balanced. Although the order of the qualitative phase came first, this was not intended to indicate any priority in the research, but rather was a logical decision, the reasons for which are addressed above. Finally, the study was a mixed methods study, utilising interviews, document analysis and surveys to fully explore CONTEST as a strategy.

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<sup>41</sup> “Sequential mixed designs are designs in which at least two strands occur chronologically (QUAN – QUAL or QUAL – QUAN). The conclusions based on the results of the first strand lead to the formulation of design components for the next strand. The final inferences are based on the results of both strands of the study. The second strand of the study is conducted either to confirm or disconfirm inferences from the first strand or to provide further explanation for its findings” (Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009, p.153).

All research designs have strengths and weaknesses, and so it is important to balance these and align them with resources and abilities as well the contextual premise of the research. All things considered, a sequential exploratory research design was the most appropriate in the circumstances of this study.

The first phase of the research undertook a complex and multi-dimensional approach to the topic of counter-terrorism. First of all, rather than reviewing counter-terrorism strategies as a whole, an endeavour whose resources were clearly outside of the scope of this thesis, a case study methodology was chosen with the focus on the UK's CONTEST strategy. Within this case study, a number of methods were applied to the data collection and analytical components of the research. Interviews with practitioners in the field, as well as online document collection and review were carried out in the initial stages. Once the data had been collected, the NVivo software platform was used to store, organise, code and analyse the documents. Following these steps, the findings of this first phase of research were further analysed in terms of categories of importance relating to counter-terrorism strategies, and an analytical tool based on these categories was developed. This tool was explored both qualitatively through text and quantitatively through the development of a basic scoring system.

With regard to the interview stage of the data collection, it is important to understand both the advantages and disadvantages to this type of data collection tool, as well as the challenges in the process. This research used a semi-structured interview style. The interviews were recorded digitally (audio only) and the interviews were then transcribed. The advantage of conducting semi-structured interviews is that it allows the researcher to impose a structural framework, ensuring that a core number of questions are answered and which have been designed to further the research. However, it is also important to ask open-ended questions, as this may inform the research and prove important in the development of the data collection.

While the design certainly had its challenges, it ultimately provided more positives than negatives. With the complexity of the subject of counter-terrorism, a complex research design would provide appropriate depth of analysis, bolstering the findings of both the qualitative research and the quantitative research to reach solid conclusions and the development of an effective quantitative tool through which to evaluate counter-terrorism strategies. In addition, because research of this nature, particularly quantitative research, does not yet appear to have been conducted on CONTEST, it would be best to start with a qualitative phase which would allow for patterns to be assessed, thus informing the categories for the next phase. By analysing the data collected in the first phase, the appropriate questions could then be streamlined to inform the quantitative phase, providing thematic focus for the tool development. Overall, despite the predicted challenges, it was decided that this methodology was appropriate and would prove the most effective for this particular research project.

### 2.2.3 Data Collection: Interviews

In total, 11 interviews were conducted over two periods. Four interviews were conducted between 16 and 17 March 2017. A further seven interviews were conducted between 27 April 2017 and 4 May 2017. These interviews were conducted with practitioners and experts in the field from a range of professions associated with counter-terrorism in the UK. They were selected based on perceived knowledge of the subject matter and in light of their roles with regard to counter-terrorism. Therefore, representatives from the Metropolitan Police, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), local authorities (in the London area), legal experts, think tanks and the civil aviation industry were contacted and interviews were successfully conducted. Also contacted were representatives of Border Security, the Home Office, the House of Commons, the Security and Intelligence Committee, MI5, GCHQ, Belmarsh Prison as well as a number of individual experts. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons<sup>42</sup>, interviews could not be arranged with representatives from these areas.

The design of the interview questions was based on a semi-structured interview design. This was done to ensure that answers were measurable across all of the interviews. 20 questions were closed questions requiring a 'yes' or 'no' response. All other questions were open and provided the interviewees with an opportunity to elaborate on their answers to the closed questions or answer more broadly on a wider selection of questions. Questions were broken into three groups. The first grouping consisted of basic questions, asking about personal understanding of CONTEST and experience in the field. The second grouping went into more detail on these questions, looking at the terminology of CONTEST and seeking the perspectives of the interviewees. The final section was specifically focused on evaluations and procedures related to evaluations in the counter-terrorism field. The interview questions are presented in Appendix B.

A factor that needs to be borne in mind regarding these interviews was that they were conducted over a period of high terrorist activity in the UK. The responses of various interviewees, therefore, were impacted to some extent by the events taking place. In particular, questions regarding the frequency of, and reaction to, events in the UK were impacted by the activity in London in March 2017 (later events took place after all interviews were completed).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> These reasons included clearance and availability. In one instance, interviews with a number of individuals working in DSTL (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) were in the process of being arranged, but the process was halted when direct approval from the Home Office was unforthcoming.

<sup>43</sup> Participants 1, 2, 3 and 4 were interviewed on 17 March 2017. The remaining participants were interviewed between 27 April 2017 and 4 May 2017. While Participants 1, 2, 3 and 4 were offered the opportunity to add to their responses in light of the Westminster Bridge attack of 22 March 2017, only Participant 1 chose to do so. Therefore, the responses of Participants 2, 3 and 4 were based on the absence of Islamist terrorist events since the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in 2013 and the murder of MP Jo Cox in 2016 by an XRW individual, two attacks which targeted individuals rather than mass casualties.

#### **2.2.4 Data Collection: Documents**

In order to triangulate the data acquired throughout the interview process, relevant documents were collected to provide further information expanding the analysis and further assisting in the development of robust data. It was decided that the best way to start this was by looking at the industries and organisations in which the individuals who had been engaged for the interviews worked. These included the Metropolitan Police, local authorities in the London area and the Mayor of London's Office. A search was conducted on these websites using the terms 'terrorism' and 'counter terrorism'. All relevant documents were downloaded and saved into appropriate folders on a personal desktop computer.

In addition to the documents found on these websites, the websites of the IRTL and the Government were also reviewed. Again, for the Government website, the search terms 'terrorism' and 'counter terrorism' were applied. The documents identified in this search were also saved to folders on a personal computer and were organised by type. Types included government documents, reports, data and statistics, articles. The IRTL did not require a search for terms as all reports issued by this office were of relevance to the research in this thesis. These documents were saved to a dedicated folder and included annual reports as well as bespoke reports requested of the various independent reviewers within the timeframe of this research (2001 to 2018). Three Independent Reviewers have held the role in this timeframe: Lord Carlile QC (2001 – 2011), David Anderson QC (2011 – 2017) and Max Hill (2017 – October 2018) and all published reports from these individuals are accessible through the website.

These document searches were not necessarily exhaustive, and do not lay out a complete and full record of all publications on the topic of counter-terrorism in the UK. Nor does this thesis purport to be the definitive account of research which has already taken place on the subject of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy. Other studies and publications, some of which have been discussed in Chapter 1, have already provided some oversight of the range of documents which have been located by teams of researchers, as well as the division of typology of these documents. However, this was not the intention of this thesis and this stage, being qualitative, was instead focused on gathering a relatively broad sample of different types of documents providing information on the UK's counter terrorism strategy.

Once all of the documents were collected, a spreadsheet was prepared which listed the document titles. As much as was possible, the titles were standardised and additional information such as folder location, date collected and the theme (i.e. type of document) were included in columns. The documents recorded in this spreadsheet numbered 1,147. Following this, additional search terms were applied in order to streamline the number of documents. These key words were 'evaluation', 'review', 'assessment', 'analysis', 'oversight', 'reports' and 'policy'. Ultimately, these initial searches returned the following results:

Table 2.1 Overview of keyword search and resulting documents.

<b>Keyword Search</b>	<b>Number of Results</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	9 documents
<b>Review</b>	63 documents
<b>Assessment</b>	28 documents
<b>Analysis</b>	3 documents
<b>Oversight</b>	3 documents
<b>Reports</b>	232 documents
<b>Policy</b>	32 documents
<b>Total</b>	<b>370 documents<sup>44</sup></b>

Within this group, it was deemed that certain documents were more or less important to the research and, given the time constraints of the research, these documents were organised in a list in order of importance for analysis. This would ensure that the most relevant documents to the research were assessed within allotted timeframes. Ultimately, the division of work resulted in 103 documents which were expected to be of greatest relevance and which were deemed to represent a reasonable spread of data and information on the broad array of subjects which sit under CONTEST. A further 323 documents were ultimately identified as highly relevant, but which, based on a number of constraints, could not be reviewed in greater detail in the Coding Project (CP) and were stored in a separate folder.

### **2.2.5 Coding the Data through NVivo**

NVivo was chosen as the appropriate software for the project in light of its user-friendly interface, online tutorials and an appropriate level of functionality enabling the research to be carried out. Some decisions had to be made prior to starting a project in NVivo. As noted above, it was decided to split the collected documents into those of ‘greatest relevance’ (which totalled 103) and those of ‘significant

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<sup>44</sup> This number of 370 was the result of the initial organisation of documents. In total, 426 documents were deemed to be of particular relevance to the project, the additional numbers a result of references to further useful sources referenced within the documents. 103 documents were selected for the NVivo Coding Project (CP) and 323 documents were put aside in a separate folder for potential future research. The additional documents which were identified throughout the coding process were added, as appropriate, to either the CP or the separate folder. Therefore, the most relevant figures to this part of the research are those laid out in this note and within the textual content of the thesis, rather than the table itself which provides a snapshot at that point in time, albeit a useful one.

relevance'. All of the documents considered to be of 'greatest relevance' to the project were therefore uploaded to an NVivo project titled 'Coding Project', and this is referred to throughout this thesis as CP. The other documents were held aside for potential future research.

The process to this point resulted in a deep dive of the 103 documents, which included the interview transcripts. As will be noted below, following the coding of these documents, additional documents and datasets were explored, although not in the same depth. Information on the steps taken throughout the research and analysis of the CP are further detailed in Appendix C, along with some supporting and clarifying data. The findings themselves will be addressed in Chapters 3 and 4.

### **2.2.6 Additional data collection activities**

The data relied on for this thesis, as outlined above, were interviews (primary sources) and various documents (secondary sources). The CP facilitated the analysis of a selection of these documents and provided a transparent and systematic approach to understanding and organising the vast data within the documentation. However, subsequent to the activities associated with the CP, additional documents were deemed appropriate to explore. For example, CONTEST 2018 had not been published at the time of the CP analysis. Furthermore, various themes which arose throughout the CP encouraged research in different directions, requiring certain relevant documents to be considered in greater depth than before.

Once the coding had been completed, and a basic level of analysis carried out, it became necessary to develop a strategy for answering the research questions. Therefore, in addition to the 103 documents included in the CP, the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) was also explored in terms of terrorist activity in the UK within the timeframe of this project. This part of the research was not appropriate for coding and, instead, data within the parameters of this research were downloaded and streamlined in Excel. This allowed for the analysis of the data on terrorist events in the UK by type, year, deaths and injuries. More detail on these tables can be found in Appendix D.

Further to the documentation contained in the CP and the data presented in the GTD, relevant reports and statistical bulletins (published by the Government) were explored when deemed relevant to answering the research questions of the project.

In relation to the research carried out on perspectives, and in addition to the interviews and the informed opinions of various entities which review and oversee aspects of CONTEST, public opinion polls were explored to further enhance this thesis' understanding of the wide breadth of views on counter-terrorism and terrorism in the UK. In particular Ipsos Mori, ComRes, ICM and Populus were searched for polls

and surveys relating to terrorism and counter-terrorism. Additional information on these polls and surveys can be found in Appendix E.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the public agency responsible for prosecutions in the UK, has significant information on criminal cases on its website. A section specifically on Terrorism provided an oversight of successful prosecutions of those charged with terrorism offences. This data was also explored in addition to the CP, when it became clear that a major theme which arose in the documentation of the CP was Legislation and the Criminal Justice System more broadly.

Datasets attached to reports such as Hate Crime Statistics (2015 to 2019), Individuals Referred to and Supported through the Prevent Programme (2015-2018) and Police Workforce data (2016 to 2019) were also reviewed and incorporated into the analysis where and if applicable.

Finally, basic research was carried out on a selection of international terrorist events which took place throughout the timeframe of the project and which were considered by this researcher to have had some effect on the UK. This may have been deaths or injuries among UK citizens, a high-impact event which resulted in new or changed Government policy, or a high-impact event that, through media coverage, influenced the level of concern expressed by the UK public.

The findings of the qualitative phase of the research are now presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

## **Chapter 3: Data and Trends**

### **3.1 Introduction and Outline**

This chapter provides an overview of the empirical findings of the research, with particular focus on data and trends. Both quantifiable and contextual data were considered important and relevant, and the combination of these highlight a complex pattern of counter-terrorism activity in the UK. Presented as three main categories, this chapter explores the wide-ranging and in-depth work which is undertaken in the UK in the effort to reduce and impact terrorist activity. This exploration brings the research closer to understanding the impact of CONTEST and feeds into the design of the analytical tool, addressed in Chapter 5. The chapter is broken down into three categories which arose from the research undertaken in the CP: Legislation and the Criminal Justice System; Events and the Threat Landscape; Assessment and Oversight. The prevalence of these three categories resulted in a useful organising mechanism for the data which was collected and allows for clear and cohesive presentation. The first section of this chapter looks at the legislative framework and criminal justice system as it applies to counter-terrorism in the UK. Following this, the chapter looks at terrorist events as they impacted on the UK, as well as the identified threats from terrorist activity. Finally, the chapter looks at the oversight structure which is in place in the UK, focusing on assessments, or reviews, and their corresponding reports which assess the various counter-terrorism activities. Each of these three sections is further broken down into relevant sub-sections presented systematically in order to provide clarity and focus in the face of extensive and complex research.

### **3.2 Legislation and the Criminal Justice System**

#### **3.2.1 Legislative Trends in the UK: 2000-2018**

For this part of the research, a timeline was developed based on data contained in the documents within the CP, as well as the additional inclusion of well-known events which have taken place within the timeframe of the project, compiled by the researcher. The findings expose constant legislative formation and reformation depending on many factors. The main piece of legislation which affects current counter-terrorism activities in the UK is the Terrorism Act 2000. This Act was developed before the attacks of 11 September 2001 and in response to the growing understanding in the UK that Islamist

terrorism was a new and urgent threat<sup>45</sup>. Following multiple attacks on US embassies and military targets, as well as Bin Laden’s published *fatwas*<sup>46</sup> against the US and its allies in the West, the Government realised that changes needed to be made to its legislative framework; shifting somewhat from a republican, domestic focus (primarily targeting the Provisional Irish Republican Army or PIRA), to one of an Islamist and ‘international’ focus. The first attack on the World Trade Centre in 1993, as well as a growing concern of radicalisation taking place among British citizens travelling to fight as Mujahideen in the Balkans during the Bosnian Conflict of the early 1990s, pointed to a rising but uncertain threat. However, the attacks in the US in September 2001 focused the threat and were followed by UN Resolution 1373 which required UN member states to apply specific legislation in the face of that threat. Because the UK’s Terrorism Act 2000 was already in place, it only needed to be partially amended by the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 in October 2001, being pushed quickly through both Houses of Parliament and receiving Royal Assent. The next 17 years would see a further 13 terrorism-focused pieces of legislation implemented. The figure below provides an overview of the number of pieces of legislation which have been enacted since 2000.

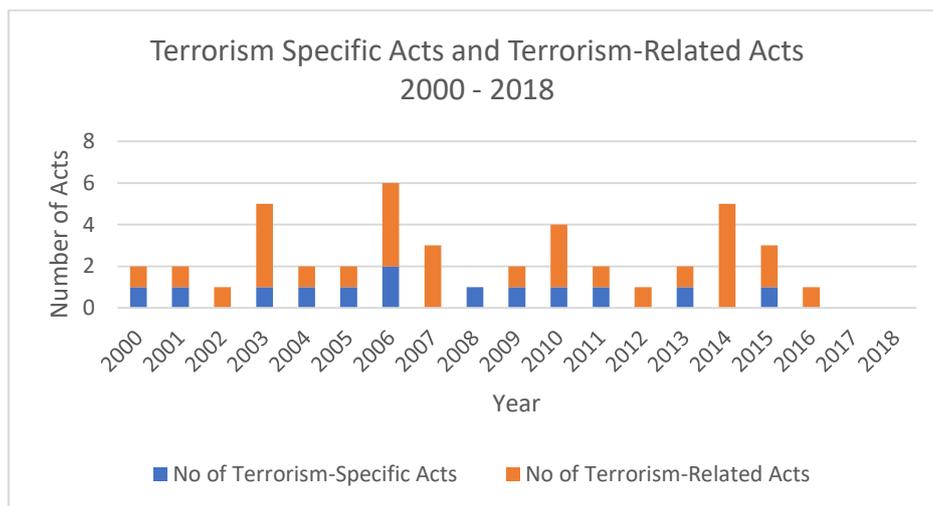


Figure 3.1 An overview of the various pieces of legislation which came into force between 2000 and 2018<sup>47</sup>, distinguished as ‘terrorism-specific acts’ and ‘terrorism-related acts’<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> The terms ‘new’ and ‘urgent’ are used quite loosely here. While the Government, counter-terrorism practitioners and many scholars at the time considered the post 9/11 world to be the start of a new Islamist threat, many others consider this not to have been the case. Al Qaeda was quite active throughout the 1990s, and Islamist terrorism had been in existence long before then, perhaps originating, according to some, with the writings of Sayyid Qutb in the 1950s and 1960s which inspired generations of Islamist extremism. Further exploration of this issue is raised in Chapter 1.

<sup>46</sup> A *fatwa* is considered to be a judgment or ruling on a piece of Islamic law, usually made by an expert in religious law. Bin Laden published two fatwas in the 1990s. The first was in 1996 titled ‘Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places [Saudi Arabia]’. The second was in 1998 and was titled ‘Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders’.

<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting that, while the timeframe for the research carried out here ends in 2018, the Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act was implemented in 2019. This is noteworthy in this particular context given the dearth of legislation produced in the previous two years. However, ultimately this Act was outside the timeframe of the research and was therefore not analysed for this thesis.

<sup>48</sup> These two categories have been constructed by the researcher. Terrorism-specific acts refer to legislation that has been passed with a specific focus on terrorism, usually but not always containing the word ‘terrorism’ in the title. Terrorism-

What this data shows is that, out of 19 years, terrorism-specific legislation was passed in all but seven years (2002, 2007, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018). 2006 saw two pieces of terrorism legislation passed, the highest number for a single year within the timeframe.

These pieces of legislation could be seen as excessive, both in terms of content and numbers, but they did have significant levels of scrutiny, and so, while Figure 3.1 provides a picture of an active legislative landscape, this data alone fails to explain the challenges the government faced in getting its desired legislation through. The vast majority of the terrorism acts that were passed went through a process of public consultation<sup>49</sup>. The consultation process was further assisted by the role of the IRTL who is often invited to provide evidence before various parliamentary committees on the specific piece of legislation being processed. The IRTL's<sup>50</sup> annual reports provide ongoing insights into some of the key pieces of legislation and the ad-hoc reports focus on exploring the efficacy and implementation of some of the more controversial pieces of legislation. Indeed, at times, amendments to certain pieces of legislation came about as a result of the recommendations of the IRTL. For example, in the written evidence David Anderson QC (now Lord Anderson) provided to the Home Affairs Committee in relation to Schedule 7<sup>51</sup> of the Terrorism Act 2000, he stated the following in the section titled 'Developments since July 2013':

The four months since my last report have been the most eventful in the long history of Schedule 7. In addition to the progress of the Bill through Parliament, they have seen:

(a) the publication in July of the Government's response to the public consultation on Schedule 7 which I had recommended in my 2011 report and which was conducted in late 2012, attracting 395 responses. (Anderson, 2013)<sup>52</sup>.

At the same time, not all proposed legislation has been successful, and some bills<sup>53</sup> would never see the light of day. An example of this can be seen in the progress of the proposed 'Extremism Bill', first

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related acts refer to legislation that does not specifically focus on terrorism but rather applies to a broad spectrum of crimes. However, these legislative examples are often used in terrorism cases, and can be found in the Crown Prosecution Service's Terrorism prosecutions section.

<sup>49</sup> Public consultation, in terms of the legislative process in the UK, is best described on the Parliament website, available at: <https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/draft/>

<sup>50</sup> The focus here is on David Anderson QC, whose time as IRTL stretched from 2011 until early 2017. Lord Carlile QC, Anderson's predecessor, also published a number of annual and ad hoc reviews which were researched contextually for this thesis. All of the IRTL's public reports are available on the website: <https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/>

<sup>51</sup> "Police officers at Ports play a key role in countering the terrorist threat and have powers under Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000 to stop, question, search and if necessary detain people entering or leaving the UK. This also applies to those travelling within the UK on board a ship or aircraft."

(<https://www.npcc.police.uk/Schedule%207/Schedule%207%20Public%20Information%20Leaflet.pdf>)

<sup>52</sup> All of the IRTL's public reports are available on the website <https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/>

<sup>53</sup> "A Bill is a proposal for a new law, or a proposal to change an existing law that is presented for debate before Parliament. Bills are introduced in either the House of Commons or House of Lords for examination, discussion and amendment. When both Houses have agreed on the content of a Bill it is then presented to the reigning monarch for approval (known as Royal

mentioned in the 2015 Queen's Speech. By the following year, the Bill had not yet materialised, although a Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill was announced. While elements of these two Bills overlapped, the initial Bill proposed in 2015 proved too controversial. For example, Anderson urged caution with regard to the Bill, noting "... previous legislation impinging on free speech has been controversial, and suggested that public consultation on the proposals could have been helpful in engendering cross-community support. He identified 15 issues that Parliament would need to address as it scrutinised the Bill" (Dawson & Godec 2017, p.21). This, among other issues such as definitional challenges, seems to have impacted moving these Bills forward. Interestingly, on the Parliament Website page, which provides an overview of the proposed 2016 Bill, it notes "it was never entirely clear to us what problem the new legislation was designed to combat. The promotion of extremist views is already the subject of a comprehensive list of criminal offences" (Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2016). As Dawson and Godec went on to report, the "Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill did not materialise during the course of the 2016-17 session" (ibid., p.28). These Bills are part of a fluid process in the UK, and for political reasons are often delayed, amended or even replaced with more palatable alternatives which might stand a better chance of being passed through the Houses of Parliament. An example can be seen in the Amendment to Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which became part of the Act in 2013<sup>54</sup>. The above case is but one example of the level of scrutiny that the legislative process receives.

A more detailed look at legislation over time can also prove helpful. Above, the challenges and oversight of legislative implementation in the UK is discussed. Yet, in order to assess legislative activity in the UK, and perhaps develop an understanding for why and when legislation is implemented, a more detailed analysis was needed. The timeline that was developed looked at legislation in the UK and compared it against notable<sup>55</sup> terrorist attacks which took place within the research timeframe. Table 3.1 displays the terrorism-specific and terrorism-related legislation which has been implemented during the timeframe of this research and which has been referred to within the documentation of the CP, building on the overview provided in Figure 3.1 above.

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Assent). Once Royal Assent is given a Bill becomes an Act of Parliament and is law." (National Police Chiefs Council Public Information Leaflet, available at: <https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/bills/>)

<sup>54</sup> This was the result of a long and somewhat controversial process. Long-held issues with the human rights dimension of the powers provided by Schedule 7 provoked the Government to amend it. Following a public consultation which closed in December 2012, the changes were formally integrated into the Terrorism Act 2000 in 2013. The Joint Committee on Human Rights had concerns about the lack of parliamentary debate and the content of the amendments, which can be found at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201314/jtselect/jtrights/56/5607.htm>

<sup>55</sup> 'Notable' in this case means events which impact UK citizens or interests directly and which are mentioned within the documentation of this project.

Table 3.1 Terrorism-specific and terrorism-related legislation in the UK, 2000 to 2018

Year	Terrorism-Specific	Terrorism-Related
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism Act 2000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIPA 2000 (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000)</li> </ul>
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Terrorism, Crime &amp; Security Act 2001 (ATCSA 2001)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Social Security Fraud Act 2001 (SSFA)</li> </ul>
2002		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POCA 2002 (Proceeds of Crime Act 2002)</li> </ul>
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (Continuance in force of sections 21 to 23) Order 2003</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal Justice (International Cooperation) Act 2003</li> <li>• Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 [NIAA 2002]</li> <li>• Communications Act 2003</li> <li>• Criminal Justice Act 2003</li> </ul>
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism and Related Activities Act 2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Contingencies Act 2004</li> </ul>
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (PTA 2005)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organised Crime and Policing Act 2005</li> </ul>
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism Act 2006</li> <li>• Terrorism (United Nations Measures) Order 2006</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006</li> <li>• WTA 2006 (Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006)</li> <li>• Immigration Asylum and Nationality Act 2006</li> <li>• Police and Justice Act 2006</li> </ul>
2007		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007</li> <li>• Serious Crime Act 2007</li> <li>• UK Borders Act 2007</li> </ul>
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Act 2008</li> </ul>	
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism (United Nations Measures) Order 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coroners and Justice Act 2009</li> </ul>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc Act 2010 (TAFSA 2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Identity Documents Act 2010</li> <li>• Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Communications Data) Order 2010</li> </ul>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPIMA 2011 (Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011</li> </ul>
2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PFA 2012 (Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)</li> </ul>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amended Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice and Security Act 2013</li> </ul>
2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014</li> <li>• Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act 2014 (DRP)</li> <li>• Immigration Act 2014</li> <li>• Communications Act 2014</li> <li>• Defence Reform Act 2014</li> </ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter Terrorism &amp; Security Act 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015</li> <li>• Serious Crime Act 2015 (SCA)</li> </ul>
2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) 2016</li> </ul>
2017		
2018		

This table shows that, over the period of 19 years, 44 pieces of legislation have been passed which in some way or another touch on counter-terrorism activities. Of these, 13 (30%) are specific to terrorism. The only years where terrorism-specific legislation was not imposed were 2002, 2007, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018. This indicates that terrorism-specific legislation was implemented in 12 of the 19

years. Interestingly, the years 2016 to 2018 were the longest period of time since 2000 where no terrorism legislation was passed, perhaps implying that the passing of legislative acts has become rarer. One of the possible reasons for this might be the British Government's shift in focus to legislation addressing 'extremism'. Another potential impact on this gap in terrorism legislation could be the distractions posed by the Brexit process, following the Referendum in 2016. This was also the time when an increase in hate crimes was reported across the UK, which may itself have been impactful on the focus on extremism over terrorism itself. Or perhaps legislators considered there to be enough terrorist legislation on the books as it stands, and appropriate Acts to deal with the current threat were already in place. Alternatively, it could just be a coincidence, and a natural lull in the publication of terrorist legislation. The data itself does not account for this decline, and certainly there is no clear indication that this downward trend will continue.

A substantial, but not comprehensive, overview of all terrorist events and legislative activity over the period of research was compiled during this project. It shows that a piece of legislation which is imposed in a given year is unlikely to be in response to an event of the same year. This may be as a result of a lag in publication, and the lengthy process required to process bills before they become acts. Additionally, most legislative activities in the UK are not in direct response to an event itself, but rather to the trends of events, both domestically and internationally. The data shows that more legislation was imposed in the first half of the timeline than in the last half of the timeline. This might not seem unusual, given the apparent comprehensive nature of counter-terrorism legislation over time, as well as the additional impact of the attacks of 9/11 and the London Transport Bombings of 2005. However, this trend becomes less clear when the five events of 2017<sup>56</sup> are taken into consideration, as there was a delay of two years before the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019 was introduced. Some potential explanations for this delay have been discussed above. Therefore, the fact that terrorism-specific legislation was not imposed following the heightened activity of 2017 may be rationalised by the wide range of terrorism legislation already in place, including the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, published just one year prior. It can also be seen, on one level, as an avoidance of a knee-jerk reaction to those events, with a more considered approach taken and the correct process of scrutiny applied prior to implementation.

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<sup>56</sup> As mentioned briefly in Chapter 2 in relation to the interview dates, a number of terrorist events took place in 2017 in the UK. On 22 March, Khalid Masood drove his car over Westminster Bridge, mounting the pavement and killing four people before abandoning the vehicle to continue on foot into Parliament Square where he attacked and killed a police officer with a knife. On 22 May, Salman Abedi detonated a bomb in the lobby of the Manchester Arena during an Ariana Grande concert, killing 22 people. On 3 June, Rachid Redouane, Khuram Butt and Youssef Zaghba drove a van into pedestrians on London Bridge, following which they continued on foot into Borough Market where they stabbed a number of people. Eight people were killed in total. On 19 June, Darren Osborne drove a van into a number of people outside of Finsbury Mosque as they leave Ramadan night prayers, resulting in the death of one person. On 15 September, a homemade bomb partially detonated on a Tube train resulting in 30 people being injured at Parson's Green tube station.

While the table above provides an overview of the legislation which has been implemented over the 19 years of the timeframe of this research, there are other insights that can be gleaned if this information is compared, over time, with a summary of various terrorist events. The activities relating to both terrorism and counter-terrorism are summarised in Table 3.2 below and show an interesting spread of activity. When comparing the implementation of legislation with the number of successful terrorism attacks within the UK, legislative activities could be deemed excessive. For a total of eight successful terrorist events in the UK, 13 pieces of legislation have been implemented. However, this is not the full picture. The picture is more balanced when we consider successful attacks *and* failed attacks i.e. all of those attacks not stopped by the security services. In this case, the total number of events rises to 17, providing a more nuanced picture of the counter-terrorism landscape. Further, we need to take into consideration those threatened attacks which also need to be addressed through counter-terrorism legislation. There were 14 of these<sup>57</sup> within the timeframe of the research (although two events technically took place in airspace rather than on UK soil). When analysing this new layer of data, 31 UK-based events took place between 2000 and 2019, whether successful, failed or foiled. This shows an ongoing challenge to security services and perhaps provides a stronger rationale for legislation than successful events alone can justify<sup>58</sup>.

It is also important to take international events into account. In the globalised world in which we live, international events can have a significant impact on counter-terrorism activities in many countries. The attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington DC stand out in this regard, where the legislative activity in the UK clearly was stimulated in the form of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime & Security Act 2001. It also seems prudent to assume that single events rarely cause a responsive piece of legislation to be imposed. Rather, a trend in international events can impact more generally on terrorism legislation in the UK, as can be seen from the attacks in France in 2015, which did not see a direct response legislatively in the UK, but which certainly contributed to the design of the legislation which was implemented in 2019, the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act.

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<sup>57</sup> This number relates to publicised foiled attacks that could be specifically observed (located either in media reporting or in the documentation of the CP). Below in section 3.3.2, additional data is presented that provides different numbers to the analysis carried out here.

<sup>58</sup> Additionally, terrorist activity is not only comprised of large-scale terrorist attacks. Financial support for terrorist organisations, disseminating information supporting terrorism either physically or online and travelling abroad to join a terrorist organisation are other examples of terrorist activity which can be prosecuted through the criminal justice system and therefore needs legislative frameworks in place.

Table 3.2 Summary of terrorism and counter-terrorism activity 2000 to 2018<sup>59</sup>.

Year	Successful Attacks - UK	Successful Attacks - International <sup>60</sup>	Failed Attacks <sup>61</sup>	Foiled Attacks <sup>62</sup>	Legislation
2000	0	1	0	1	1
2001	0	1 <sup>63</sup>	1	1	1
2002	0	1	0	0	0
2003	0	1	0	1	1
2004	0	2	0	4	1
2005	1	0	1	0	1
2006	0	0	0	1	2
2007	0	0	2	1	0
2008	0	1	1	1	1
2009	0	0	1	0	1
2010	0	0	1	2	1
2011	0	0	0	0	1
2012	0	0	0	1	0
2013	2	2	0	0	1
2014	0	0	1	0	0
2015	0	4	0	0	1
2016	1	1	0	0	0
2017	4	0	1	1	0
2018	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>

While some of the data in Table 3.2 relates to foiled and failed attacks as sourced from the documents in the CP, it is not representative of the full picture. Indeed, other than vague references to the counter-terrorism impact of police, such as “a number of serious attempted attacks were foiled” (CONTEST Annual Review 2013, p.10), specific breakdowns by year are not readily available and data must be

<sup>59</sup> This portrait of terrorism activity is further complicated by the aforementioned (Chapter 1) difficulty of understanding what is, in fact, terrorism. For example, in 2018 Salih Khater drove his car into pedestrians outside the Houses of Parliament. While expounded in the media as an act of terrorism, Khater was prosecuted for murder, as there was insufficient evidence that it was actually a terrorist attack. Similarly, in 2019, three people were stabbed and two others injured in Manchester’s Arndale Shopping Centre, but the individual, who was apprehended initially under terrorism offences, was ultimately charged under the Mental Health Act. These events, unconfirmed as terrorism, are not included in the table here. Ultimately, these attacks were not listed in the documentation contained within the CP and are therefore not reflected in the data here.

<sup>60</sup> This category is not a complete summary of all international events which took place within the timeframe. Instead, they have been selected from the documentation with the aim of focusing on events which clearly impacted British citizens.

<sup>61</sup> A failed attack is one in which the security services do not prevent an attack from taking place, but for one reason or another the attack fails. An example of this is Richard Reid, the ‘Shoe Bomber’, whose bomb failed to detonate on a transatlantic flight in 2001 and the 21 July 2005 coordinated attacks in London which attempted to emulate the attack earlier in the month and while it was not prevented, the bombs failed to detonate.

<sup>62</sup> A foiled attack is one in which the security services prevent the attack from taking place. An example of this can be seen in the Transatlantic Airline Liquid Bomb Plot of 2010, which was prevented through Operation Crevice.

<sup>63</sup> In this case, multiple coordinated attacks are considered as one event. For example, the events of 9/11 consisted of four plane hijackings, but all made up one event. Similarly, the London Bombings of July 2005 consisted of four separate but coordinated incidents which are classified here as one event.

obtained from multiple sources. One of the types of sources that can be looked at to provide additional insight is the media. Three media articles were located which provided some additional insight into the general number of foiled plots. In the first, Neil Basu, the UK's Head of National Counter-Terrorism Policing, stated that the security services have "thwarted 18 attacks in under two years" (Dearden, January 2019). The second article quotes Basu as saying "A year on [from the attacks of 2017] and our activity continues to be at unprecedented levels; shown, not least, by the fact that, in the past year, working together with the security services we have stopped an average of one terrorist attack every month" (Grierson, June 2018). The final article states that "The police and MI5 say that they have thwarted 13 plots since March 2017" (Cowell, November 2018). Further detail on the topic of foiled and failed attacks is explored in a dedicated section below (section 3.3.2).

Analysis of the data shows that, while terrorism legislation has been imposed in the majority of years of the study, there have been fewer pieces of legislation imposed in the second half of the timeframe. It seems plausible that the legislation in place was deemed to be effective in meeting the 'current' terrorist threat, with a lack of impetus in creating new legislation just for the sake of it. It is also plausible that the political climate post-2016 simply did not allow for new and controversial legislation. The single and existentially-framed threat of 9/11 behind which the public and the political elite could rally had created an environment ripe for legal maneuvering in order to protect the public. This was not the case in 2016 and 2017 when attention rested elsewhere and significant political shifts absorbed political energy. Additionally, unrelated political issues such as UK political party leadership changes and the hung parliament<sup>64</sup> of 2017 likely impacted the ability of government to have bills approved and passed into law. This is particularly interesting considering that the piece of legislation which was published in 2019 came two years after the 2017 attacks in the UK. There is, therefore, no conclusive evidence within the analysis above that the legislative system reacts excessively to successful terrorist events. This may be different for policies and procedures, but legislation itself, and the subsequent powers of the police, seem to be proportionate in terms of numerical data at least.

### **3.2.2 The Criminal Justice System: Overview of Successful Prosecutions**

The CPS has a specific part of its website dedicated to terrorism cases<sup>65</sup>. Here, a list of successful prosecutions for terrorist charges can be found. Currently, data extends from 2016 to May 2019<sup>66</sup>, but

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<sup>64</sup> A hung parliament is when no single political party holds a majority of seats in Parliament following a general election. In these circumstances, the largest party usually forms a government with another party in what is known as a coalition. This often complicates the ability of the government to push through its agenda. See the following website for additional information: <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/hung-parliaments>

<sup>65</sup> This section of the CPS website is located at <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/terrorism>

<sup>66</sup> At time of research (February 2020). In a subsequent review of the data, which took place in August 2020, it seems that an additional eight cases have been successfully prosecuted since the research for this project was carried out. These additional

this research will focus on the period from January 2017 to May 2019<sup>67</sup>. While this data is useful from a qualitative perspective, it lacks sufficient robustness to be used in any truly quantitative capacity. This is because the list is organised by case and in free text style resulting in varied data reporting. For example, some entries discuss the date of arrest while others do not, and some entries include the date on which the individual(s) were charged, while many entries do not provide this information. For this reason, only a moderately rigorous overview of the data can be provided. Nonetheless, despite this limitation, some interesting findings can be made.

There were 11 successful prosecutions in 2019 (January to May), 37 in 2018 (January to December) and 36 in 2017 (January to December). Although detailed research has not been carried out on the successful prosecutions for 2016, there were a total of 24 in that year. This indicates a generally increasing trend, although the information for 2019 is incomplete, at time of writing. In 2019, eight individuals were identified as being 'Islamist', one was identified as 'Extreme Right Wing (XRW)' and the other two were unspecified. In 2018, 20 were identified as Islamist, eight were identified as versions of XRW (anti-Muslim, anti-black or anti-Semitic) and eight were unidentified. One case was related to a high-level breach of security within the counter-terrorism police system, and therefore was treated quite differently, and does not easily relate to the vast majority of the cases being looked at here. In 2017, 28 were Islamist related, three were XRW, three were unknown, one was a foreign fighter looking to fight in the Ukraine and one was associated with Northern Ireland 'republican' terrorism. This shows a decreasing trend with regard to individuals being prosecuted for Islamist-related terrorist acts, although again, 2019 is incomplete and the significant decrease in these cases may just be the result of the full year not being reflected in the data. Those cases related to XRW seemed to fluctuate over the years, with 2018 having the highest number of these cases. Of all of the cases between January 2016 and May 2019, 13 involved multiple individuals. Interestingly when broken down by year, and with the caveat made above, 2016 had by far the most examples of this with 9 successful prosecutions of groups, usually involving two or three individuals. Four such cases took place in 2017, none took place in 2018 and one took place in 2019 (up to May 2019). All of the 'groups' in 2017 and 2019 were Islamist. In the nine cases in 2016, the vast majority were related to attempts to travel to Syria to join ISIS. Throughout the three and a half years, 10 women were successfully prosecuted, all in relation to Islamist terrorism. An additional woman was found to have encouraged her brother to join her in Syria where she was a jihadi bride, and although she herself was not prosecuted as she was abroad, her brother was prosecuted. Several of the women were charged with supporting roles of helping family to get to Syria. All of the XRW cases were related to men.

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cases are not included in the data for this project. Data prior to 2016 has not been published and cannot therefore be analysed here.

<sup>67</sup> 2016 is reflected on more broadly in terms of contextual numbers, but is not explored in the same level of detail as in the years 2017, 2018 and the first five months of 2019.

The vast majority of cases resulted in a guilty plea, although some of these came late in the process following initial innocent pleas. As with any criminal case, an early entry of a guilty plea usually resulted in a more lenient sentence, unless the charges were extreme (such as those who carried out a failed attack or were imminently about to carry out an attack). Seven life sentences were given out between 2017 and May 2019<sup>68</sup> and almost all cases resulted in a custodial sentence (imprisonment). In addition, a ‘notification period<sup>69</sup>’ of 10 or 15 years was added onto many of the sentences, and a ‘criminal behavior order<sup>70</sup>’ was also applied in some of the cases (two in 2018 and one in 2017). Extended license periods<sup>71</sup> of five years or more were also added to several custodial sentences. On a few occasions, fines were also applied.

The data shows little predictability for future trends. This is likely a result of the very small window of analysis, just two and a half years in any depth (three and a half years if 2016 is included). Nonetheless, within that timeframe, Islamist-related terrorist prosecutions decreased while XRW cases fluctuated. There were more Islamist-related cases than XRW cases in all of the years. It is also interesting to see that all of the groups in 2017 and 2019 were Islamist-related, perhaps reflecting the isolated nature of XRW terrorism. This exposes a significant challenge, as groups are more likely to be prevented from carrying out an attack, given the risks inherent in communications with individuals who are on the security services’ radar. Those acting independently do not always communicate their plans with others, and the ability to intervene decreases significantly as a result. All in all, a total of 108 successful prosecutions for terrorist-related crimes took place between 2016 and May 2019, clearly showing a significant threat in the UK. While the activities for which these individuals were arrested often occurred outside the timeframe of the research, the information from the CPS provides insights into the complex and active terrorism landscape, and the work needed to prosecute these individuals and groups successfully.

### **3.2.3 Comparison between Islamist Terrorism cases and XRW Terrorism cases**

Appendix F presents two tables, the first of which summarises all 12 of the XRW cases prosecuted by the CPS between January 2017 and May 2019 and the second of which summarises all 56 of the Islamist cases within this timeframe. Some of the cells within the tables have missing data; this is a reflection of all available data presented on the CPS website in regard to these cases. Again, the challenge of looking at this data is the lack of consistency in included details. In particular, the table of the Islamist

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<sup>68</sup> Only one life sentence was given to a XRW case, and that was the case of Darren Osborne who was involved in the Finsbury Park Mosque attack in June 2017.

<sup>69</sup> A period of time when a convicted individual must notify the police and other authorities

<sup>70</sup> Information on this sentence can be found at <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/criminal-behaviour-orders>

<sup>71</sup> Information on what it means to be released from prison on licence can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/licence-conditions-and-how-the-parole-board-use-them>

cases is large, and so it was deemed appropriate to include both tables in an appendix, while exploration of the data could be carried out in this section.

Analysing the table on XRW cases shows that eight of the 12 individuals pleaded guilty, although Creighton only pleaded guilty to eight out of the 10 charges laid against him. In light of these pleas, the data shows that the majority of XRW cases do not go to trial. The range of sentences began with nine months' imprisonment to life imprisonment. The only individual to receive life imprisonment was Darren Osborne who was responsible for the Finsbury Mosque attack in 2017. Aside from this one case of life imprisonment, the next longest sentence was 13 years (this included nine years imprisonment and an additional four years extended). There were not enough cases to really assess the frequency of sentence lengths. In addition, the 13-year sentence and the life sentence are clear outliers. However, if the other 10 cases are analysed, it can be seen that the sentences range from nine months to five years. Taking the average of the monthly breakdown on all of these cases, the average sentence was just over 26 months.

Of the 56 Islamist terrorism cases, 35 cases involved guilty pleas, whether early on or later in the case. In some 'group' cases, not all pleaded guilty. 12 cases involved individuals pleading not guilty and were therefore found guilty in a trial. This means that the vast majority of Islamist terrorism cases do not go to trial, although it should again be noted that some guilty pleas come towards the end of the trial, albeit this seems to be rare. The range of sentences spanned 12 months imprisonment, usually with an add-on sentence such as notification periods, to life imprisonment. The lower end of the spectrum was relatively rare, as was the higher end of the spectrum. In just taking the years of imprisonment (leaving out the smaller monthly breakdown), the average sentence in years, excluding life sentences, was almost six years while the most common sentence length was five years (10 individuals received this duration) followed by two years (nine individuals were sentenced to this length of imprisonment).

In comparing the two datasets, which is somewhat challenging because of the significant difference in number of cases, some basic findings can nonetheless be made. In particular, XRW cases generally received shorter sentences than those of Islamist terrorism. While two thirds (66.6%) of the XRW cases pleaded guilty, a similar amount pleaded guilty in the Islamist cases (62.5%). Therefore, some similarities as well as contrasts can be seen in the two sets of data, although meaningful analysis is undermined by the limited and disproportionate size of the two datasets, impeding appropriate comparison.

The legislation used in terms of Islamist terrorism reveals some very interesting trends. In particular, it is interesting to see that, throughout the 56 Islamist cases, only one was proceeded against under a non-terrorism related piece of legislation and without any reference to terrorism legislation. Aside from two cases that were unspecified, all other cases had at least one charge that was terrorism-related. Of these,

the dominant pieces of legislation applied were the Terrorism Act 2000 (Sections 1, 5, 17 and 58 in particular) and the Terrorism Act 2006 (Sections 1 and 2 and 5). As of May 2019, only one case was brought under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The alternative acts that individuals were charged under were:

- Section 3 of the Explosives Substance Act 1883
- Section 53 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Section 3 of the Explosive Substance Act 1883
- Section 53 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
- Section 127 Malicious Communications Act
- Section 29c Public Order Act 1986
- Section 29C of Public Order Act 1986
- Section 3(1)(b) of the Explosive Substances Act 1883<sup>72</sup>
- Section 36(1) Criminal Justice Act 1925 (passport related)

This compares quite interestingly with the XRW cases. Of those 12 cases, only two resulted in a terrorist charge going forward, and both of these cases also involved other legislation. In particular, these individuals were charged under various sections of the Public Order Act 1983. The data cannot truly provide any insights into why it is more likely that a terrorism case related to Islamist terrorism will more likely result in charges under terrorism legislation than those cases related to XRW terrorism. Several ideas can be supposed, including decision-making based on the prospect of successful prosecution. Alternatively, much of the legislation was written before the inclusion of XRW activities as a category of terrorism and focused on Islamist terrorism. This could also have impacted this finding. What would be interesting to look into further, should the data become available, would be the unsuccessful prosecutions<sup>73</sup> and whether a pattern of terrorism legislation framing impacts the proceedings in these cases. Either way, in 2017, 2018 and part of 2019, XRW cases were more likely to proceed under non-terrorism legislation, while Islamist cases were more likely to proceed under terrorist-specific legislation.

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<sup>72</sup> The case of Nadeem Muhammed was the sole example of Islamist terrorism where no terrorism-specific legislation was ultimately applied. According to the CPS "... the Judge considered, pursuant to section 30 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2000, whether or not the offence was committed for a terrorist purpose but was not satisfied that such a motive had been proved." (Crown Prosecution Service, available at: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/terrorism/counter-terrorism-division-crown-prosecution-service-cps-successful-prosecutions-2016>)

<sup>73</sup> The CPS does not provide data on unsuccessful prosecutions as, if an individual is found to be 'not guilty', their names are not published in the official records and on the website. Therefore, extrapolation is needed, by comparing policing data in terms of terrorism-related arrests and charges. The challenge with this is the completeness of the data and whether or not the two sources interact sufficiently for appropriate conclusions to be made.

## 3.3 Events and the Threat Landscape

### 3.3.1 Domestic Events in the UK

In terms of the events that take place within the UK, there can be no doubt that the greater activity is carried out in Northern Ireland. However, republican terrorism is dealt with in a different way to other forms of terrorism in the UK. In CONTEST 2018, for example, it states “CONTEST addresses all forms of terrorism that affect the UK and our interests overseas, with the exception of Northern Ireland related terrorism in Northern Ireland, which is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland” (CONTEST 2018, p.25). Therefore, while the UK has experienced the highest level of terrorist activity within the EU within the timeframe of this research<sup>74</sup>, the impact of these terrorist events is both localised to Northern Ireland and of comparatively low intensity<sup>75</sup> to that of Islamist terrorism. It should also be noted that the goals and methods of republican terrorist organisations are very different to those of Islamist groups, and so the level of ‘success’ in terms of terrorism and counter-terrorism, and the impact these have on the safety of the population, is completely different<sup>76</sup>. As has already been mentioned in Chapter 1, this thesis focuses on the terrorist threat as it is addressed within CONTEST (i.e. Islamist terrorism and XRW terrorism). Therefore, this next section only looks at republican terrorism contextually, with some analysis carried out below, but from a comparative perspective only. The data presented and analysed below was sourced specifically from the GTD, and can be found in Appendix D.

As alluded to above, in addition to Islamist terrorism, another significant threat in the UK is from XRW, and this is also dealt with in CONTEST. Particularly, since the murder of Member of Parliament (MP) Jo Cox in 2016, there has been a move to incorporate the threat from XRW terrorism into CONTEST, an element which was under-represented previously. Yet while the newest form of CONTEST does address the issue of XRW terrorism in more detail than before, and there is a clear increase in activity is indicated within the data, it is still an issue that is only now building attention and receiving more nuanced response.

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<sup>74</sup> See the afore-mentioned European Union Terrorism Situation and Trends (TE-SAT) reports.

<sup>75</sup> This refers to the low number of deaths and injuries in comparison to the number of attacks. Republican terrorism in Northern Ireland tends to be less spectacular than Islamist terrorist events, although this certainly has not always been the case. Another aspect of this low intensity is the general focus on individuals involved in security in Northern Ireland, such as the police and prison guards, as opposed to any focus on the killing of civilians on a broad scale.

<sup>76</sup> In particular, P11 commented on this issue in his interview: “...in Northern Ireland, the terrorists didn’t want to get killed. They didn’t particularly want to get caught. And not wanting to get caught, not wanting to get killed, was quite a disincentive to do it. The terrorist of today doesn’t care. Therefore, a lot of the substance you read about regarding effective security measures are predicated on the fact that they don’t want to get caught, they don’t want to get killed and that isn’t true anymore ... it changes the whole assumption base for what you do.” When he refers to the “terrorist of today”, P11 is referring to suicide bombers, associated with Islamist terrorism. This shift in activity results in different counter-terrorism responses to address these differing tactics and motivations.

On looking a little closer at XRW terrorism in the data, a similar number of events as those of Islamist terrorism can be observed, but with far less impact in almost every way (fatalities, injuries and media coverage). The GTD records 26 events related to various forms of XRW terrorism within the timeframe of this thesis. Of these, 14 attacks were anti-Muslim, with one taking place in Scotland (Edinburgh), one taking place in Wales (Rhyl) and the other 12 taking place in England. Two took place in 2013, one in 2014, two in 2016 and nine in 2017. This does not show an increasing trend of violence against Muslims, but it does show a considerable jump in events between 2016 and 2017. Of all 26 events, three people were killed and 19 people injured. Of the anti-Muslim events, one person was killed and 17 people were injured. The targets tended to be civilians and religious leaders, and eight of the attacks were classified by the GTD as being infrastructure attacks, with two armed assaults and four unarmed assaults the next most prevalent.

By far, however, the most impactful acts of terrorism in the UK in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been carried out by Islamist terrorists. In total, since 2000, there have been eight ‘successful’<sup>77</sup> Islamist-inspired attacks in the UK.<sup>78</sup> Of these, the first four were associated with Al Qaeda or its affiliates, while the subsequent four were attributed in one way or another to ISIS. The first event of 2005 was followed by a gap of eight years until the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013. Following this event, there was another gap of three years before the two attacks took place in 2016. The events of 2016 were small, targeting single individuals, as indeed had been the case with the murder of Lee Rigby. The following year, within the space of six months, the remaining four events took place. In each of these events, the perpetrators either died by their own hand, were killed by security services or were captured, arrested and prosecuted. None escaped and there are currently no unsolved crimes relating to Islamist terrorism.

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<sup>77</sup> ‘Successful’ in this context is taken to mean that the perpetrators detonated their explosives or caused bodily harm to others. Harm to themselves and to property would usually only have been a secondary goal, and so events where these took place, but not the death of members of the public, are considered to be failed attacks in this thesis. The Parson’s Green attack is a little more complicated. It can be assumed that Ahmed Hassan intended to kill people with his bomb, but ‘only’ succeeded in injuring people. Nonetheless, with 30 people injured and widespread media coverage, this event is considered this to be a successful attack in this thesis – although many would likely disagree as he did not achieve his primary goal of mass murder.

<sup>78</sup> These attacks were the London Bombings of 2005 (taken as one event), the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in 2013, the murder of Imam Jalal Uddin in Rochdale in February 2016, the murder of shopkeeper Asad Shah in Glasgow in 2016 and the four Islamist terrorist attacks in 2017 in Westminster, Manchester, London Bridge and Parson’s Green.

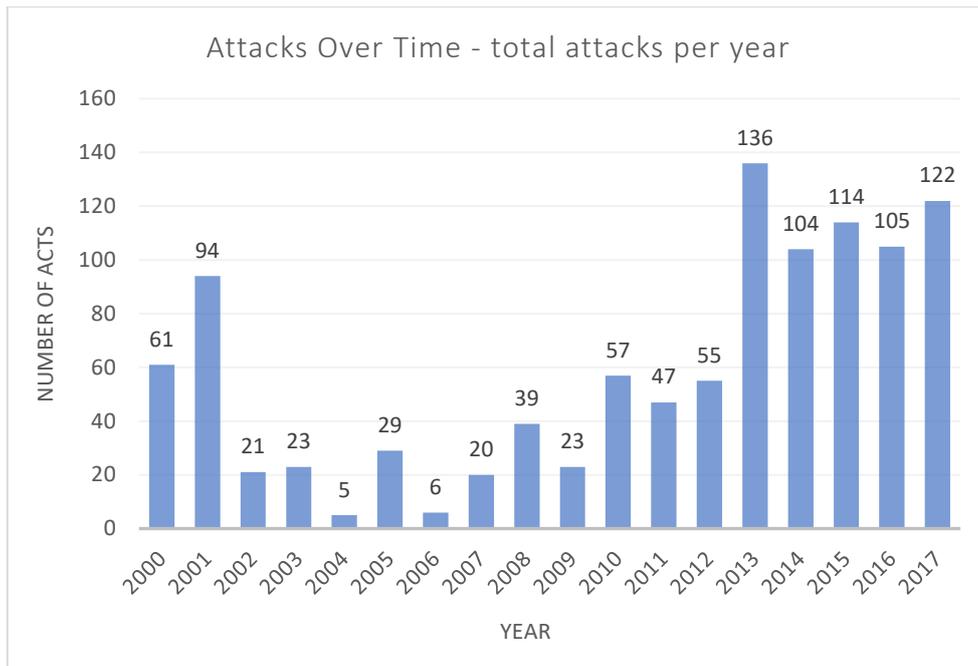


Figure 3.2 Total number of UK-based attacks between 2000 and 2017. Source: GTD.

When looking at the overall picture of terrorist activity in the UK, a clear and interesting pattern emerges. 2013 was the most active year in the timespan, with 136 individual terrorist events taking place. This might surprise many, as the vast majority of these events did not make national news. When people are asked to think about 2013 in terms of terrorist activity, without a doubt the horrific murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby might come to mind, an Islamist inspired terrorist attack that saw the public and traumatic death of a single individual. This event resonated in the psyche of British citizens perhaps far more than the 135 other events that took place that year. But why is this the case? For the vast majority of British citizens, the 135 other events did not impact them, as they took place in Northern Ireland. Perhaps, if one were to ask a citizen of Northern Ireland about terrorist activity in 2013, a very different response would be provided. And yet, the brutal nature of the attack on Fusilier Lee Rigby, and the very purposeful message which it intended to send, recorded publicly on bystanders’ phones, took on a more haunting and disturbing resonance in the minds of the British public. It was symbolic of a new, intimate and brutal form of terrorism. While bombs have their own psychological impact, largely for their indiscriminate nature, this was something different than what the UK had previously experienced in terrorism terms. The perpetrators – Michael Adebawale and Michael Adebolajo – intended the attack to send a message far beyond the death of a single individual, and as with many Islamist inspired terrorists, intended to die following their act (suicide-by-cop). This type of terrorism had not been seen in the UK before. The IRA more often use bombs (or guns in assassination style attacks), and attacks were traditionally preceded by a warning, reducing the numbers of those injured and killed. IRA attacks also focused specifically on the security services, and rarely sought to attack civilians, which would alienate their support base. They also intended to survive their attacks, so that they could live to fight

another day. The notion of suicide was simply not part of the terrorist conflict of Northern Ireland. So, while the data shows that 2013 stood out as a highly active year in terms of terrorist activity, it has become notorious primarily for the single attack on one off-duty soldier.

Taking the analysis of republican terrorism a little further shows this form of terrorism to remain, on the basis of events, a dominant concern, albeit one that is primarily restricted to Northern Ireland. While some events related to this type of terrorism have taken place in England<sup>79</sup>, the vast majority of them occur in Northern Ireland itself. In the timeframe reviewed, 370 events took place.<sup>80</sup> These events culminated in a total of 35 deaths and 198 injuries. It is important again to understand that these figures are not directly comparable to the figures of Islamist terrorism when it comes to success as the goals of the IRA are rarely to bring about a high death rate. Of the attacks, two events took place in Wales (Bangor), one in 2000 and one in 2010 with no casualties and 4 injuries from the early attack. A total of 16 took place in England: four events in 2000; five events in 2001; one event in 2003; and six events in 2014. London was targeted five times during 2000 and 2001, resulting in no deaths and one injury. Of the other cities affected throughout England, no city was targeted more than once. The total death count in England for the time period was zero and there were nine injuries. All of the attacks in England were bombings and the targets ranged from military, business, government, transportation, police, private citizens, educational institutions and journalism/media. This data goes some way to explaining why the public in England, Scotland and Wales are less concerned by republican terrorism: the activity is focused primarily within the borders of Northern Ireland.

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<sup>79</sup> In March 2019, for example, five packages were sent to various locations around the UK, including Waterloo Station in London and Glasgow University. These packages contained explosive residue, were apparently posted from the Republic of Ireland, and were later claimed by the New IRA (a terrorist organisation based in Northern Ireland).

<sup>80</sup> As a reminder, those events that the GTD could not verify as being part of the republican terrorism of Northern Ireland are not considered in the data here, so while an additional 450 events are likely to belong to this category (based on this researcher's interpretation regarding the location of the events), they are not included in this research.

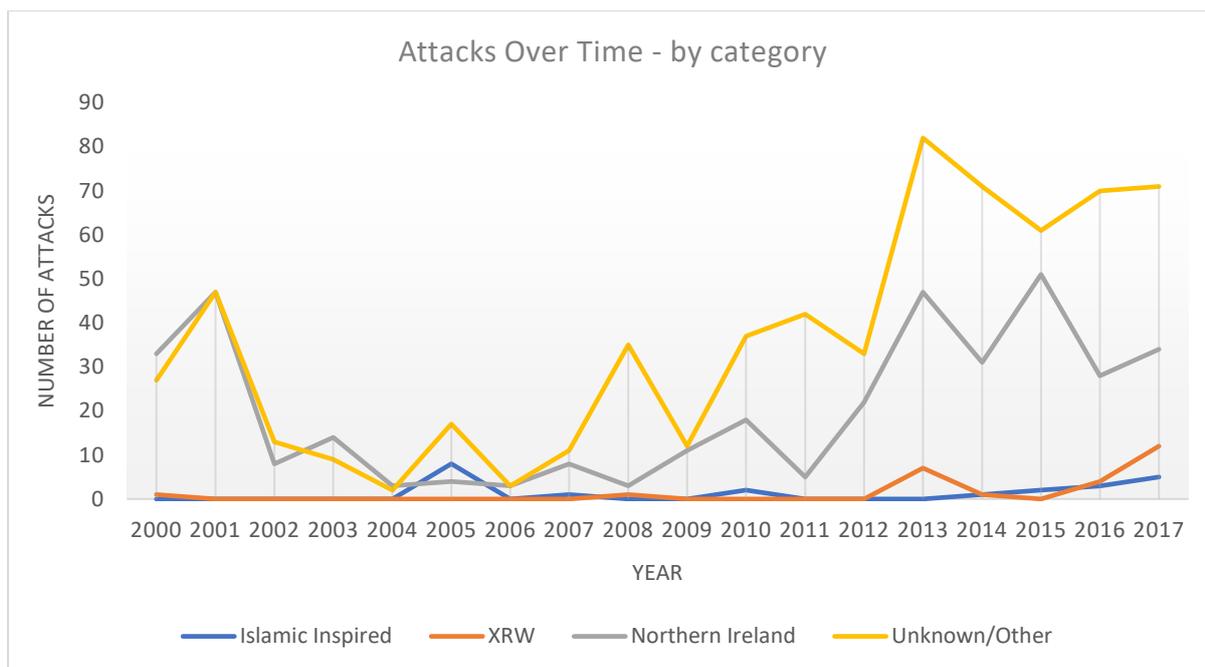


Figure 3.3 Number of UK-based attacks between 2000 to 2017, displayed by category. Source: GTD.

In the figure above, an outline of attack trends over time can be seen, as recorded in the GTD. Many of the events have not been specifically identified with one form of terrorism or the other, and for this reason, the larger number of events per year tend to fall within the category of ‘Unknown/Other’. However, the next most ‘active’ terrorism category is without a doubt terrorism related to Northern Ireland.<sup>81</sup> Interestingly perhaps, given the media focus on Islamist terrorism, 2015 saw the highest number of attacks in Northern Ireland since 2000, with 51 attributed events. 2001 and 2013 were the next most active years, with 47 attacks each. Since 2012, a consistent number of attacks in the double digits have taken place, perhaps indicating a resurgence in activity in the area.<sup>82</sup>

Both Islamist inspired attacks and XRW attacks have been at a generally low level, although there has been an overall increase in activity since 2014. The GTD considers each attack as individual, and for this reason, in 2005 the GTD records eight events, four which took place on 7 July 2005 (considered to be successful) and four which took place on 23 July 2005 (considered to have failed as the four bombs did not detonate). 2005 was a clear outlier in the data, however, and many years within the timeframe experienced no Islamist terrorist attacks at all. This is even more reflective of the XRW category of

<sup>81</sup> For the purpose of this part of the thesis, this particular category does not differentiate between republican or unionist terrorism, although this can be distinguished with additional levels of analysis within the data. Further to this statement, it should also be noted that many of the events in the ‘Unknown/Other’ category took place in Northern Ireland and can therefore be assumed to belong to this category. However, the GTD was unable to verify the type within their criteria, and these events have therefore not been included in the Northern Ireland tally.

<sup>82</sup> It is interesting to note that there are differences in the terrorist event numbers when the data of the GTD and the data of the TE-SAT reports are compared. This is likely because the GTD relies on the triangulation of three media sources, while the TE-SAT data is informed (and dependent on the veracity of) the data provided by the governments of the EU’s member states.

terrorism, where, until 2013, only two years had a single attack take place each – 2000 and 2007. All other years between 2000 and 2013 experienced no ‘recorded’ XRW attacks, according to the GTD. Yet from 2013 to 2017, a clear rise in XRW attacks took place, and from 2014 to 2017 a similar trend is visible from Islamist inspired terrorism. Much of this increase may be a result of changes in reporting, both in policing data and in the media, as discussed further below.

The data itself cannot necessarily explain these increases, nor the relatively low number of Islamist terrorism incidents between 2002 and 2012, although contextual knowledge of the political and social landscape of the time can possibly shed some light. In terms of the increases, 2016 was the year of the Brexit Referendum where highly divisive political campaigns pitted British citizens against the ‘other’: the EU, legal migrants, refugees and sometimes other citizens who held differing views. Related hate crimes<sup>83</sup> spiked in that summer, and this might explain the increased XRW activity around this point. Why 2013 and 2014 experienced an increase in events compared with previous years is unclear, but the counter-terrorism landscape certainly reacted to these attacks. In 2015, the Counter-Extremism Strategy was first published, and in the same year, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a statutory duty on certain professions to refer individuals who were suspected of being vulnerable to radicalisation to the Channel Programme. Around this time, an increased awareness in the need to include XRW terrorism in the counter-terrorism response also became apparent. In particular, this latter point might have resulted in the GTD reporting more of these activities around this time, as its methodology uses media reports (a minimum of three for verification) to confirm and record its events. Media reporting would have increased in response to these counter-terrorism activities, and therefore, while events may have taken place prior to 2013, they might not have been reported in the same way. Regardless of any reporting issues, 2013 to 2017 saw an increase in XRW terrorist activity, with 2017 seeing the highest number of events at 12. In terms of Islamist inspired terrorism, a steady increase since 2015 indicates a concerning trend. This increase in activity can likely be attributed almost completely to the rise of influence of the terrorist organisation, ISIS, and in particular its declaration of the Caliphate<sup>84</sup>. The government and the media are captivated by Islamist inspired terrorism, not because of the number of attacks carried out by Islamists, but because of the heightened impact of each successful attack, bolstered by an existential narrative, and augmented by its transnational activity.

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<sup>83</sup> A complicated narrative exists around hate crimes and terrorism. The two terms seem to be applied contextually, depending on the narrative being put forward. It is rare indeed to see attacks carried out by Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals as ‘hate crimes’. Likewise, it has been rare to see attacks carried out by white individuals as terrorist attacks. While the latter situation is changing, this skewed narrative has fuelled the belief that there are different kinds of justice for different groups, and different levels of threat. A hate crime, while acknowledged to be terrible, seems far less onerous or threatening than a terrorist crime.

<sup>84</sup> An Islamic state, based on Sharia (religious) Law, can be present in any political system, such as presidential, military, sultanate etc. Iran, for example, is an Islamic Republic, having both a President and a Supreme Leader (religious role) who, in theory, share power. In reality, the Supreme Leader tends to be the most powerful man in Iran. A Caliphate is basically a theocracy and purports to have a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed as its leader.

Below, the thesis looks in more detail at fatalities and injuries in the UK, again broken down in the categories identified above.

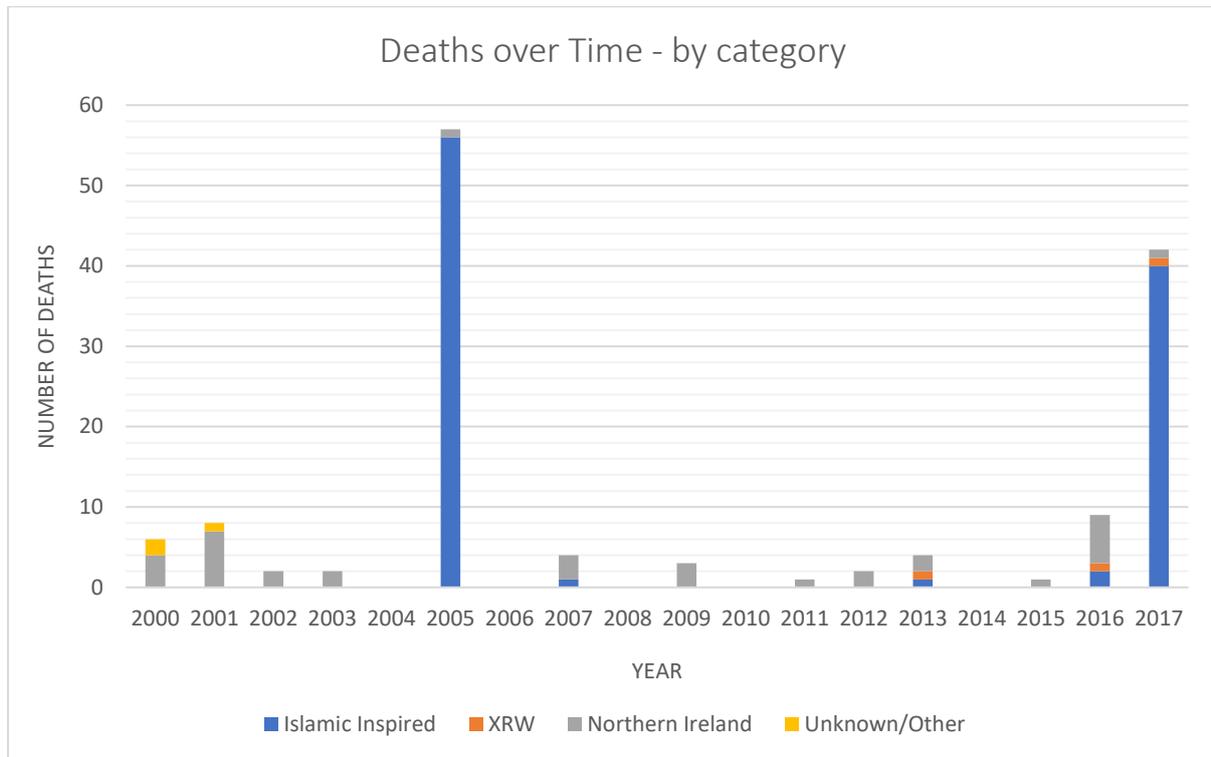


Figure 3.4 Number of fatalities arising from UK-based attacks between 2000 and 2017, displayed by category. Source: GTD.

Figure 3.4 presents some very important data. Of the 1,061 terrorist events that have taken place between 2000 and 2017, very few resulted in any fatalities. With regard to the category ‘Unknown/Other’, only 2000 and 2001 experienced any deaths (2 deaths and 1 death respectively). This category largely contains attacks in Northern Ireland (where republican or unionist terrorism can be assumed but not confirmed in the GTD), but ‘single causes’ such as animal rights and climate groups could also be included here. Deaths are not usually the goal of these latter groups, and as has already been discussed, terrorism associated with Northern Ireland tends to keep death tolls low. Following this, the category of Northern Ireland terrorism also sees relatively low death tolls, although in 13 of the total recorded years, some deaths did result from these attacks. 2000 saw the highest death count from this category, with seven deaths, followed by 2016 which experienced six deaths from Northern Ireland related terrorism. Deaths from XRW terrorism are not recorded prior to 2013, but following this year, they do occur in 2016 and 2017. Interestingly, with the shift in attention to XRW terrorism following 2015, these two individual events, resulting in a single death each, did gain a lot of attention. 2016 saw the public murder of Jo Cox MP as she hosted a local constituency surgery in Birstall, West Yorkshire, while 2017 saw the attack carried out by Darren Osborne on the Finsbury Mosque, which resulted in the death of one individual. The nature of these attacks captured the attention of the public and can be

seen in some way to reflect the tactics of Islamist inspired terrorism at the time. Jo Cox was murdered by Thomas Mair after being shot and stabbed multiple times. This multi-weapon tactic, and particularly the use of a bladed weapon, reflects elements of the Lee Rigby murder of 2013<sup>85</sup>. The attack on Finsbury Mosque in 2017 was carried out with a vehicle ramming tactic, where Osbourne drove deliberately into a group of people who had been attending the Mosque during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Again, this was indicative of a recent trend of vehicle attacks which had been initiated following the lorry attack in Nice, France in July 2016.<sup>86</sup>

Much can be speculated from the nature of these two XRW attacks. Whether there was an acknowledgement among XRW individuals that the tactics of Islamist terrorism resulted in high media coverage and more spectacular impact, that the weapons were easily accessible and difficult for the security services to prevent, or whether the similarity of tactics was a mere coincidence, is open to interpretation. Certainly, the data observed for this project did not provide such insights, and additional research would be necessary in order to gain a complete understanding. Nonetheless, the trends indicated by these two events are important, and reflect a change which took place in the threat posed by XRW terrorism.

The final category in Figure 3.4 is Islamist inspired terrorism, and this data does provide some clear conclusions. Deaths as a result of Islamist terrorism occurred in only five of the years within the timeframe of the research. However, each of the events in those years resulted in deaths. Assuming the intention of each of the perpetrators in those attacks was to kill someone, each attack which took place was, if not completely successful, somewhat successful. Most of these events resulted in single deaths, but two years in particular stand out. In 2005, the four coordinated bombings on the London Transport system resulted in the death of 52 civilians (and all four perpetrators), the highest number of deaths from a terrorist attack in the UK since the Lockerbie Bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988 resulted in the deaths of 270 people. In fact, 2005 saw the highest number of deaths on record within the timeframe of the research. It was followed by 2017, which experienced four Islamist inspired terrorist attacks, three of which resulted in fatalities. In total, 40 people are recorded to have died in these attacks, the second highest year in the timeframe.

This perhaps goes some way to explaining the impact of Islamist terrorism attacks, beyond the frequency of the attacks themselves. In general, the aim of these attacks has either been to kill as many people as possible, or to kill an individual as a message to a larger audience. The two murders in 2016

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<sup>85</sup> Lee Rigby was randomly selected by Adebowale and Adebolajo as a representative of the military, in protest to the UK military involvement in Muslim countries. Jo Cox was targeted as a representative of the governing elite whose liberal views supported issues such as immigration and was a Remain campaigner (wishing the UK to remain within the EU) in the Brexit campaign.

<sup>86</sup> This view, of a connection between Islamist inspired terrorism tactics and XRW tactics, was also described in a BBC news article from September 2019. Available at: [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49753325?intlink\\_from\\_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/ceyn4q51546t/neil-basu&link\\_location=live-reporting-story](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49753325?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/ceyn4q51546t/neil-basu&link_location=live-reporting-story)

of Imam Jalal Uddin in Rochdale and shopkeeper Asad Shah in Glasgow, were also either intended to send a message to a broader group or were punishment for beliefs with which the perpetrators disagreed<sup>87</sup>. For these reasons, the attacks tend to be public and violent. Vehicles, bombings, bladed weapons and guns are commonly used, often with multiple weapon types applied. Civilians are specifically targeted, and so there is the idea that anyone could be next. The narratives of the perpetrators are often reinforced by the organisations with whom they claim an affiliation, usually Al Qaeda or ISIS, which connects the individual criminal events to a broad existential and global conflict. But, more than anything, the idea that these events are communication by action impacts the public perception of the threat. The public is under no illusion that the intention of Islamist inspired terrorists is to murder civilians and those who do not adhere to their ideologies. With the associated intention of suicide, which is characteristic in particular of the suicide bombing attacks but also can be the case with ‘suicide-by-cop’ tactic, the fact that these perpetrators intend to pay the ultimate price for their beliefs is also both chilling and fear-inducing. It is so far outside the average person’s view of the sanctity of life, that these individuals become something other than human, and along with that perception, they become unpredictable and therefore terrifying. This analysis goes some way to showing why public perception of the terrorist threat is fed, not so much by the number of events, but by the individual impact of each of those events.

While death is the ultimate price of these terrorist activities, numbers of injuries should also be explored. Below, Figure 3.5 explores this data.

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<sup>87</sup> Imam Jalal Uddin, while a Muslim, practiced Ruqya healing with amulets and was murdered by Mohammed Hussain Syeedy and Mohammed Abdul Kadir, two supporters of ISIS, because this did not fall within ISIS’ specific ideology. Asad Shah was murdered by Tanveer Ahmed because he claimed to be a prophet. This claim is considered blasphemous by Sunni Muslims, who believe Muhammad was the last prophet.

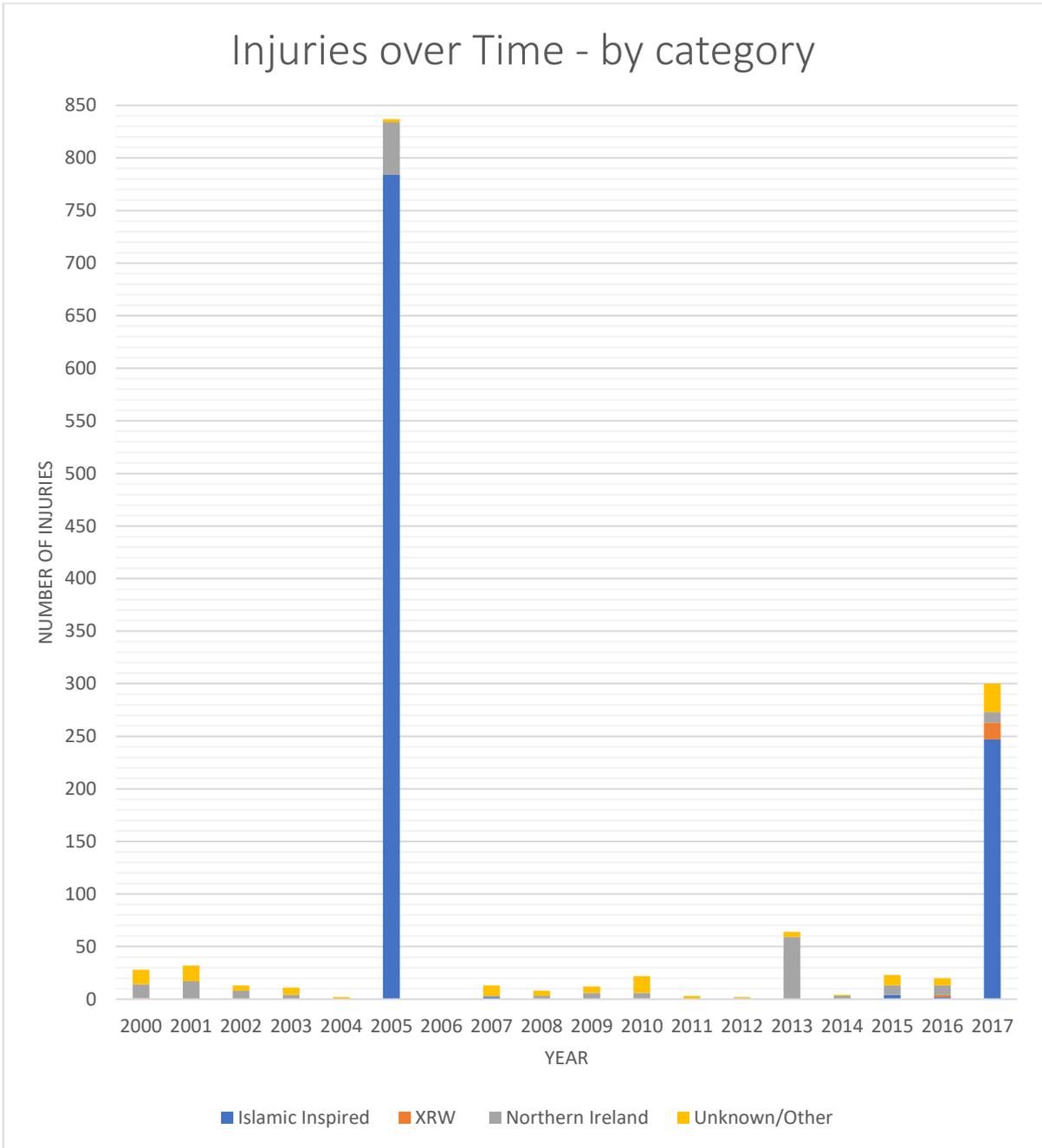


Figure 3.5 Number of injuries arising from UK-based attacks between 2000 and 2017, displayed by category. Source: GTD.

This graphic shows the significant outlier years within the timeframe; lining up very closely with Figure 3.4, 2005 and 2017 clearly show the highest impact in regard to injuries. Again, these two years are dominated by Islamist inspired terrorism, and experienced hundreds of injuries (in 2005, 784 injuries resulted from the four coordinated attacks on the London Transport System and in 2017, 247 injuries resulted from the five attacks in Westminster Bridge, Manchester Arena, London Bridge and Parsons Green Tube Station). While the attack on Parson’s Green Tube Station has not been represented in the

data, given it resulted in no deaths, it did result in 30 people being injured. Therefore, it is important to understand that fatalities alone do not measure the impact of an event.

While Islamist inspired terrorism is clearly the most impactful form of terrorism in the UK in terms of both deaths and injuries, Figure 3.5 also shows a greater impact in terms of the other categories of terrorism. Only 2006 resulted in no injuries from the category 'Unknown/Other'. 2010 saw 16 injuries as a result of this category of terrorism, the highest within the timeframe, while 2000 and 2001 saw 14 and 15 injuries respectively. Both 2010 and 2015 resulted in 10 injuries, and all other years experienced injuries in single digits for this category of terrorism. Of course, as has already been highlighted, many of the events under the 'Unknown/Other' category are more likely related to Northern Ireland terrorism, so the next area to focus on is this category. By far, 2013 saw the highest number of injuries as a result of republican terrorism, with 59 injuries. Given that 47 events took place under Northern Ireland terrorism in that year, this is a very impactful year for this category. And yet, as mentioned above, 47 confirmed republican events, 59 injuries and two deaths seem to have been eclipsed by the single murder of Lee Rigby. Again, context and public messaging through the media, for example, is an important component in public understanding of both terrorism and its inherent threat. XRW terrorism, on the other hand, seems to have had a relatively low impact in terms of injuries prior to 2017, with 2000 and 2016 the only years that resulted in any. Caution should be taken when considering this data, however, as reporting has changed over time and the activities of XRW groups simply might not be classified as terrorism throughout the dataset. Nonetheless, according to the GTD, 2017 experienced an increase in injuries for this category of terrorism, with 16 injuries attributed to XRW terrorists.

On the whole, while 2013 was the most active year in terms of terrorism events in the UK, 2005 remains the most impactful. A total of 29 terrorist events took place in that year, and yet the impact of four of them (the coordinated attacks on the London Transport System) resulted in the highest death toll and injury toll in the UK within the timeframe of the research. 2017 can be considered as having the next most significant impact when all of the elements are combined: attacks, deaths and injuries. In this year, 122 events took place, resulting in 42 deaths and 300 injuries. All four categories of terrorism were active in this year, and the data, when combined, shows a significant rise in the threat from terrorism in the UK. The data analysed provides no clear trend in terms of fatalities and injuries, but it certainly shows a relatively sudden increase in terrorist activity in the UK in 2013, as well as an overall increasing trend of events, which has been largely maintained since. Figure 3.6 below demonstrates this visually.

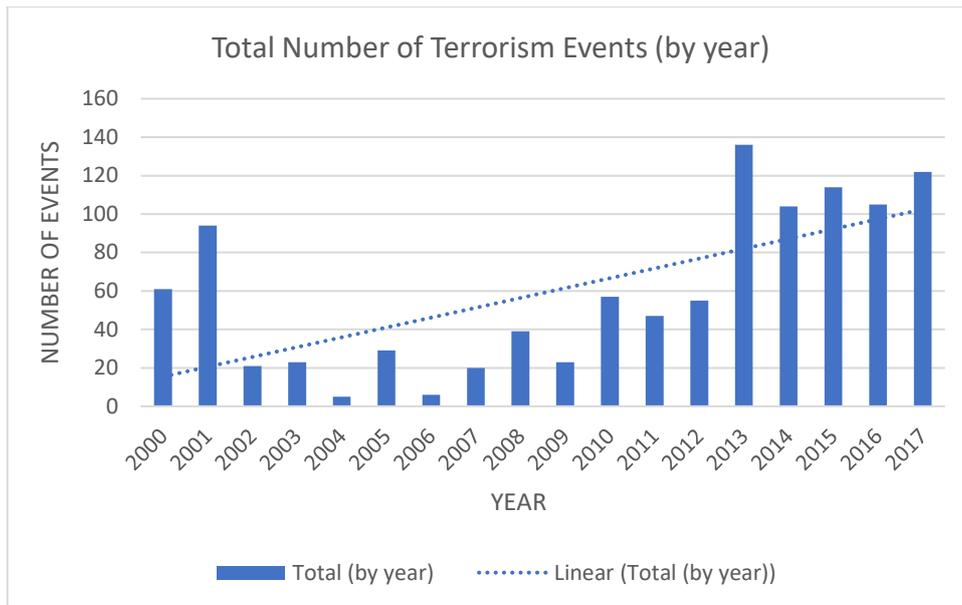


Figure 3.6 Total number of terrorist events in the UK between 2000 and 2017, regardless of category. Source: GTD.

As can be seen in Figure 3.6, in terms of the average number of events per year, an overall increasing trend of terrorism events is taking place in the UK when considering the entire span of the timeframe. This supports the views of those counter-terrorism practitioners in the field, such as Neil Basu, the Head of National Counter-Terrorism Policing, who claim that the threat from terrorism is increasing.

Of the other trends in the data, some interesting points arise. Of the cities which experienced the most terrorist attacks, and again assuming that the eight attacks of 2005 are condensed into two separate events, London by far had the most activity with nine events taking place there. Three events took place in or near Manchester, and two events took place in Glasgow. The other two events took place near Leeds and east of York. The results of all of these events combined was the death of 100 citizens and 1040 people injured. Again, taking the four attacks of 21 July 2005 as one event, only two events resulted in no deaths or casualties (the printer cartridge bomb plot of October 2010 and the 21 July 2005 attacks).

### 3.3.2 Foiled Plots and Failed Attacks

As important as it is to look at the events that did take place, it is equally important to try to look at the events which did not succeed. There are two reasons for this: first of all, even events which did not succeed have had impacts on the creation of legislation and the development of counter-terrorism activities; second, by looking at foiled and failed events in comparison with successful events, some basic measure of the impact of counter-terrorism activities can be gleaned. There are two types of these

attacks: failed attacks, where the perpetrators are not stopped in advance of their attack but, through some capability or technical issue, are unable to carry out the attack; and foiled plots, where the security services stop perpetrators from committing an attack. A lot more of these events have taken place since 2000, although not all have been made public in any detail, as can be seen above. The challenges with this aspect of counter-terrorism are multifarious. Firstly, in the early part of the research timeframe, far less data was published for public consumption. This issue is further explored below. Therefore, only the kinds of events that made media headlines were openly acknowledged. Secondly, even now there are challenges with releasing detailed data. If a trial is ongoing, the publication of specific information could negatively impact (through bias) criminal proceedings. Additionally, if a more broad-reaching operation is taking place, involving multiple Subjects of Interest (SOIs) of which the relevant individual is but a part of a bigger picture, data is again difficult to come by until after the conclusion of the security services operation. Releasing detailed data on these individuals is not possible given the potential impact on preventing other terrorist events. These trials and operations may go on for some time and, therefore, data may only be published in broad terms or after a significant time lapse.

In lieu of these details, the security services have instead begun to release some broad trend data. These have been provided in interviews or in reports carried out by other independent entities (e.g. Independent Reviewers and Select Committees, specifically the ISC). So, while specific detail cannot be presented publicly, broad-stroke figures are being released more regularly. When looking at interviews reported in media, overall numbers with regard to foiled plots are occasionally provided. This chapter has already discussed this briefly in section 3.2.1. Commentary on foiled plots prior to 2017 is difficult to come by, but there is a clear marker of added transparency following the heightened level of activity in 2017. The rationale for this increased transparency is not difficult to understand. In light of a string of multi-casualty attacks in the most active year of terrorism in mainland UK in decades (certainly in terms of Islamist terrorism), the security services needed to justify their apparent inability to prevent these from taking place. By pointing to the high level of plots that had been stopped, they demonstrated to the public that they were in fact preventing terrorism activities from taking place, although clearly, some managed to succeed. Regardless of the motives for additional transparency, it is good to know that this activity is taking place. This increased transparency is welcome, although, without the details behind these numbers, there is little that researchers can do to analyse the complete picture.

When pieced together from the MI5 website and various media articles, the following numbers can be extrapolated:

- June 2013 – February 2017: 13 foiled plots (about 3.5 years)
- March 2017 – September 2017: 6 foiled plots (6 months)

- October 2017 – June 2020: 19 foiled plots (about 2.5 years)
- July 2020 – October 2020: 2 foiled plots (3 months)

Therefore, in total between June 2013 and October 2020, 40 terrorist plots were foiled, far more than the 14 explored for the entire project timeline (2000 to 2019) earlier in this chapter. This is largely because this data specifically explores the overall numbers provided publicly following the terrorism events of 2017, providing an overall number of foiled attacks between 2013 and 2020. The data explored above in section 3.2.1, however, looks at individual events which were publicly detailed and within the entire timeframe of the research. The individual foiled plots to which this section is referring are not currently available, and so the two sets of data provide differing, but nonetheless useful, analyses. The calculations behind these data can be found in Appendix G.

This extrapolated information outlined above is helpful, but too vague to provide any in-depth analysis and only covers part of the timeframe of this research. Nonetheless, the picture painted is one of significant and ongoing counter-terrorism, and indeed terrorism, activity. While it is not possible to directly compare the overview of foiled attacks with details of the successful and failed attacks, given the lack of year-on-year data and differing timelines, the data does indicate counter-terrorism policies that are working, and performing as expected (stopping more attacks than are successful), if not as hoped for (100% of attacks stopped). Between June 2013 and October 2020, eight successful attacks (those included in the Table 3.2 and an additional attack on London Bridge in 2019) seems eclipsed by the reported 40 foiled plots. Even when failed attacks (not stopped by the security services) is added to the successful attacks, that number of ‘failures’ by the security services rises to 10. This still means that, since 2013, the security services have stopped more attacks than those which have successfully taken place or would have taken place had technical challenges not presented.

In light of this challenge, the documents in the CP were also reviewed to explore mentions of foiled and failed attacks. The following table provides an overview of these 14 events (also explored comparatively in Table 3.2), as described within the documents of the CP. These particular events are common knowledge and have been reported in the media and recounted in the various documents of the CP.

Table 3.3 Summary of a selection of UK-based foiled plots and failed attacks, 2000 to 2017<sup>88</sup>.

<b>Name of Plot</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Status of Attack</b>
<b>Two British citizens of Bangladeshi origin arrested in Birmingham</b>	November 2000	Foiled Plot
<b>The ‘Shoe Bomber’, Richard Reid</b>	December 2001	Failed Attack
<b>Ricin Plot, Wood Green</b>	2003	Foiled Plot
<b>Fertiliser Bomb Plot</b>	March 2004	Foiled Plot
<b>The Dirty Bomb Plot</b>	August 2004	Foiled Plot
<b>Attempted bombings of London Transportation</b>	July 2005	Failed Attack
<b>Birmingham Kidnapping Plot</b>	2007	Foiled Plot
<b>London Car Bombs or ‘Tiger Tiger Club’ Bombings</b>	2007	Foiled Plot
<b>Glasgow Airport Attack</b>	2007	Failed Attack
<b>Attempted suicide bomb – Nicky Reilly</b>	May 2008	Failed Attack
<b>Suicide bombing targeting mall in Bristol</b>	2008	Foiled Plot
<b>Underwear Bomber</b>	December 2009	Foiled Plot
<b>Printer Cartridge Bombing plot</b>	October 2010	Foiled Plot
<b>Plan to attack London at Christmas</b>	2010	Foiled Plot
<b>Underwear Bomb Plot</b>	April 2012	Foiled Plot
<b>Silenced firearms attack</b>	2014	Foiled Plot
<b>Plot to behead at least one member of the public</b>	November 2014	Foiled Plot
<b>Attempted attack on US military</b>	July 2015	Foiled Plot

The sample of foiled plots and failed attacks listed above provides some insight into the terrorist activities which are ongoing, as well as the challenge for counter-terrorism agencies and practitioners.

<sup>88</sup> Additional detail on the specific events presented in Table 3 are provided in the full table in Appendix G.

Of the 18 ‘events’ recorded here, all were related to Islamist terrorism, specifically Al Qaeda or its affiliates. More recent plots which might have been motivated by ISIS are not included in the documentation, likely because of the time it takes to process and publicise the data. Foiled plots by XRW terrorists have not been recorded in the documentation. Of these 18 events, 14 were foiled plots where the security services successfully protected the public. However, four attempted attacks would have proceeded had it not been for technical issues or issues with skills. For this reason, failed attacks can be added to successful attacks when looking at the success, or lack of success, of the security services. Adding these four events to the eight successful events already mentioned in Table 3.2, a total of 12 events failed to be prevented over the period 2000 to 2017. However, more often than not, the security services are effective in preventing terrorist attacks, with 14 foiled plots noted in the table. This indicates that, overall, more events are prevented than actually take place. The reality, as the data explored above shows, is that many more plots than 14 are foiled, improving the success rate of the security services significantly.

## **3.4 Assessment and Oversight**

### **3.4.1 Overview**

So far, this chapter has looked at ‘Legislation and the Criminal Justice System’ as well as ‘Events and the Threat Landscape’. The collection of data for these two sections was front-facing in that the general public would not have difficulty in connecting these themes with counter-terrorism. As such, they provided for clear opportunities for analysis and for understanding the UK’s counter-terrorism, and terrorism, landscapes. However, another important element to consider when assessing counter-terrorism strategies is the level of oversight that takes place. This is not always an obvious element of counter-terrorism considered by the public, or even scholars and practitioners, as it essentially works in the background. However, this dimension is essential to understanding the ‘health’ of counter-terrorism strategies. A strategy that has no oversight can assumedly function in whatever way those who run it choose, answering to no one and providing little value for money. Oversight is crucial to ensure effective and responsive policies which are appropriate across time and indeed space. For these reasons, it was considered that research on oversight mechanisms of CONTEST was a requisite component in the development of a true understanding of CONTEST’s impact and indeed performance.

The main challenge with researching this section can also be considered a positive. There is a significant amount of documentation available in the public sphere on the performance of CONTEST. Consisting of briefing papers, strategy documents, reviews, statistical bulletins and government responses to various publications, these documents demonstrate a broad swathe of oversight. While this is positive,

it also meant that there was a vast number of documents to research in this category alone. In addition, because a number of different entities were involved in producing these documents, they are not consistently formatted or structured, employ various levels of methodological rigour and are not centralised. These challenges meant that, as a part of the overall research, only a modest delve into the data could be undertaken for this particular thesis.

The analysis of review documents needs to take place at both the micro and the macro level. In light of the topic of this chapter, 'Data and Trends', it was considered appropriate to look at the macro level here. Therefore, the focus is on an overview of the documents explored for this part of the research. The micro level, where the views of the interviewees are explored, is presented in Chapter 4.

In total, 164 documents were identified for this research. The majority of these were in addition to the documents of the CP but were located while carrying out the initial data collection phase. By organising the data in different ways, some surface level analysis can be carried out. Additional detail on a selection of data-based statistical reports can then be presented.

Of the 164 documents, 18 were published in 2011. However, following this, the majority were published in 2016 (17 documents), with an additional 16 documents published in 2017. 14 documents were published in 2018 as was also the case in 2015. In comparison to the years 2000 to 2014, these four years resulted in 61 documents (or 37% of the total number of documents). While this collection of documents is not purported to be exhaustive, the search was extensive, and therefore this trend shows that there are an increasing number of public-facing reviews. A broader search of earlier years in the timeframe might result in this percentage being reduced, but this apparent increased transparency indicates a trend supported throughout this thesis of a growing move publicly available publications. Indeed, this view is supported by the publication of the 'Transparency Report: Disruptive Powers [year]' which began in 2015 and looks at the "work of our intelligence, security and law enforcement agencies" (Home Office 2015d, Forward).

By far, the most publications were attributed to government bodies including the Home Office, the Treasury, the Prime Minister, House of Commons Library (44 publications), followed by the ISC (38 publications), 28 publications attributed to the IRTL and 22 attributed to the Joint Committee of Human Rights. The Home Affairs Committee published 12 documents in the research timeframe. There are a number of other documents, but from the search undertaken for this thesis, these are the prominent entities that provide open reporting. Parliamentary Select and Joint Committees are one of the most robust methods for oversight in the UK's governmental system and proved very useful in understanding the level of scrutiny applied to government policy development.

The empirical nature of these documents was explored in order to assess their robustness and impartiality. 82 of the documents were found to be of a high quality and empirical nature, some with a statistical focus and many with data-driven analysis. A further 64 documents were considered to be empirical to an extent, but also contained some level of bias and self-congratulatory language (32 of these documents presented as such). This latter grouping was primarily comprised of government documents. The other 32 documents in this ‘category’ were created by the Home Affairs Committee and the Joint Committee of Human Rights, which, while fairly robust, also clearly presented a bias agenda in their documents. Additionally, access to hard data for these committees was limited (certainly when compared to the ISC) but this issue was offset by the witness evidence these committees availed themselves of. Only 14 documents were assessed to have been wholly unempirical (based largely on opinion and unfounded assertions).

Finally, the number of recommendations was reviewed, and this particular research led to the conclusion that a full analysis could not be reasonably carried out for this particular part of project. Of the documents collected, 42 contained either recommendations or conclusions or both. 33 documents did not contain recommendations whether because the type of document rendered recommendations inappropriate (government documents were not intended to make recommendations to itself) or because of redaction. An additional 88 documents were not explored in this capacity due to time constraints as well as the realization of the immense scale of this specific aspect of the research. Rather than presenting the data here, a table has been included in Appendix H which shows the scale of the data, even on a summary basis.

The data presented in Appendix H clearly shows that a large number of recommendations and conclusions are made in the reports. Analysis of these would constitute a research project in and of itself. The importance of these recommendations is aligned to the potential to measure actions taken. If failings are observed throughout an in-depth review and recommendations to address these are identified in the reports, it is useful to look at whether the recommendations have been acted upon. This exemplifies a flexible strategy that takes on board lessons identified and actively works towards making informed improvements. Of course, identifying the recommendations is really the easy part of this research, as it is far more difficult to truly ascertain if the government or other entity has actually made the changes or is working towards making the changes. However, analysis of this aspect of oversight would make a significant contribution to our understanding of the effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies and should be considered for future research.

### 3.4.2 Data-Based Statistical Reports

Finally, this section of the chapter looks at reports which were specifically based on data and statistics. There are a large number of reports such as these. Home Office Statistical Bulletins are particularly useful and provide solid, if not in-depth, methodologies into the research, usually also including a select bibliography for ongoing exploration. Given the fact that data can be spread out over a number of sources and entities, and is not always easy to locate, these Statistical Bulletins provide a coordinating role, allowing the data on a particular topic to be seen within one document, but also providing citations so that the original sources may be followed up on.

Of the various data-based reports of relevance to this thesis, the following are a selection:

Table 3.4 Overview of data-based reports, as collected for the CP.

Frequency	Entity	Title of Report
Annual	Home Office	Statistical Bulletin: Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme
Annual	Home Office	Statistical Bulletin: Crime Outcomes in England and Wales
Annual	Home Office	Operation of Police Powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search, Great Britain
One-Off	Home Office	Fact Sheet: Counter-Terrorism and the Border Security Act 2019

It was decided that, in light of the types of data contained within these documents, they would not be coded, but would rather be explored less formally. These reports served multiple uses. While they provided data on trends over time relating to a particular project or counter-terrorism activity, they also provided an element of oversight on these activities.

An example of this can be seen in the Crime Outcomes Report for 2015. Following some explanation of the changes in crime reporting which had been undertaken between 2013 and 2014, the report goes into detail on how the reporting of data is made, providing appreciated transparency on what has usually been an opaque system. It states that “The Home Office receives monthly data on crime, crime outcomes and transferred or cancelled crimes from police forces. These data are quality assured and analysed by Home Office statisticians and any anomalies or errors identified through this process result in a report being returned to the relevant force for validation or correction. Prior to the publication of crime outcomes a verification exercise is carried out with all forces. The data held by the Home Office are returned to individual forces asking for confirmation that the data accords with that held on their own

systems. Again, forces resubmit data if required” (Allan 2015, p.14). A number of interviewees reflected on the oversight carried out regarding police forces, including by the Home Office. This is explored further in Chapter 4.

The report for 2015 outlines the issue of missing data. It notes that only 19 police forces in England and Wales were able to provide data through the Home Office Data Hub, but a further 19 police forces did so in alternative ways. This meant that 38 of the “43 territorial police forces in England and Wales” provided the data for the report (ibid.). In light of other challenges arising from the sharing of data, such as varied timeframes, the report believes that it had access to about 73% of offences recorded for the relevant period (ibid.).

These insights are presented here to show the challenges of obtaining consistent data across all of England and Wales, even for the Government, which was not made easier in light of the changes in reporting alluded to above. In addition, both Scotland and Northern Ireland gather data in completely different ways and are therefore not included in any of these reports. Instead, the two devolved governments have their own reports and methodology which can be accessed on their official websites.<sup>89</sup>

In terms of the document series titled Individuals Referred to and Supported Through the Prevent Programme, some interesting commentary is given on the ongoing updating and adaptation of this activity. This shows that the programmes which are initiated do not stay stagnant over time but adapt to new learning opportunities. In the 2018 report, it states “[t]his year, the new category ‘Mixed, Unstable, or Unclear Ideology’ has been added to describe type of concern. This category describes cases in which the ideology the individual is presenting with cannot easily be described as one of the existing categories, such as Islamist or right wing extremism. This new category reflects the fact that Channel panels work to support individuals with wide ranging and sometimes extensive vulnerabilities” (Home Office 2018c, p.8). Further, in the same section, the report acknowledges some of the challenges with the data, stating “Due to the provisional nature of this dataset, these statistics have been designated as **Experimental Statistics** [sic]. It was acknowledged that there was a need for greater consistency in recording referrals across the regions. Work has been undertaken to improve this” (ibid). This again shows that improvements are being made and that there is an effort to become more transparent, providing hard data to the public more routinely.

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<sup>89</sup> These websites can be accessed at <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubRecordedCrime> and <https://www.psnipolice.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/>

### 3.5 Findings

The three sections of this chapter have provided a broad spread of understanding, as well as a nuanced deep-dive, of CONTEST as a strategy. Without going into each individual counter-terrorism action, a monumental task far beyond the purview and research constraints of this thesis, the research carried out here provides multi-dimensional understandings of the complex counter-terrorism environment which has existed in the UK since 2000. Through an exploration of a broad spread of documentation available as open-access, this chapter has shown that it is possible to develop an appropriately deep understanding of counter-terrorism.

First of all, a large amount of terrorism legislation is in existence in the UK, building from the Terrorism Act 2000 which shifted the UK counter-terrorism focus to Islamist terrorism (otherwise described as international terrorism) from republican, IRA-dominated terrorism (or domestic terrorism). Many pieces of legislation failed to progress beyond initial bills due to a robust process of scrutiny which is in place for all forms of legislation – there is no special system for counter-terrorism legislation. Those pieces of legislation which do become acts have been viewed critically by some, but the existence of the IRTL, among other entities, ensures that the spotlight illuminates the activities within the legal system. Few entities have reason to doubt the efficacy of the office of the IRTL, and while the IRTL has no power to enforce an action on government, recommendations appear to be taken seriously. When the data on terrorism legislation was compared with the number of terrorist activity taking place in the UK, the balance seemed, to this researcher, to be fair. Without doubt, those who are on the receiving end of the law may disagree with this conclusion as, for example, ‘stops and searches’ and TPIMs (Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures) continue to prove controversial. However, from the data reviewed, improvements are made over time and few TPIMs, have ever been in existence at a given time.

What is often overlooked, it seems, is the fact that counter-terrorism legislation does not exist in a vacuum. Those arrested for terrorism crimes are not always prosecuted under terrorism legislation. A broad sweep of legislative options are available to the CPS and so it is important to understand the application of legislation more broadly when it comes to those intent on carrying out terrorist activity. In particular, the data showed that those accused of committing acts of XRW terrorism are less likely to be prosecuted under terrorism legislation while those identified as Islamist terrorists are almost exclusively prosecuted under terrorism legislation. This complex interconnection of terrorism and non-terrorism legislation is a product of practicality, likely a result of complex decision-making on how to successfully prosecute the specific case. Academics looking at counter-terrorism legislation in the UK need to take this overlapping network of legislation into consideration when assessing efficacy and impact. The data did not show whether those arrested under terrorism legislation are successfully

prosecuted, primarily as the CPS does not publish information on those who are found to be not guilty. However, police data, published both annually and quarterly, can perhaps be compared and explored to get a better impression of this activity. However, challenges in the data such as gaps or conflicting terminology (for example types of arrests and dates) pose significant obstacles. Better interactions between police data and the data held by the CPS would greatly improve the ability to analyse the efficacy of the criminal justice system as it applies to terrorism activity.

When it comes to the data on events and threats, some important issues arise. First of all, connected with the research carried out for the section above, terrorist activity is not only connected to attacks. There are a number of actions that are terrorist-related but which fall short of being a terrorist attack. Therefore, terrorist activities are far more than the rare successful events we see in the news. Further, terrorist attacks are themselves complex and only a few succeed in carrying out their goals. The data explored in the chapter showed that more terrorist events are foiled than are successful and even those events not stopped by the police have a high chance of failing due to some technical reason. It is therefore short-sighted to only consider successful attacks as a measure of terrorist activity in the UK. Foiled and failed attacks as well as a number of other ‘smaller impact’ activities are also commonly dealt with by the security services and the courts in the UK. Only by considering the breadth of this activity – both terrorist activity and the actions taken to stop it – can a true picture of counter-terrorism strategy effectiveness be ascertained. This chapter has shed some light on this through empirical analysis but further research, as well as better collaboration with practitioners<sup>90</sup>, is certainly needed to gain further insights and understand the impact of counter-terrorism activities more broadly.

Finally, in terms of assessment and oversight, it seems clear that some learning is being carried out to improve both data collection and the understanding of the problems being faced by frontline workers in counter-terrorism related activities. Efforts are made to improve transparency and accuracy, and where these are not available, insight is usually provided, even if this is not particularly extensive. The fact that the documents reviewed for this chapter are available to the public is noteworthy and is an important finding of this research. While significant problems have been identified throughout this section, such as classified information, inconsistency in reporting across entities and missing data, it can be concluded that an established system of oversight is in place. It can be surmised that what can be found publicly is but the outward face of this review system and that internal reviews and assessments are ongoing. Nonetheless, despite the challenges with accessing supporting data for many of these reports, an understanding of this system can be identified from the data gathered for this thesis. If we can extend our trust to the reviewing bodies to give a fair and accurate account of the information they

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<sup>90</sup> It is relevant to note that, throughout this project, there was an expressed interest in the research being carried out by a number of entities, including the Home Office and the DSTL. However, when opportunities for cooperation were pursued (such as data sharing or interviews) no actual progress was made. While an appreciation of what can be achieved by collaboration seems to prevail on both ‘sides of the aisle’, so to speak, there remains an impasse on how to actively and practically bridge the gap between academia and policy-makers or practitioners.

have access to, we must admit that the review process undertaken by the IRTL and the ISC (both of whom have access to classified data) and similar entities is sufficiently robust to provide sound accounts of the events and counter-terrorist activities. If, on the other hand, we do not trust the system, nothing short of putting eyes on the classified information will suffice and, in the absence of this, no true academic research can take place. For the purpose of this research, the former suggestion is held to be the best-case scenario, given the significant constraints. Therefore, while the data presented in the Assessment and Oversight section could be considered flawed or incomplete, it is argued that there is sufficient information available to support the idea that a substantial oversight process is in place in the UK. On the other hand, the research carried out for this section also indicates a significant range of challenges in empirically assessing the data available. Further collaboration between the Government and various entities involved in research on this topic and academia would undoubtedly result in more comprehensive analysis.

The next chapter builds on these findings, bridging the gap between academia, the Government and frontline practitioners and experts through in-depth interviews, as well as the views of the public through the exploration of public opinion polls and surveys. Building on the macro-level exploration carried out so far, this next step is to engage with the micro-level analysis.

## Chapter 4: Perspectives

### 4.1 Introduction and Outline

This chapter explores the perspectives of a number of different sources on the UK's counter-terrorism activities. While the previous chapter focused on hard data and numerical analysis, this chapter diversifies the findings through the exploration of opinions expressed throughout the research. This approach ensures a unique research project is undertaken, resulting in multi-dimensional findings. The analysis of the data allows for a fuller picture of the counter-terrorism landscape in the UK than has been previously offered in the field and is motivated by the understanding that insights into the impact of counter-terrorism activities cannot come from numbers alone. Rather, triangulation of hard data with the soft data of perspectives adds depth to the analysis. This depth of empiricism is one of the key attributes of this thesis. It is appropriate at this juncture to note that the documents gathered for the analysis of CONTEST did not reflect deeply (or in some cases at all) on the voices of those who oppose the strategy or elements of it. BAME voices, as well as the voices of other critics, were not presented in the documentation. This was largely as a result of the focus of the project on reports published by the Government, the security services, statistical reports, parliamentary committee reports, the IRTL publications and other similar types of documents. This is not to say that these voices are not important or in need of consideration. Rather it is simply a reflection of the focus of this thesis. This chapter will attempt in a small way to incorporate these perspectives, although they continue to fall outside of the primary focus of the work. Future research should further incorporate these voices to provide an even fuller understanding of the complex framing of, and perspectives on, the UK's counter-terrorism landscape.

If we again reflect on the Government's overarching goal of CONTEST<sup>91</sup>, it seems essential that the citizenry of the UK believes the strategy to be working and considers themselves to be kept safe. Therefore, this chapter looks at a number of different perspectives in regard to CONTEST. All perspectives presented here are arranged, as in the previous chapter, under three broad sub-sections: Legislation and the Criminal Justice System; Events and the Threat Landscape; and Assessment and Oversight. In the first two sections, the views of a number of practitioner interviewees are considered<sup>92</sup>,

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<sup>91</sup> As previously described in Chapter 1, the overarching goal of CONTEST is to "reduce the risk to the UK and our interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence" (CONTEST 2011, p.6; 9; 15; 17; 40; 119).

<sup>92</sup> A number of questions were posed to the interviewees (see Appendix B for the full list of questions), some of which were relevant to Legislation and the Criminal Justice System, others to Events and the Threat Landscape and yet others to Assessment and Oversight. To this end, a select number of questions posed to the interviewees, and relevant to the appropriate section, form the basis of exploration for these three interview sections. In order to make best use of space, only the responses of a few of the interviewees are considered for each section. To address all 11 responses to all relevant questions for the particular section would not be feasible in the space allotted the chapter.

followed by a number of public opinion polls providing insights into the views of the broader citizenry<sup>93</sup>. The final section, ‘Assessment and Oversight’, only looks at the views of the interviewees as there are no opinion polls on this topic. As in the previous chapter, a final ‘findings’ section is provided. Some additional commentary on dissenting voices is also provided throughout the chapter as appropriate.

While the interviewees wished their identities to be anonymised, it is also helpful to outline the roles of the interviewees in general terms here, so that the reader can understand the context of their replies:

P1: Legal

P2: Policing

P3: Policing

P4: Policing

P5: MOPAC (Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, Mayor of London)

P6: Legal

P7: Think Tank

P8: Local Authority

P9: Policing, Retired

P10: Government Policy, Academia

P11: Aviation Industry

## **4.2 Legislation and the Criminal Justice System**

### **4.2.1 Interviews**

The interviewees<sup>94</sup>, speaking between March and May 2017, on the whole considered that the legal framework in the UK in terms of counter-terrorism was fit for purpose.

In response to the question “Is CONTEST working?”, Participant 1 (P1) stated “I can’t think of any other analogous criminal justice policy that has been so effective against a huge challenge”. P1 went on

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<sup>93</sup> The search for opinion polls resulted in a limited number relating to terrorism, despite significant effort spent. They also connect quite specifically with terrorist events, either in the UK or internationally, and therefore the views expressed within them are likely skewed, contextualised within a heightened threat perception. Additionally, no polls reflected on the topics of assessments or oversight, and therefore could not be explored in that particular section of the chapter.

<sup>94</sup> The 11 interviewees engaged for this research were experts and practitioners in a range of counter-terrorism areas such as the legal system, policing, think tanks, local authorities, the transport industry and public policy. Further details on the interviews can be found in Chapter 2 under the section ‘Data Collection: Interviews’, as well as in Appendix B.

to say that “[w]hilst I take on board criticisms, and share a few of them, by and large, I think that the impact of CONTEST has been excellent”. He developed this point further by highlighting a piece of legislation which was not, in his view, appropriate and one which he considered to be working well. He said that “Section 44<sup>95</sup>, when it was created in the Terrorism Act 2000, was seen to be necessary. As it turned out, whilst the concept behind Section 44 was reasonable, it proved counter-productive, because it produced no benefits”. He considered that, on the other hand, “Schedule 7<sup>96</sup>, whilst it is irritating for some travelers, is extraordinarily effective”. By comparing these two pieces of legislation, P1 has highlighted the nuance in the practical application of legislation as opposed to the intended impact. While both sections were deemed appropriate tools in the fight against terrorism, in the real world they had differing impacts and efficacy, and thus notoriety. P1 even notes that, while Schedule 7 is effective, this does not mean that it is necessarily well-regarded, it being a potential hindrance to travelers. He also mentioned that one of the indicators of a successful counter-terrorism policy is “... avoiding the dilution of ... legitimate civil liberties”. This delicate balance is not easy to achieve, but in democratic states, upholding civil liberties is paramount in gaining continued support from the public. Some of the greatest opponents of the Prevent Duty, for example, would argue that civil liberties are under threat by the requirement to report vulnerable individuals to the authorities, regardless of the fact that the hope and intention of the requirement is to support these individuals, not criminalise them.

An example of a different view to P1 can be found in a CAGE report published in August 2019 titled “Schedule 7: Harassment at Borders: The impact on the Muslim community” which provided a scathing commentary on the activity under this piece of legislation. Following the provision of some of the basic facts on what Schedule 7 does, the report states “[i]n terms of UK law, Schedule 7 – on these facts alone – is a staggering power in terms of its violations of due process, lack of oversight, and its vulnerability to abuse. It is an affront to the principle of the rule of law and is detrimental to trust between society and state” (CAGE 2019). Clearly the positive view of P1 is not supported by CAGE and this opinion is valid and important to consider in terms of effective activities addressing this area of threat (borders). Open critique of government activities and strategies is an important mechanism in democratic societies to hold governments to account and provoke improvements and change. Clearly, Schedule 7 is divisive, although most of the documentation explored for this project deemed it to be an effective tool in the fight against terrorism.

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<sup>95</sup> Section 44 gives the power to the police to stop and search anyone of whom they have a ‘reasonable suspicion’ of involvement in terrorism-related activity. This was the legal test of Control Orders. The legal test for TPIMs was that the police officer had a ‘reasonable belief’ of involvement in terrorism-related activity.

<sup>96</sup> Schedule 7 relates to stop and searches at ports, and while controversial, has been defended by security services as an important and useful power in the counter-terrorism arsenal. This legislative tool has also been discussed in Chapter 3.

In some detail, P1 also addressed the issue of the change from Control Order to TPIMs<sup>97</sup>: “I thought a significant mistake was the insistence by the Liberal Democrats in the coalition that Control Orders should be replaced by TPIMs ... There were very small numbers – at most there were 23 at any one time. And usually there were a dozen or less”. Clearly seeing this as a narrow impact on only a few individuals, he focused on the strongest element of Control Orders, in his view: “Relocation<sup>98</sup> was a very significant and wise part of Control Orders. It was abandoned on grounds that were not founded on merit at all. The relocation provisions effectively then had to be replaced in TPIMs, and they were, quite rightly ... It took people out of circulation, that’s what protected the public ...”. Lord Anderson, who became IRTL in 2011, said the following in his 2012 report on Control Orders: “In terms of their effectiveness ... there are good reasons to believe that control orders fulfilled their primary function of disrupting terrorist activity. The disruptive effect of relocation was as prized for national security reasons as it was resented by families. Control orders are likely also to have released intelligence resources for use in relation to other targets. It is less clear that they assisted controlled persons in disengaging from terrorism. They did not prove a useful source of evidence for criminal prosecutions” (Anderson 2012, p.6). This shows the controversy of this particular counter-terrorism action, where Anderson notes that the relocation scheme was of great assistance to the intelligence community, freeing up resources which would otherwise have had to be applied to observing the individual, but ultimately may not have impacted the individual’s inclination to engage in terrorism. Nonetheless, despite the controversy, both P1 and Lord Anderson agree that ‘relocation’ provisions were applied to very few individuals. Lord Anderson notes “All nine controlled persons at the end of 2011 were British citizens suspected of Islamist terrorism. Each control order featured a wide range of restrictions, including in six cases relocation ... Relocation requirements were upheld as necessary and proportionate by the High Court in two cases during 2011...” (ibid., p.5). It can be assumed from the data provided here that, only in very specific cases, relocation measures were deemed appropriate and were not a tool used more broadly among the population.

Nonetheless, the moderate controversy explored above between two practitioners who are intimately familiar with the legal impact of both Control Orders and TPIMs is some insight into the controversy around these two measures. In May 2020, Liberty published a news piece on their website reflecting

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<sup>97</sup> Control Orders came into use under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005. They were highly controversial and involved severe restrictions being placed on individuals in breach of terrorism laws. The government replaced Control Orders in 2011 with Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMs). The intention of TPIMs was to allow greater flexibility, although many believe they are merely a ‘rebranding’ of Control Orders. Initially, TPIMs did not have a relocation option, although this was changed over time. In 2012, Lord Anderson provided the following helpful overview of control orders: “A control order was a bundle of obligations, different in each case but often including long curfew periods at a specified address, tagging and tight restrictions on association and communication. In a substantial minority of cases it also involved relocation to a different town or city. The purpose of control orders was to restrict the individual’s involvement in terrorism-related activity. Orders remained in force for periods ranging from a few months to more than four-and-a-half years.” (Anderson, 2012)

<sup>98</sup> Relocation was an attempt to break an individual’s connections with others who might be involved in terrorist activity. By moving someone who was involved in terrorist activity to another city, it was hoped that breaking the ties to other terrorist actors, and the community locations they met in, would force disengagement and therefore protect the public.

their views of a proposed piece of legislation. It criticized the proposed Counter-Terrorism and Sentencing Bill for “[authorising] people being locked up indefinitely, and expands Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMs) in a way which reintroduces Control Orders in all but name. Liberty has also criticised the Government for not reviewing its failing counter-terror strategy” (Liberty 2020). The right to be concerned about expanding counter-terrorism legislation is legitimate and appropriate, but the news piece also contains vague statements which seem unsubstantiated based on the research carried out for this project. For example, Liberty claims that “[t]he Government’s counter-terror strategy is failing” but gives no evidence to support this view. In fact, the evidence seems to point to the fact that the strategy as a whole is working, and that perhaps some validation of this claim can only be levelled at the issues surrounding Prevent. None of the interviewees had issues with Pursue, Protect and Prepare, and indeed the media takes either a positive or a neutral view of these workstreams. It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that the entire strategy is failing. It is statements like these, vague and without support, that often open up these organisations to criticisms and skepticism, and while keeping the Government in check is an important aspect of NGOs and civil society, the reliance on vague statements and anecdotes undermines the clout they might otherwise have. Nonetheless, these organisations do have a strong voice in communities that feel negatively about counter-terrorism activities more generally, and therefore the impact of their statements and reports is an important consideration when exploring counter-terrorism strategies.

P1 also addressed the positive aspect of terrorist prosecutions going through the normal justice system, as in “the trial of the two men in the Lee Rigby case, I thought demonstrated that the law was working. It was a regular trial”. This idea that a terrorist is a criminal and should therefore, as much as is possible, go through the UK’s normal criminal justice system is an important foundation in the legal system in the UK. This impacts not only the point of conviction and sentencing but also the charges levelled at an accused. Decisions will carefully be made on whether a bar can be met to secure a conviction and the CPS will only lay charges it considers it can prove in court, with the burden of proof lying with the prosecution. Using the regular criminal process is considered by many to be better for both transparency and human rights implications, while a special ‘terrorism court’ or separate judicial process for terrorism crimes is considered to be excessive, disproportionate, opaque and a move away from democratic norms.<sup>99</sup> Of course, this analysis is based on the threat from terrorism observed within the criminal justice system, and an exploration of alternative trial models, such as military tribunals or trials which take place under emergency measures with excessive curtailment of liberties and a more opaque system of trials, are beyond the scope of this thesis.

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<sup>99</sup> An example of exceptional criminal processes can be seen in the Diplock Courts which are non-jury courts held in Northern Ireland and gained notoriety during the Troubles. In theory, these were abolished in 2007, but the director of public prosecutions has the power to try cases without a jury in Northern Ireland in exceptional circumstances. In addition, Foley (2013) explores the French counter-terrorism legal system which is separate to the regular criminal system in comparison with that of the UK.

In regard to the implementation of terrorism legislation, Participant 3 (P3) stated “There’s been a whole raft of legislation that’s been produced over the last eleven years. Some would argue it’s been very draconian legislation, gives [incredible powers to] police officers, much more so than is used by an average constable on the street or dealing with traditional criminality”. This point was further emphasised later on in his response to the question of ‘*what is the biggest change in counter-terrorism policy or practice*’, in which he again focused on the changes to terrorism legislation. He stated: “... the Terrorism Act 2000 was instrumental. And then it was quickly followed up, following 2005, with the 2006 amendments to the 2000 Act, which, again, had fundamental changes. While we never had internment in Britain, it introduced very draconian legislation and there were aspects such as Schedule 7, which was a very draconian power, and gives police at ports huge authority and huge powers. So, this was something that was fundamental in the introduction of TPIMs, before they were changed again”. This statement disputes the view of P1 who considered Schedule 7 to have been appropriate and effective. Yet, P3 did agree with P1 on the point that TPIMs were an ineffective change, stating “... there were Control Orders, then they went to TPIMs and then TPIMs light. Then it was changed around and that became a game of political football with the new coalition<sup>100</sup>, when the coalition government came in in 2010 to try and soften it down”. Essentially, TPIMs were used, in P3’s view, as a political measure, and with so many adjustments and changes, it is certainly difficult to see how useful they may have been. He followed up these comments by saying, “I would say the [Terrorism] 2000 Act was instrumental. The [Terrorism Act] 2006 then just came and reinforced the message to allow for legislation that was the strictest and the strongest counter-terrorism this country has ever had, even at the height of the Troubles<sup>101</sup>, when we had the IRA operating. The legislation that was being used [during the Troubles] wasn’t as draconian as that. So then, I suppose, it’s interesting, when thinking about it - proportionality with compared to the level of risk”.

P3’s repeated use of the term “draconian” is an interesting element of his responses to questions on terrorism legislation. While P1 and P3 disagree to some degree on the extent of the powers terrorism legislation provide security services, they both considered the changes to Control Orders and TPIMs to have been politicised and problematic. Further, when P1 referred to “criticisms” of terrorism legislation, P3’s use of the term “draconian” comprises a large part of this issue. There are those, particularly in civil society, who believe that the legislation is draconian in that it is excessive and flawed<sup>102</sup>. However,

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<sup>100</sup> This coalition government was comprised of the Conservative and Liberal Democrats parties, with David Cameron (Conservative) at the head.

<sup>101</sup> The Troubles generally refers to the period from 1968 to 1998 during which time the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) carried out an intense offensive terrorist campaign against the British Government in Northern Ireland. It ended with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 following which the PIRA disbanded and fully transitioned to its political arm, Sinn Fein. By 2005, PIRA claimed that it had fully decommissioned its weapons. That being said, and as can be seen in the data explored in Chapter 3, terrorist activity is still prevalent in Northern Ireland although generally taking a low impact form. For further discussion on this topic, see McKittrick & McVea 2002; English 2010; English 2016; McConaghy 2017.

<sup>102</sup> See discussions on counter-terrorism legislation in the UK and the perception of it being draconian in the following papers: Amnesty International 2005; Walker 2016; Honeywood 2016, Amnesty International 2017. See also Syrett 2015 for an analysis of the UK terrorism legislation landscape.

one should also note that the changes from Control Orders to TPIMs and subsequent updates were implemented to address public concerns in this regard. While someone ‘on the inside’ might have been aware that the measure worked well in the first place and so there was no need to change them, this was not the case with the vocal public at the time. The role of the IRTL to produce a report on TPIMs (and Control Orders before that) was designed specifically to ensure that the legislation was appropriate and the powers were not abused. The back and forth between Control Orders and TPIMs can be considered by some as unnecessary political manoeuvring. However, from another perspective it could also be seen as an attempt to address the concerns of the public.

On a more positive note, reflecting on the criminal justice process more broadly than just the legislative element, P3 stated “Pursue is effective because, traditionally, we are very good at detecting plots. We are very good at, if something happens, about arresting those people that are involved. So, from a criminal justice point of view, that’s very successful. Its traditional policing using police and security service. It’s what most people in policing are more comfortable with. And we’ve got forty years’ experience of dealing with traditional terrorism, so we are very good at that”. This is also an interesting observation as it suggests that lessons in regard to policing during the Troubles can be carried forward to the post-9/11 era. This compares with P3’s view that the UK’s terrorism legislative framework has not carried forward and has instead shifted towards more draconian measures since the Troubles. The comparison between the ‘inscrutable’ legislation (which he distinguishes as draconian and controversial) and the “traditional”, “comfortable” and “experience[d]” activities of the police is an interesting dichotomy, especially as the two frameworks are interconnected (legislation provides police with the powers to carry out their activities).

Participant 4 (P4) stated that “I think CONTEST is a fairly basic crime-fighting strategy really. If this was burglary, you’d have a preventative arm, you’d have a pursue arm, you’d have a protect arm and you’d probably have a prepare arm”. This shows a clear difference to the view of P3 with regard to the over-arching legislative component of CONTEST as compared to the day-to-day activities of the security services, under the CONTEST framework. Further, the challenge of assessing counter-terrorism activities becomes exposed in the views of the interviewees where complex levels of activities are interacting but with different levels of impact and effectiveness. The idea that the strategy is an effective “crime-fighting strategy” but is negatively impacted by “draconian” legislation is a contradiction in reality, but in terms of perception is not all that unusual.

Participant 6 (P6) had a generally positive view of CONTEST. However, he had particular criticisms of the impact of mental health issues around those accused of committing a terrorist crime - specifically the impact of the criminal justice process for these individuals. He stated “I think the mental health community itself distances themselves from people that are committing atrocities of a terrorist or political violence nature who are mentally ill. Because I think they think that, if they suddenly start to

say people that are mentally ill are more likely to engage in that kind of activity, it will affect the way people perceive mentally ill people. And so that's a real problem". This is indicative of an ongoing issue in terms of identifying those who might perpetrate terrorist attacks. There was an idea, largely within the media, that to commit a terrorist attack, the individual must have been crazy or insane as it was an act that was so far beyond what a 'normal' person could do. However, significant research has indicated that there is no higher risk of mental health issues among terrorists than there is the broader population (see Weatherston & Moran 2003; Gill 2015; Copeland & Marsden 2020). The difference in treatment in the legal system, from P6's experience, between terrorist atrocities and their association with Islamist terrorism or other forms of terrorism is concerning. P6 believed that, in his experience there is a "real reluctance on mental health experts in identifying mental health issues in terrorist clients that are clearly mentally ill". While presenting the issue, P6 was unable to explain this perceived reluctance. However, the criminal route and the mental health routes are quite different, with different implications, and it seems likely that, given the egregious nature of most terrorist attacks, a more severe punishment may be sought by the CPS. This rules out the mental health route, generally speaking, and encourages the process to be handled as a crime carried out by a responsible adult with appropriate mental capacity or culpability. Whether this is right or wrong is beyond this thesis' purview, but it could be hoped that appropriate safeguarding action would be taken should mental health issues actually be identified in a terrorism case<sup>103</sup>.

Participant 10 (P10) looked at terrorism legislation in terms of the core goals of the CONTEST strategy. In respect of the aim that the British public can "live their lives freely", he stated that "Freely [means] you have to achieve [the other goals] without giving up essential liberties and freedoms. I think that has actually been achieved, although we do have some quite significant counter-terrorism legislation on the statute book. I don't think that is felt to be oppressive". Of course, this contradicts the view of P3, but supports the perspective of P1. An important element to understanding these differences is what kind of work these individuals are involved in and whether they are frontline practitioners or not. While identities of the interviewees are not revealed in this thesis, the fact that there are different views among the experts, particularly in terms of the vast array of elements which make up the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, reveals a complex phenomenon which defies broad observations and requires nuanced and multi-dimensional analysis.

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<sup>103</sup> While P6 is referring to actual experience in the legal process, it is interesting to compare this experience with the CPS's written guidance, which can be found at <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/terrorism-guidance-relation-prosecution-individuals-involved-terrorism-overseas>. In section 21 of this guidance, at the very end of the page, it states "Prosecutors will also have regard to CPS policies on dealing with defendants with mental health issues." This statement indicates that those charged with terrorism should be treated in the same way as anyone who carries out a crime and has mental incapacity. The difference in understandings of these two representations exposes further the need for researchers to look at multiple dimensions when dealing with complex phenomenon. A researcher who just considers the official documentation might only get part of the picture, while triangulating that data with the experiences of practitioners might provide very different understandings. The CPS guidance on mental health policies can be accessed here: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/mental-health-suspects-and-defendants-mental-health-conditions-or-disorders>

#### 4.2.2 Public Opinion Polls

The research conducted for this section ultimately shows that the public is more amenable to new terrorism legislation and to giving up certain freedoms following a terrorist attack, regardless of whether it takes place at home or abroad. Yet those who find themselves at the ‘wrong end’ of the laws framed by terrorism legislation, are always the loudest and the first to condemn it<sup>104</sup> (see BBC 2014; Khaleeli 2015; BBC 2017; CAGE 2019). While media picks up on these ‘dissenters’, giving the impression that certain counter-terrorism activities are hugely unpopular, the surveys explored for this research did not support this view. There could be many reasons for this absence of voice, but one likely reason is that certain communities who feel impacted more negatively by various counter-terrorism measures were not represented in the samples for the polls. Demographic information for the polls explored for this research was not always complete or available and so, ultimately, this explanation is conjecture only.

Very few of the polls that were searched with the term ‘terrorism’ focused on legislation. However, several of the polls looked at the issue of terrorism legislation among other aspects of counter-terrorism activities. Below, a few examples of the more relevant surveys to this section have been presented. The relevant sections of the polls themselves can be found in Appendix E.

The first item that is explored is an overview of a series of polls that Ipsos MORI carries out focusing on the ‘concerns of the UK’. The report series is titled ‘Issues Index’ and looks at a broad spread of social, political and security issues. Looking specifically at the question relating to terrorism, an interesting pattern of public perspectives on what the greatest threat to the UK is becomes apparent. Figure 4.1 below shows the findings over time from the series.

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<sup>104</sup> An interesting case can be found in the nomination of an Independent Reviewer of Prevent. While this can be seen, on the one hand, as an attempt by the Government to address concerns with the strategy and enhance transparency, on the other hand, those who oppose Prevent have been consistently unhappy with the individual invited to undertake the role (first Lord Carlile, a former Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation was rejected for the position and currently William Shawcross, who was appointed in January 2021) (see Grierson & Dodd 2021; Amnesty International 2021; MEND 2021)

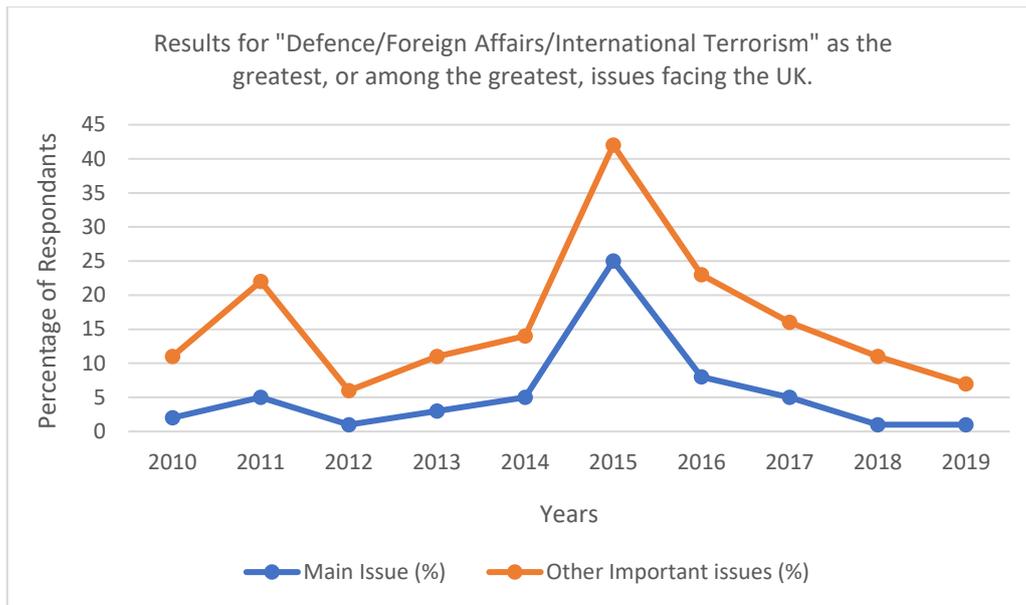


Figure 4.1 Compiled by the researcher based on the results of Ipsos Mori polls titled ‘Issues Index’. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/search?search=issues+index>

Among the other issues, ‘Race Relations/Immigration/Immigrants’ was often a top concern, which can be linked to hate crime and extremism - themselves issues that *potentially* feed into terrorism. However, in light of the focus of this project, only the specific issue of terrorism will be explored. It is also interesting to note that terrorism is classed as ‘international terrorism’, removing the ability of respondents to allude to Northern Ireland or XRW (if the public even makes the distinction), and is placed in the category of defence and foreign affairs rather than crime (removing the domestic element). This confusion of relationships is a significant problem throughout the literature and various reports where acts of terrorism are treated as crimes, but many perceive them within the frame of the ‘War on Terror’. This is perhaps shifting somewhat as a result of the arguably more recent development of home-grown terrorism and self-motivated terrorists, in themselves a result of the shift in tactics and guidance of ISIS, an international entity.

The pattern which is shown in Figure 4.1 is not a particularly clear indication that the population of the UK becomes more concerned about terrorism around the time of events. This conclusion has been drawn as a result of the fact that there is more concern following an international event, such as the events which took place in Paris in January and November 2015, rather than the four events which took place in the UK itself between March and September 2017. Additionally, although the increased activity of ISIS throughout 2015 and 2016 resulted in a number of other impactful events in Europe, as well as Turkey and North Africa, the trend for these years is decreasing, albeit not by a significant amount. Therefore, it seems likely that terrorist attacks alone cannot account for the public perception of the terrorist threat. Other theories could be that propaganda, public framing, messaging and media focus can shift this perception and impact public fears. Undoubtedly, the public beheadings of Westerners by

ISIS, disseminated at first through social media but expanded further through mainstream media outlets, contributed to the perception of threat, even when these attacks did not take place in the UK.

In 2007, Populus carried out a poll on behalf of the BBC and asked the question “This week, Gordon Brown [Prime Minister] has been outlining new counter-terrorism measures, including a new unified border force, and allowing police to detain terror suspects for longer than the current maximum of 28 days. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements” (Populus, July 2007).

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the responses to the statements.

Table 4.1 An overview of the results of the question “This week, Gordon Brown [Prime Minister] has been outlining new counter-terrorism measures ... Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.” Available at: <https://www.populus.co.uk/poll/counter-terrorism-measures/>

<b>Q. 1</b>	Government should be combating terrorism ahead of concerns for civil liberties, and give police whatever powers they need	<b>Agree</b>	<b>73%</b>
		Disagree	21%
<b>Q. 2</b>	Gordon Brown’s proposed new counter-terrorism measures are more about looking tough on terrorism than making Britain safer	<b>Agree</b>	<b>60%</b>
		Disagree	29%
<b>Q. 3</b>	New laws will not make any difference to the level of terrorism threat Britain faces	<b>Agree</b>	<b>51%</b>
		Disagree	39%
<b>Q. 4</b>	Britain should distance itself from the United States in order to reduce the threat of terrorism	<b>Agree</b>	<b>49%</b>
		Disagree	43%

This poll shows a surprisingly conservative view of the situation. On the whole, respondents were much more willing to suspend civil liberties and give the police whatever resources were necessary to protect the country from the threat of terrorism. That being said, the poll itself was broken down by age, gender and region in the UK, but it did not specify ethnicity. While the survey methodology was robust and indicated an appropriate level of representation<sup>105</sup>, one must wonder if many of the respondents feel the full force of these activities, from which position it is perhaps easier to support stronger measures. There was also a strong majority of respondents who seemed to consider counter terrorism as ineffectual,

<sup>105</sup> Being appropriately representative means that the sample of people polled has been randomly selected, and that everyone in the broader population has a chance to be selected for the poll. In the case of this particular poll, “Populus interviewed a random sample of 1007 adults aged 18+ by telephone between 25th July 2007 and 26th July 2007. Interviews were conducted across England and the results have been weighted to be representative of all English adults.” (Populus website, available at <https://www.populus.co.uk/poll/counter-terrorism-measures/>)

being just for show and not actually making a difference to the terrorism activity in the UK. This is a very stark view of the situation, and begs the question, why people are willing to support extreme counter terrorism measures (e.g. extensive police powers) when they do not expect them to have any tangible impact on terrorism?

Finally, in a poll undertaken by Ipsos MORI and held in 2017, titled 'Power to the People', a number of questions were asked, and the responses compared, across 23 countries. While not all of the questions are relevant to this section, one in particular appeared interesting. When asked "How much confidence, if any, do you have in ... the justice system including the courts?" (Ipsos MORI, 2017), only 6% said they had complete confidence, 44% said they had a fair amount of confidence, 30% said they did not have much confidence and 14% said they had no confidence at all. This is interesting in terms of the Populus survey of 2007 outlined above, where there was support for tougher terrorism laws, despite a relatively strong confidence in the existing system.

Another question in the same Ipsos MORI survey asked whether people agreed that terrorism should be stopped "at all costs even if it means ignoring peoples' civil rights". A summary of the results is presented in Table 4.2 below. 18% of British respondents strongly agreed with this statement, 25% somewhat agreed with this statement, 21% neither agreed nor disagreed, 16% somewhat disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed. Again, this shows a high level of support for the suspension of freedoms in the face of a bigger threat, although, as seen in the 'Perils of Perception' report (Ipsos MORI 2017), this threat is not as great as people perceive it to be.

Table 4.2. An overview of the responses to the question “Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - ... should stop terrorism at all costs even if that means ignoring people’s civil rights.” Figures represent percentages. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/six-ten-around-world-think-their-society-broken>

	Country	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Total
1	Serbia	44	30	74
2	Turkey	53	16	69
3	France	33	26	59
4	Israel	31	26	57
5	Belgium	28	28	56
6	India	28	25	53
7	Hungary	29	21	50
8	Peru	29	21	50
9	Sweden	22	26	48
10	Poland	24	23	47
<b>11</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>43</b>
12	South Africa	19	23	42
13	Australia	18	23	41
14	Germany	18	22	40
15	South Korea	13	24	37
16	Brazil	19	18	37
17	US	14	23	37
18	Italy	18	18	36
19	Mexico	16	19	35
20	Canada	13	18	31
21	Argentina	16	14	30
22	Spain	13	17	30
23	Japan	8	16	24

It is interesting to look at the UK in comparison to the other countries surveyed. Countries that have experienced high levels of terrorism, or an increased terrorist threat, in recent years are more supportive of the suspension of their freedoms. These countries include Turkey, France and Belgium, as well as states where the XRW activity is on the increase (in some cases where a far-right government is in place). In this picture, the UK is in 11<sup>th</sup> place out of the 23 countries, putting it in the top half of those who would sacrifice their freedoms. This either shows a great deal of support and trust in the criminal justice system to apply the laws effectively, or it shows a concerning lack of awareness of what these individuals may be sacrificing in order to feel safe from a ‘perceived’ threat.

It would be difficult to say, having looked at the polls above, whether or not those who have an issue with the UK’s terrorism legislation have truly had their say. Those groups and individuals who believe they are discriminated against within the criminal justice system and who are politicised by the

Government are less likely to be among those who answer surveys such as these, and without the ethnic breakdown, this is not easy to ascertain.<sup>106</sup> Some reflection on these under-represented views has been provided already but it is appropriate at this juncture to reflect briefly on the views of these individuals as they relate to interactions with CONTEST, largely from a legal or criminal justice perspective.

James Lewis and Sarah Marsden produced an insightful report on “Public Experiences of the UK Counter-Terrorism System” in 2020. In their main findings, they concluded that “Qualitative studies suggest that British Muslims and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities have disproportionately more contact with the counter-terrorism system and are more concerned about its actual and perceived impacts. While quantitative research suggests that the majority of the British public are unopposed to current counter-terrorism measures, it still estimates that up to one-third of British Muslims distrust the counter-terrorism system” (Lewis & Marsden 2020). This provides some interesting insights into the variations between types of research. The conclusion reached by the report reflects somewhat on the findings of this thesis: there is a dominantly negative view of counter-terrorism (Prevent specifically but in terms of Pursue in regard to arrests) throughout publications reliant on qualitative data. This is connected to the fact that qualitative data looks at textual data, relying on interviews, the study of media and significant anecdotal contributions to the debate. While the quantitative studies researched in the report showed a relatively high level of distrust in the system, therefore not refuting the views of the qualitative studies totally, the fact that two thirds of the population actually seem to be at least somewhat satisfied with the CONTEST strategy is in line with the findings of this thesis.

The key findings of the reports go on to say “Both direct experiences and indirect experiences, or a broader awareness of incidents where friends, family members, or members of one’s community have had actual or perceived contact with the counter-terrorism system, can have similar impacts. This ‘shadow of the collective story’ can exacerbate perceptions of personal victimisation and can reinforce the view that counter-terrorism measures discriminate against one’s community as a whole” (Lewis & Marsden 2020). This is an interesting view, and shows the power of the narrative as well as the fact that even those who do not have a directly negative interaction with the counter-terrorism system can, through stories from family, friends and neighbours, negatively impact the perception of those individuals, even though they have not be directly impacted. Finally, the report finds that “Qualitative research has found that experiences, such as being asked additional screening questions at airports, are

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<sup>106</sup> An interesting project was carried out by Ipsos MORI in February 2018 to better understand the public opinions of Muslims titled ‘A Review of Survey Research on Muslims in Britain’. However, rather than looking at the percentage or number of Muslims who participate in surveys, i.e. representation, it looked at the views of Muslims who have participated in a range of surveys, including on terrorism and extremism. Similarly, a project undertaken by Schmid in 2017 also approached the issue from this angle rather than exploring how Muslims were actually engaging in general surveys. Finally, the Pew Research Centre also polled Muslims across the world in 2013 to understand their views on topic issues. Again, this does not answer the concern raised above.

often perceived as being related to the counter-terrorism system” when in fact this may not be the case at all, and goes on to say that “[p]erceived and actual experiences can contribute to a lack of trust in counter-terrorism policies and perceptions of victimisation” (Lewis & Marsden 2020). This again shows that the power of perception, and the reach of the narrative (such as Prevent is failing or the belief that being asked questions in an airport is because they think you are a terrorist), can have as much an impact as the facts which are not easy to access. If anything, this information should encourage the Government and security agencies to continue to improve their transparency and ensure people understand the context and the rationale behind decision-making in terms of counter-terrorism legislation and activity.

Another study carried out by Tina Patel (2017) explores CONTEST “to illustrate how “brown” members of the black and minority ethnic (BME) population, continue to be viewed as problematic and deviant, within a post-race era”. Following an in-depth, qualitative overview on racism, she highlights in her section on counter-terrorism “it is important I declare that this article does not dismiss the fact that in recent years there have been a number of terrible incidents in the United Kingdom and elsewhere which have been carried out by groups and individuals declaring themselves to be acting in the name of Islam” but rather “[w]hat this article challenges though is the use of anti-Muslim racism to construct all or the majority of Muslims as terrorists—either actual, potential or supporters of” (Patel 2017). She mentions that counter-terrorism measures focus on Muslims, presenting a view that “extremism and radicalization is inherent within Muslim culture” (Patel 2017). This view “presents all Muslims as extremists, rather than problematising the extremist mind-set of individuals themselves” (Patel 2017). Any logical individual can see that this is problematic, and there should be little controversy that this perception should be addressed, both within Muslim communities (ensuring that they are provided appropriate information to better understand if they are actually criminalized or if it is just the perception) and within other communities (to explain how Muslim culture as a whole is not extremist). The question therefore comes down to whether this perceived view of all Muslims as extremists is based on reality or is it a perception built on outlier cases, anecdotes and false claims. In truth, as with much in the real world, it is likely a little of both. The flaws within the Prevent strategy in particular have been discussed throughout this paper, and the damage early mistakes and misjudgements can make to the trust between all communities and the authorities can be detrimental to the effectiveness of, for example, counter-radicalisation programmes. The views of individuals must be taken into account, but while much of the sources located for this thesis which reflect on the voices of these individuals (opposed to CONTEST) must be acknowledged, the broader research of this project provides evidence that these views have been heard and that the Government continues to try to address them (examples include the initiation of the Commission for Countering Extremism and the much-delayed Prevent Review which is in progress).

It is also important to note that it is not just the unknowledgeable masses who are opposed to Prevent. A much-publicised letter, signed by more than 140 “experts”, also criticized Prevent in 2016. Following a psychological study undertaken in prisons, 22 risk factors for radicalisation were identified. The report was provided to the Government and informed the guidance on the Prevent Duty, but was done so as a classified document. However, the researchers went on to publish an academic paper based on the study in 2015 (Lloyd & Dean 2015). The Guardian reported on the issue, stating “A review of that article, released on Thursday by Cage ... and reviewed by 19 academics, raises concerns over the study’s methodology and the lack of a recognised peer-review process or oversight from the broader psychology community” (2016). It goes on to say “The “Science of Pre-crime” report has prompted more than 140 academics and experts, including Noam Chomsky, to sign an open letter protesting against the lack of transparency and scrutiny of the science that underpins key aspects of the government’s domestic counter-terrorism strategy” (ibid.). However, the indication in the article is that the views of these experts were based on the interpretation of CAGE, and while some of the criticism is no doubt legitimate, it is not clear from the article. This means that those who read the article may not be able to understand the complexity behind the issue. Criticism, as already mentioned in this thesis, is appropriate to improve policies and hold the Government to high standards. But when the context is not provided, the public, for example, are not provided with the opportunity to appropriate critique the account. This is the harm that media can do, whereby it provides facts and information, but often does not contextualise them.

## **4.3 Events and the Threat Landscape**

### **4.3.1 Interviews**

On the whole, the interviewees all considered that CONTEST was working and fit for purpose, in specific regard to stopping or mitigating events. The views, unsurprisingly, were more varied when it came to Prevent. Those who had access to the internal workings of intelligence activities and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Police identified ongoing improvements and an active and appropriate framework on the whole. Yet there was also an acknowledgement that there are issues with, for example, resourcing<sup>107</sup>.

When P3 was asked whether CONTEST was broadly successful, he replied “what is the alternative in a kind of a liberal secular democracy? So, it’s using a tactic other than securitisation. It’s kind of the

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<sup>107</sup> This issue of resourcing is also supported by the internal reviews conducted by MI5 and the Counter Terrorism Police, particularly in terms of the prioritisation strategy when dealing with Closed Subjects of Interest (CSOIs). More information on this issue can be found in Anderson’s two reports on the MI5 and Counter Terrorism Police’s internal reviews following the 2017 attacks (Anderson 2017; Anderson 2019) as well as in the ISC’s report on the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby (Intelligence and Security Committee 2014)

soft and fluffy way of dealing with a situation that can potentially end in terrorism. But it's one that you would expect a country like this to put in place as a response". This insight falls in line with the desire of the Government to use the legal system to address the criminality component of terrorism. On the other hand, the 'not-so-soft-and-fluffy' response would be that of the military or intense securitisation, something that would likely not be accepted in a democratic society<sup>108</sup>. P3 was next asked if the Government was achieving its goal. He replied "Yeah ... you have to say they are achieving that because the [London Underground] is running, people are going to work, people are going to football matches. Normal life is continuing despite [the fact that] we're still at a very high-risk level. So, despite that, life continues as normal". This reflects the findings of the Ipsos Mori poll (2005) which is explored in more detail below, and which showed that people continued to commute to work in London, with apparently few changes to routine, following the 2005 Bombings.

P4 had a different view to P3 in terms of whether CONTEST is, on the whole, successful. He stated "CONTEST is not achieving the aim of UK citizens just going freely about their business, in reality, because the terrorist threat since 2011 is still at Severe [at time of interview in March 2017]. Is the world any safer for UK citizens [now] than it was back in 2011? You could argue, probably not. Some of that in reality may be a bit of an unrealistic expectation from policy makers when you think of global affairs and other dynamics at play, and about whether one government's counter terrorism strategy can achieve that". He went on to clarify, however, that "CONTEST has certainly made some contribution, but exactly how much [is unclear] ... But the actual premise of CONTEST has probably helped to keep us probably safer than if we didn't ever have a counter-terrorism strategy in the past. As I said, I think it's a pretty sensible counter-terrorism strategy". This is a little bleaker, and perhaps realistic, in terms of the impact of CONTEST. While P4 acknowledges that lives have been saved through the efforts of the strategy, the high threat level and perhaps more subtle restrictions on people's lives mean that life is not the 'normal' it was before 9/11. This comment also highlights the challenge with identifying correlation between counter-terrorism success on the ground and with the higher level of the strategy itself, and what is the balance of impact each of these elements has in stopping terrorism activities.

Participant 5 (P5) conveyed the following view on CONTEST generally: "I think it's very good. I think, seemingly, it's pretty effective. I think it's got widespread support and widespread levels of engagement. There's no getting away from the fact that Prevent is the thing that attracts the most coverage in the papers. But what we have tried to do is to see through that". When asked whether CONTEST is more or less successful, he stated "I think the level of preparation, the way the agencies work together in this country is something we can be rightly proud of and something we can say, yes,

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<sup>108</sup> Arguments can be made for and against this observation. In particular and extreme circumstances, the public would be more willing to accept significant restrictions on their inherent freedoms, such as has been the case since 9/11 in the US. Additionally, the polls explored above show that the British population is open to stricter measures if it means being safe from terrorism, although how this would be accepted in reality is difficult to envision.

is a real success of CONTEST”. This is an interesting observation, particularly when reflecting on the negative interactions between US agencies, for example, leading up to the events of 9/11. P5 was also reflecting on the Harris Report of 2016 which looked into the preparedness of London in the face of a terrorist attack. For this report, a large number of agencies were engaged and there was clear cooperation in broad terms following terrorism events in the UK. However, it should also be noted that there are also flaws in the communications between agencies. This was identified in Lord Anderson’s 2017 Report where he said the following: “The UK’s CT effort has been effective over the years, and the strong partnership between police and MI5 is widely envied around the world. But even good relationships need to be worked on, and it can sometimes take a crisis to see what is required” (p.42). He goes on to point out three ‘step changes’ which were identified in the internal reports of MI5 and Counter-Terrorism Policing, all of which involved the need for improved communications: “analysing and sharing data”, “intelligence-derived knowledge to be shared more widely” and “the same CT assessment and investigatory tools across the board” (ibid, p.42 and also paragraphs 3.38-3.46). With regard to the impact of CONTEST on terrorist activity in the UK, P5 replied “I do think the adoption of more lone-wolf, more insular characters, is the fact that they accept that the community networks have been established in this country and are quite affective in getting information out to people. Some may well think the development of really low-sophisticated attacks is an [indication of the] effectiveness of governments. Certainly, in this country we [emphasise the fact that the] difficulty of obtaining firearms and of obtaining explosives would point to an adoption of low-sophisticated attacks, border control and things like that”. While on the one hand lone wolves can be seen as those who have started out on the process of radicalisation alone, without truly making a conscious decision to do so (rather than with a group), others, and P5 included, believe that opportunism reigns supreme and that the good work of the intelligence community in intercepting communications between individuals who are part of terrorist groups has resulted in an increased number of individuals willing to carry out terrorist attacks as lone actors and apply low-tech methods to achieve their goals (such as vehicles for ramming and knives as opposed to bombs or firearms which are difficult to make and/or obtain), otherwise known as displacement.

P6 agreed with the other interviewees that CONTEST has had an impact on terrorist activity. However, when asked if the Government was achieving its goals through CONTEST, he replied “No, I think its failed that entirely. I’m talking about the general public. I think the Prevent narrative, the extremist extremism narrative has been a part of this massive split and divisiveness in society generally, where there’s now constantly a need to blame somebody else for something and I think actually Prevent has a lot to do with that ... So, I think it’s been counter-productive in that way”. However, despite this negativity in terms of Prevent, P6 went on to further elaborate that “I deal with Counter-Terrorism Command at Scotland Yard, MI5 from time to time ... in terms of my work, and the things that I see that they can do is phenomenal. They are professional, they are very good at what they do, and apart

from the odd instance of impropriety, generally speaking, my experience is that they have tried to do things within compliance of the law. Which is important". P6, therefore, has two very different views of CONTEST. On the one hand, he considers the Prevent workstream to be working well, with good and professional individuals carrying out relevant and impactful work in terms of stopping terrorists. On the other hand, he views Prevent as a reason why society is divided and as a cause of the broader issue of blaming others for problems. This view is reflective of the complexity of the phenomenon of counter-terrorism, particularly as the immediate response to the question was that CONTEST is not achieving its goals, and this is because of the significant issues arising from Prevent within society. While for some, the Prevent narrative may indeed split society, particularly along the lines of ethnicity and poverty, it should also be taken into account that there are wider underlying issues that have made society what it is today and have resulted in decisions such as Brexit. It is ultimately difficult to truly see what P6's perspective on this issue is. He focuses on two out of four workstreams, one of which he considers to be working well and the other which he believes is not only failing but is fragmenting British society. This thesis seeks to resolve this conundrum by considering the interaction of these views and, through the tool developed in Chapter 5, scaling the impact of these issues or otherwise understanding them.

Participant 7 (P7) said the following in regard to CONTEST's impact: "Yes, I would say it has [had an impact]. It has solved a lot of problems, foiled attacks ... So, I think lives have been saved because of CONTEST. On the other hand, the process has also changed the ways that terrorist organisations operate ... I think there is a lot of awareness that the security forces might be intercepting communications. But also, the entire online space, at least the surface space, is being monitored well. So that has probably driven them more underground. But this has also led to kinds of self-starting attacks that we [see] so [much] more of". This is connected to what was said by P5 in regard to terrorists understanding vulnerabilities as a result of counter-terrorism activities and therefore adapting, whether that be the tools used or acting alone. When asked if CONTEST is meeting its goals, she replied "It's reducing [the threat]. I think you can never eliminate the risk. I think that [the Government have] reduced it to the maximum of what is within their power and within their capacity. As I said, I think the only part where improvements are always needed is the Prevent part. Its arguably the one where there is most potential for development as well because it's such a long-term effort, not to mention complex topic. It's not just about targeting specific individuals who return [from conflict zones] but protecting the public space". The fact that "you can never eliminate the risk" from terrorism is a true statement and one which is acknowledged by the Government in its goals. It was never intended that terrorism could be completely eliminated, but rather the goal was to "reduce the risk" (CONTEST 2011, 2018). English's statement, explored in Chapter 1, that we must "[accept] that we will have to live with some form of terrorism, we must try to diminish its level: to contain, thwart, frustrate, reduce, and limit terror in all the ways that we can" (2009, p.127) seems particularly relevant here.

Participant 8 (P8) responded to the question of whether CONTEST is achieving its goals by saying “Yes. Absolutely. We are the only country, as I said before, that has a strategy [such as the Community Safety Partnership]<sup>109</sup> and it’s working. Yes, initially there were misunderstandings of the policies. But, since 2011, I think people who are working to deliver these policies know that engaging with the community is absolutely important, as is the buy-in from the community. For me that’s the most important bit of both strategies<sup>110</sup>”. This point supports one of the fundamental insights derived from the research carried out for this thesis, particularly in terms of Prevent. While initially, Prevent was flawed and problematic, in the many years since its inception, it has been improved and adjusted. Misunderstandings and issues abounded in the early days and the impression seems to be that these have continued to this day.

Prevent Digest (a “monthly press and commentary digest”) and Prevent Watch are two examples of civil society attempting to provide oversight on the Prevent workstream specifically. Prevent Watch states on its ‘About’ page “We at Prevent Watch support people impacted by the Prevent Duty. Since the duty has become legislation we have supported hundreds of cases” (Prevent Watch, n.d). In particular, Prevent Watch provides a helpline, publishes reports, engages with the media and maintains a directory of lawyers who can help individuals charged with crimes under the Prevent Duty. This all sounds reasonable and good, and is an important mechanism to assist people and hold the Government and security agencies to account. And yet, they do not provide an unbiased voice within the controversy around Prevent. In their ‘About’ page, they use bullet points to highlight how the Prevent Duty “targets children ... [is a] surveillance state ... [creates] suspect communities ... [has a] chilling effect on open discussion and free speech ... [has facilitated] institutionalised Islamophobia ... [and is based on] flawed science” going so far as to say “ Prevent is based on pseudo-science, no credible evidential basis for rolling out Prevent” (Prevent Watch, n.d.).

The terminology used by entities such as these are powerful and alarming, and to those who are unfamiliar with the substantial amount of alternative information on the topic, can reinforce the negative views on Prevent. With examples of outlier cases such as very young children being referred to Channel to support these disturbing views, it is clear to see how individuals who want to demonise Prevent can do so by just reading the information on these sites. But there is a broad collection of other information behind the outlier cases that is not usually brought to bear, and so these entities perpetuate a negative aspect of Prevent and the view that it is failing. The research undertaken for this thesis did not find this to be the case. While new problems have arisen over the years, some of the fundamental flaws of Prevent have been addressed (such as the programmes being led by the police at the outset rather than local

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<sup>109</sup> Community Safety Partnerships, or CSPs, “were set up as statutory bodies under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Each CSP is made up of representatives from the police and police authority, the local council, and the fire, health and probation services (the ‘responsible authorities’).” (Gov.uk. Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/023feb9b-da48-4d1f-aafd-9e912a3cd59a/community-safety-partnerships-csps>)

<sup>110</sup> Here P8 is referring to CONTEST broadly and Prevent specifically.

authorities and communities). There is also ongoing learning on how to improve it as well as improved training for frontline workers, such as teachers who need to refer vulnerable individuals under the Prevent Duty, taking place. Many of the more vocal complaints still reflect views developed at the launch of the strategy and have not truly tried to understand the changes that have taken place since the earlier years. An interesting article was written by Paul Thomas exploring the changes Prevent has experienced since it was first initiated in 2006 (Thomas 2020). In particular, he states “[t]his in turn raises questions for researchers about the extent to which these vociferous public criticisms reflect the reality of the Prevent Duty’s implementation within education, or rather whether they actually represent a form of inertia or ‘lag’ amongst critics who still understand Prevent as what it was, rather than the significantly modified strategy that it now is” (p.27). On the other hand, Fahid Qurashi states “[t]he article shows how the framing of the terror threat in the ‘war on terror’ has afforded a surveillance infrastructure, embedded into Muslim communities, which has securitised relations with local authorities ... Using empirical data, the article uncovers the Islamophobic function of counter-terrorism surveillance in the Prevent strategy” (2018, p.11). These two academic views reflect the ongoing controversy of the issue at all levels. P8 has acknowledged the early issues, but believes that that workstream, and its engagement with communities, is ultimately effective.

Participant 9 (P9) said the following with regard to whether CONTEST was working: “I think the sub-policies under CONTEST are probably always in need adjusting. Prevent is always going to be political and that’s the problem. If somebody commits a criminal offence, you know that you have intelligence that someone is a definite terrorist threat and is trying to blow up [something], they are talking on the phone about getting the guns, then that’s very black and white. [With] Prevent ... you’re getting rid of that problem, but you are going to have a much bigger problem in 20 years’ time”. P9 is addressing two connected but separate issues here. First of all, there is the broader issue of CONTEST itself. While not wholly positive on the effectiveness of the strategy, neither is P9 negative. Instead, he reflects a pragmatic, real-world approach where the multifarious policies under CONTEST will always need to be adjusted and adapted to current circumstances and the prevailing threat of the day. While legislation and strategy are not the same thing, their connection in terms of framework within which counter-terrorism activities exist provide a connection which emphasises the view of P9 that flexibility and an ability to respond to the current threat landscape is an essential element. The second issue that P9 reflects on in his response is that of Prevent, and he moves quickly on to this element of CONTEST, rather than fully reflecting on CONTEST as a whole strategy. He considers Prevent to be largely a political issue, with a negative connotation. This is in light of P9’s practical experience where issues of politics trumped the frontline needs and considerations of the Prevent strategy itself. This was frustrating for P9, and while he acknowledges in his comment that Prevent may solve short term and immediate issues, the long-term issues generated by Prevent activities are far more problematic. P7

suggested something similar; that Prevent is a long-term strategy and thus far more difficult to get right, given the challenge of predicting long-term outcomes.

P10's response to whether CONTEST is working was "I think it is all working well. The most difficult is Prevent, but the Pursue policy – building up the capabilities and size of the intelligence agencies and developing their relationship with the police – has been extremely successful. The Protect strategy in relation to aviation and critical infrastructure has also been very successful. There are limits to what can be done with crowded public places. And I think that preparation and building up resilience, in those three areas [Pursue, Protect and Prepare] you can probably say the UK is world-leading. I think on Prevent, nobody has yet quite worked out how to do that. But some parts of that, for example the Channel programme, I think have been extremely successful in identifying and then providing mentoring to young people who are at risk of taking the wrong life decisions". This is a welcome insight, based on specific cases of perceived success. Rather than providing general comments, as the government often does in terms of its own perception of the success of the Strategy, P10 reflects specifically on what has worked, while acknowledging some of the challenges and limitations, particularly in terms of Prevent.

Finally, Participant 11 (P11) said the following with regard to whether CONTEST is achieving its goal: "I think the first time [2006 or earlier] it had to be refreshed. I don't think it was quite right the first time round. [But] my intuitive view is yes. I think we've done a lot of work in joining up the end-to-end process and being much more systematic about targeting each section rather than trying to take it as a whole phenomenon. I think that the methodology is the right methodology, and the fact we have revisited every element of CONTEST, and said it is still fit for purpose. What I'd like to see, and what I haven't seen, is the metrics associated with each of those things. So, if you say it's been done well, what metrics give you the confidence to make that statement? I don't know the answer to that". This thesis seeks to explore the applicability of metrics in order to understand just that and the model presented in Chapter 5 goes some way to answering P11's question here. P11's response is helpfully specific, outlining why he believes that CONTEST is achieving its goals. While acknowledging early errors, P11 believes that improvements have been made, again reflecting the need for ongoing improvement and flexibility outlined by other interviewees and explored in the Assessment and Oversight section of Chapter 3.

### **4.3.2 Public Opinion Polls**

In light of the visibility and clear association of terrorism with attacks, many of the polls and surveys reviewed for this thesis focused on tangible issues, such as events, as opposed to more abstract concepts,

such as strategies. Additionally, the polls explored below tended to focus on public opinion following an event, whether a domestic UK event or an international one. Clearly the impetus to carry out the poll is impacted by the occurrence of an event – when no events have taken place for months or years, there is reduced interest in exploring the topic. Instead, other issues become more pressing and become the focus of other polls, such as the economy or immigration. For this reason, the polls below cannot be seen as reflective of a common or extended state of concern, given their intrinsic connection to recent, albeit rare, events. Rather, they are interesting and informative snapshots of the public’s state of concern in connection with recent terrorist events, both within the UK and beyond its borders.

In the years following 9/11, and before the London transport attacks of July 2005, the view of the British public seemed to stay consistent. A poll by ICM in March 2004, just following the Madrid Train Bombings, asked what peoples’ views of their safety were in light of 9/11 and the Madrid bombings? 51% felt more concerned and 46% felt no difference. A very interesting poll, again carried out by ICM on behalf of the BBC in March of that year, asked the following question “Here are some things people have suggested should be done to counter the risk of terrorism. Others oppose them as they say they endanger the rights of everyone. Bearing these two things in mind, for each one please say whether you would support or oppose the measure to counter terrorism?” (ICM, April 2004). The following table shows the results.

Table 4.3. Responses to the ICM Poll Q1, April 2004.

<b>Indefinite detention of foreign terrorist suspects</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	32%
<b>Indefinite detention of British terrorist suspects</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	29%
<b>Indefinite detention of those associating with terrorist suspects</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	34%
<b>All police officers to be routinely armed</b>	
<b>Support</b>	47%
<b>Oppose</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Bring in the death penalty for terrorist offences that kill people</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	37%
<b>Give police greater powers to eavesdrop on people (like listening to telephone conversations and reading emails)</b>	
<b>Support</b>	46%
<b>Oppose</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Allow the use of phone tapping and other eavesdropping as evidence in court cases</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	33%
<b>Police powers to stop and search anyone at any time</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	29%
<b>Detain all immigrants and asylum seekers until they can be assessed as potential terrorist threats</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	29%
<b>Making it easier to get a conviction in cases involving terrorism by changing the rules in court so that someone can be convicted on the balance of probabilities rather than beyond all reasonable doubt</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Oppose</b>	45%

Of the 10 measures suggested, eight were supported by the respondents. The two measures that were not supported by the majority of respondents were very closely split, showing a clear polarisation; first, that police officers be routinely armed; and second, that the police have greater powers to eavesdrop on people. Of the measures that were supported by the majority of respondents, the closest, or most polarising one, was the issue of changing the court system to essentially lower the bar in achieving convictions of those accused of terrorism offences. An interesting finding from this data is that a lot of the backlash to various aspects of CONTEST, primarily focusing on the erosion of freedoms by the vocal minority, are not of the same concern for the broader public (if we take this survey to be representative). So, while at times it *seems* that the population does not support a particular counter-terrorism measure, this might not actually be the case. Certainly, in 2004, the public supported some

extreme measures, some of which have been implemented through legislation, but many of which did not make it through the process of scrutiny. An important final note on this particular poll is that it was broken down further by gender, age, social class and region. However, it did not indicate the ethnicities or religions of the respondents and this information might paint a very different picture as to whether all ethnic or religious groups held the same views on these topics.

Ipsos MORI carried out a poll for the BBC which was published in October 2005 and with a specific focus on the post-London bombings. This poll also reflected back on a poll carried out in July of the same year. In the first question which asked “How likely do you think that it is that London will experience another terrorist attack in the near future” (Ipsos Mori, October 2005), 51% said it was very likely (when asked in a previous poll in July 2005), and 43% considered it very likely when asked for this poll in September 2005. A further 36% in July and 39% in September indicated that it was somewhat likely. This shows that the public was significantly concerned that additional and imminent attacks would take place. Interestingly, in response to the question “As a result of the attacks in London in July this year have you spent more or less time in central London, or have the attacks made no difference at all?” (ibid.), 77% of the respondents who go into Central London sometimes said it made no difference at all while 80% of the respondents who go into Central London at least once a week said the same. When asked if they had considered moving out of London as a result of the attacks, 89% said they had not. The respondents were next asked how they rated the response of various entities. Among the highest responses for each entity, 36% thought that the Mayor of London (Ken Livingstone at the time of the poll) responded fairly well, 44% thought the government responded fairly well, 54% considered the London Metropolitan Police responded very well and 43% considered the leaders of the Muslim community responded fairly well. Respondents were also asked how effective security measures in London are to prevent another terrorist attack on the London transport system. 39% considered them fairly effective while 31% considered them not very effective. A significant 62% considered that the London terrorist attacks would make it more difficult for different ethnic communities in London to get along. In the final question, participants were asked whether three statements on counter-terrorism activities were acceptable or not. The vast majority (79%) considered it acceptable to deport or exclude “non-UK citizens who encourage terrorism”; the majority (51%) considered it unacceptable to allow “the police to have a policy of ‘shoot to kill’ a suspected terrorist”, although 45% considered it acceptable; and the majority (55%) considered it acceptable for the Lord Mayor, Ken Livingstone, to “meet with groups who believe the London bombings were justified”, while 41% considered it unacceptable (ibid.).

These results are worth exploring a little further. It seems that, of those who responded to the survey, a change in daily behaviour was not deemed necessary. Travel to London daily or weekly was not going to change for many of the respondents, most likely for practical reasons such as needing to get to work.

Therefore, this question is informative on one level regarding a lack of impetus for changing ‘current’ habits of travelling to London, while on another level it may not truly reflect an option that is available to the respondents, if they wish to continue to be employed at their places of work. What would be interesting to explore in more detail would be the broader trends over time. Given time, would the respondents prefer to search for future jobs in a location other than London, perhaps where terrorist attacks were less likely to take place? This issue is beyond the scope of this chapter which is focused on analysing the polls at hand, but would be an interesting subject for future research. At the same time, there seemed to be a strong feeling that more attacks were likely to take place. This could be an indication that the terrorists failed in their attempt to strike fear into the population and is an indication that the impact of the London Bombings of July 2005 are far more complex than a mere ‘fear’ response. While the bombings resulted in deaths and injuries, as well as significant property damage and heightened security measures, the impact on peoples’ daily lives does not appear to have been drastically felt, although wariness of another attack did increase. Only the Metropolitan Police were considered by over half the respondents to have been effective, although most of the other primary entities involved in the response were seen in a more positive light than a negative one. This confidence in the police is possibly reflected in the responses to the question on effective counter-terrorism measures where the highest support was for “more uniformed police officers” (ibid.). The last two questions are compelling in that they potentially forecast the deterioration in relations between ethnic communities and between ethnic communities and the authorities. While a majority considered deportations of non-UK citizens appropriate, high levels (although not majorities) of respondents supported a ‘shoot-to-kill’ policy and considered it inappropriate to engage with those groups who may have supported the bombings. This high level of intolerance would, over the next decade, grow to become the divided society that exists post-Brexit Referendum, with increased hate crimes and community distrust. On the other hand, when looking at government documents on community engagement in CONTEST programmes, a much more positive picture emerges. A deep dive into these different perspectives is beyond the scope of this thesis but would prove enlightening for future research.

Ipsos MORI published an article in 2013 which looked at its category ‘Defence/Foreign Affairs/International Terrorism’ over time (Ipsos MORI February 2013). They provided the following graphic which shows the public perception of the threat over time, while identifying specific events which may have triggered the concern.

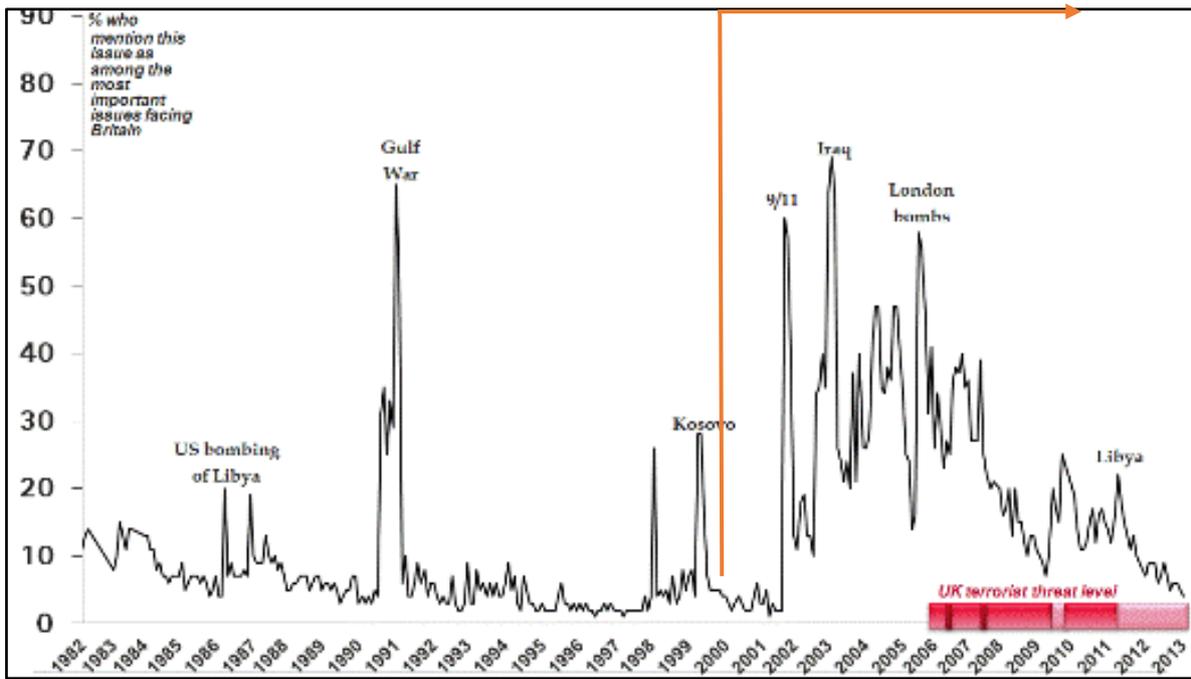


Figure 4.2 Long term concern about Defence/Foreign Affairs/Terrorism. The line and arrow indicate the period of time under focus in this thesis. Source: Ipsos Mori, February 2013. (Link available in Appendix E)

What is very interesting about this graphic is the insight it gives us into British concerns as far back as the 1980s. Since 2001, there is no doubt that the ongoing level of concern regarding ‘Defence/Foreign Affairs/International Terrorism’ is sustained at a higher level than that of 1982 to 2000. Aside from some specific spikes relating to international events, and in spite of constant and relatively impactful activity from the IRA, less than 10% portrayed it as a major issue. One must think that, at least in part, this is the result of how the issue has been framed, as well as technological advancements resulting in more information on various related topics. On the other hand, particularly since the spike around the military action in Libya in 2011, the trend has gone down. A caveat on this representation, however, is that the graphic only records data up to 2013, prior to the commencement of ISIS operations in the West. This could greatly impact the trend of this data since 2013.

In November 2015, ComRes carried out a poll for the Daily Mail on the topic of terrorism. Again, this poll followed the attacks in Paris, and so the data was clearly impacted by this event. What was interesting about this, however, was that the responses of the respondents were comparative with what we might see if an attack took place on British soil. In other words, the fact that the most recent terrorist attacks took place in another country was relatively inconsequential; the respondents were as concerned as they would have been had the attack taken place in the UK. The events in Paris in November 2015 can be seen as the start of the ISIS attacks against the West (the three days of terrorist activity initiated by the Charlie Hebdo attack in January 2015 is associated with Al Qaeda), following which terrorism activity seemed to be on the increase. The first question of the poll looked at the public’s concerns. 78%

of people were concerned that a terrorist attack would take place in Britain, with 46% concerned that another recession was imminent and 43% concerned to fly in planes<sup>111</sup>. The next question asked if the respondents supported a variety of actions in response to the Paris attacks. All options were of a military nature. 60% supported the British military launching airstrikes on Syria and 50% supported British troops fighting a ground war in Syria (31% were opposed and 19% did not know). The majority of respondents supported British involvement in Syria through an alliance with France and the US (59%) although a relatively high proportion (24%) were opposed to an alliance. Another question asked whether people supported a number of activities in response to the recent events in Paris. The majority (53%) supported closing Britain's borders with the EU so no one from Europe can come into Britain permanently and 79% supported the idea of all European countries closing their borders and setting up border controls. 55% of people supported the refusal of entry to refugees from Syria, while 29% opposed this<sup>112</sup>. When asked "How confident, if at all, are you that Britain's security and defense services can prevent attacks in the UK similar to those in Paris?" (ComRes, November 2015), 44% said they were confident, while 51% said they were not confident. The majority of respondents considered that it made little difference on the likelihood of a terrorist attack in the UK whether Britain takes military action or not (54%) although 35% considered that military action would make the UK a target for ISIS terrorist attacks. Respondents also considered that Britain could sufficiently defend itself from terrorism as part of the EU (41%) as opposed to 26% who believed Britain could better defend itself outside of the EU. 72% considered that the shoot to kill policy of the British secret services regarding suicide bombers or terrorists believed to be about to commit an act of terrorism imminently was correct<sup>113</sup>, and 73% of the respondents supported the killing Mohammed Emwazi (Jihadi John) without the approval of the UN. In asking questions specifically related to ISIS, 67% expected that an attack such as the one which took place in Paris was inevitably going to happen in the UK, 69% considered that ISIS can only be stopped with military action, and 58% were of the view that it is possible to stop ISIS, while only 21% believed it was impossible. In following up, only 19% considered that there are other ways of stopping ISIS than military action, with 60% believing that there are no other ways.

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<sup>111</sup> There are perhaps some concerns with the framing of questions in this poll, most likely in line with the type of reporting which is carried out by the Daily Mail. This is exemplified in how the first and subsequent questions were framed. The first question respondents were asked was related to terrorism, which ensured that when people answered the question about planes, for example, they would think of it in the context of terrorism, although this might not necessarily have been the fear – many things concern people about flying. This may have skewed the data, or at least shows some bias in the format of the questions.

<sup>112</sup> There can be little doubt that long-term British concerns with foreigners entering the UK, which had been often framed in terms of a potential terrorist threat (specifically since 9/11) was exacerbated by the November 2015 attacks in Paris, and likely had some impact on the Brexit Referendum just seven months later. Additional research would be needed to ascertain even a correlational relationship between these events, but for the purpose of this qualitative research, this indication is an interesting finding.

<sup>113</sup> This can be compared with the Ipsos MORI poll of 2005, explored above, where a majority (51%) considered it *unacceptable* to allow "the police to have a policy of 'shoot to kill' a suspected terrorist", although 45% considered it acceptable. In the space of 10 years, this increase to 72% in support of this measure can be seen as a significant change, although the responding audience must also be borne in mind: the Ipsos MORI poll was conducted on behalf of the BBC and the ComRes poll was carried out on behalf of the Daily Mail: perhaps the two groups of respondents are not comparable.

In 2017, ComRes carried out a survey for Unherd. It asked which of a number of options were most dangerous in the world today (ComRes, September 2017). The results are summarised in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 UnHerd Values Survey. Source: ComRes, September 2017.

Terrorists	80%
Religious Leaders	31%
Fake News	26%
Military Leaders	20%
Right-wing pundits, politicians and donors	17%
Left-wing unions, politicians and campaigners	16%
High-taxing governments	13%
Big businesses	13%
Capitalists	9%
Communists	9%

The fact that there is a significant difference between the perceived threat from Terrorism and the next highest threat of Religious Leaders (in itself an interesting result as one might not expect the UK public to consider these individuals as a threat), indicates the public's preoccupation with the unknown impact of terrorism which runs outside of our understanding of what is normal. The idea that a terrorist will target civilians, that the more dead or injured the better, that they will often hope to die in the act and that they could be anybody at all walking alongside you or sitting on the bus or train, is terrifying to people, without the act itself taking place. The timing of this poll, following three high-profile Islamist inspired terrorist attacks in the UK (although the Parsons Green attack and the Barcelona attacks had not yet taken place at the time of poll was taken) is likely to have impacted the views of the respondents. This follows the pattern indicated in other polls where the concern about terrorism rises following significant events. Of course, as mentioned previously, this impression may be a result of the absence of polls focusing on terrorism when no events take place. At the time, it seemed like terrorist activities were increasing, and the difficulty in preventing 'new'<sup>114</sup> terrorist tactics such as vehicular attacks was becoming more apparent to the UK. Interestingly, when broken down by region, while all areas had 'terrorists' as the most dominant danger, London's response to this question was the lowest of all the regions, with only 69% believing that terrorists are the greatest danger compared to an average of 82%

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<sup>114</sup> 'New' is always relative in terrorism studies, and it should be noted that vehicle ramming has been carried out by terrorists and insurgents for a number of years (see Miller & Hayward 2019; Jenkins & Butterworth 2019). However, its use as a tactic in the West, its increasing prevalence in the terrorist arsenal, its targeting crowds of people and its application by Islamist terrorists were relatively new, or at least framed as such by the media. Prior to this, stabbings and bombings were considered the primary tactics of the terrorist in terms of the modern threat.

for all the other regions (including Scotland and Wales but excluding Northern Ireland). The North-East of England, on the other hand, had the highest percentage of respondents who believed terrorists to be the biggest danger (87%), although this region has experienced no major terrorist attack. This connects in an interesting way to the October 2005 Ipsos-Mori poll reflected on above.

## 4.4 Assessment and Oversight

### 4.4.1 Interviews<sup>115</sup>

While the public perspective on assessment and oversight is not recorded in the sources explored for this project, practitioner perspectives are available. The interviews conducted at the outset of this project provide a varied view of assessments and evaluations, generally depending on the role and level of the individual, in line with a mix of closed and open questions (see Appendix B).

When asked if he considered that there was a robust evaluation system in place in the UK, P1 said “I do, but it’s quite difficult to describe. You know, when is an evaluation system an evaluation system? Some other countries have more formal systems, Australia and Canada for example. I don’t think that they work as well as our system. First of all, there is a high degree of parliamentary accountability through various parliamentary committees [in the UK]. And you know, I would always defer to them, and they have been efficient. Secondly, although the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation has no powers as such, no powers to compel anyone to do anything, people do pay attention”. This comment is interesting to consider in the context of Jessie Blackbourn’s 2014 article on the impact of the role of the IRTL (Blackbourn 2014). P1 acknowledges the limited power of the role to specifically direct action, but considers that there is a tangible impact nonetheless. When considering what could be a formal evaluation system, challenges abound. While P1 implies here that there is not a formal evaluation system in place in the UK, he goes on to describe a robust system of independent oversight. Augmenting this, the Government does have two publications, the Magenta Book (2011) and the Green Book (2013)<sup>116</sup>, which are designed to formalise the evaluation process across all Government departments. Understanding how these publications are actually used in reality, however, is not

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<sup>115</sup> As several of the interviewees were working in areas more closely related to Prevent, some of the responses were presented with this focus in mind. However, it is important to note that the questions posed to these interviewees did not focus on a specific workstream of CONTEST, unless it had been clearly established in earlier questions that this was the only area they had knowledge of.

<sup>116</sup> ‘The Magenta Book: HM Treasury guidance on what to consider when designing an evaluation’ was first published in 2011 and was last updated in April 2020. It can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>. ‘The Green Book: appraisal and evaluation in central government’ was published in 2013 and last updated in December 2020 and can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

currently feasible and, in light of the publications explored for this thesis, formal and systematic evaluation does not appear to be carried out.

Participant 2 (P2) said the following in regard to evaluation processes: “[In] any major inquiry or investigation, where a referral is made, we will always refer it, and we’ll have a de-brief session, where all the learning is recorded ... We look at every single thing that we do. And protocols will be put in place very quickly. If something is identified we will quickly learn from that and try to share that information with colleagues ...”. While not indicative of a systematic review process, P2 describes instead a responsive and accepted oversight system in order to learn from specific events. The development of protocols, implying that learning is not only observed but is also applied, is also a positive insight into the counter-terrorism activities in which P2 is involved. This view is augmented by Lord Anderson’s 2017 Report on the activities and international review process of MI5 and Counter Terrorism Police following the 2017 terrorist attacks. While the system is not perfect, and some issues have been recurring for a period of time (such as observing or monitoring Closed SOIs<sup>117</sup>), there seems to be an effort to understand and improve on issues identified through this review process. Anderson’s 2017 report into the internal reviews of MI5 and Counter-Terrorism Police following the 2017 terrorist attacks provided useful and welcome triangulation of P2’s views which would otherwise have been unavailable to this research.

In response to the same question of whether an evaluation system is in place, P3 said “I think there’s a robust analysis of what we are doing because we have to record our actions. We have to develop action plans around what we are doing. And the enquiries that were made into the jobs we are dealing with have to have a conclusion. They’re not just left hanging. So, when we have issues that are raised with us we will progress those. So, from that point of view, I think supervisors do make sure that we do come to a conclusion, that there is an outcome at the end of it. I think that is done and done robustly”. This indicates a positive perspective in regard to internal analysis of their actions but also appears to be informal and ad hoc. Taking this point further, it seems that a number of elements impact on assessment of counter-terrorism activities in P3’s area of work. Enquiries need to be made and resolved, and only if an issue is raised is it dealt with. This seems to depend on a variety of decisions, including those of supervisors, which was not made clear and indicates that not all activities are monitored in this level of depth. P3 went on to say “I think it would be good to have more evaluation to make what we do and the whole Prevent agenda more transparent. I think a lot of it is coached in secrecy when it doesn’t really

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<sup>117</sup> The issue of SOIs has been explored briefly in Chapter 3 under the section *Foiled Plots and Failed Attacks*. Closed SOIs refers specifically to those individuals who, at one time or another, were flagged up by the security services as having potential to be involved in a terrorist act, but who were deemed, for one reason or another, to no longer be a threat. Over the years, a significant number of closed SOIs have accumulated (according to Anderson, there are “20,000 or so people who have been part of MI5 Priority Investigations since 2009 but who have been given a holding code which indicates that they are no longer assessed to represent a national security threat” (2017, paragraph 1.26), and a number of these individuals have gone on to be involved in terrorist attacks (see Intelligence and Security Committee 2014). Issues such as a lack of resources to monitor these individuals understandably makes this issue challenging to address.

need to be. And I don't know why that is. Because a lot of the jobs I do, I don't think they're particularly secret or particularly confidential. Clearly, we are dealing with individuals, and that information can be confidential and you can't be able to provide information that would identify that person. So that aspect, the idea of getting oversight, we are subject to audit from the Home Office who look at what we do, through OSCT. So, they do analyse what we are doing and how we are doing it". Again, this issue of a dearth of consistent evaluation is highlighted here, although not an absence of such. Additionally, the lack of transparency is problematic, and the impression given by P3 throughout his account was that different departments or teams may not necessarily learn from each other in a systematic way. P3's indication that there is potential for greater transparency without damaging necessary classified data or activities is an important topic which has arisen in other parts of the research and which feeds into the model developed in Chapter 5. Finally, P3's reflection, albeit brief, on the role of OSCT in oversight is positive, and indicates that, at least to some extent, a central counter-terrorism body is carrying out some level of oversight. The issue relates to the transparency of this process and some additional indication of what is entailed in this oversight process would be welcome. Currently, this information is not publicly available.

P4's response to the question of how to measure counter-terrorism 'success', specifically in regard to Prevent, was as follows: "It's very difficult to quantify what success looks like...I think we can show, from a quantitative point of view, the amount of people who have gone through [the Channel Programme], the amount of intervention measures which were undertaken, and where we are aware of the amount of people that have gone on to commit attack offenses or gone to travel to theatres of combat. And in that respect, I think, we can probably highlight success, but [it] would still be argued in some quarters [that] we are in that pre-criminal space". This pre-criminal space is a controversial one, reflecting counter-terrorism activities that anticipate the future criminal activities of an individual rather than reacting to a criminal activity which is currently taking place or has already taken place. Prevent is seen as functioning within this space by its critics, where the fact that individuals are identified as criminals before a crime has been committed is a breach on the individuals' rights and freedoms. The argument against this view is strong however, given the reliance on community actions rather than on police actions in terms of those identified as vulnerable and referred to the Prevent Officers, and perhaps on to Channel for safeguarding. On the negative side of evaluation, P4 said the following: "I think, therefore, because we are under pressure, or agencies feel they are under pressure, we've come up with mainly quantitative measures to try and measure prevent, to show some sort of tangible outcomes that aren't always (appropriate) and don't always tell the (full) story or aren't as helpful perhaps as they could be". This is interesting as it aligns with a fundamental concept of this thesis: only through the combination of different types of data, both hard data (numbers and statistics) and soft data (text, interpretations and opinions) can a more accurate reflection of the reality of the counter-terrorism landscape be ascertained.

P5 reflected on the Harris Report on London's Preparedness to Response to a Major Terrorist Incident, stating: "About 70 organisations were interviewed and about 80-odd people, in addition to those in groups and things like that. Our three tests of preparedness produced a report with 127 recommendations. And obviously we are now working on behalf of the Mayor in monitoring how those recommendations are taken forward, and some of those we are more involved in than others". The Harris report was a useful addition to the research of this project in that it was an in-depth exploration of counter-terrorism activities across London (focusing on Pursue, Protect and Prepare and on publicly available data). Further, the research for the report was not carried out in response to any specific attack and therefore provided useful insights into general areas for improvement as opposed to specifically targeted issues identified following a terrorist attack. When asked if a robust and formal evaluation process was in place, he stated: "No. But I think it's much easier to say than do. I think there are some valiant efforts at trying to look at performance and productivity efforts ... There's obviously quite a lot of government measures around holding the police to account, not just in terms of spend and resources, but in terms of actual delivery. I think it's probably less so around the secret services. But it's difficult to go and [show] a little chart with the green and the reds and the ambers and actually say "Yeah, we are doing really well." I think that the test is around whether there's been an attack. It comes out as crude as that sometimes. Has there been an attack or not been an attack?". The complexity of carrying out a useful evaluation was supported by the research carried out for this thesis. Yet, it also reflects the difficulty those who are involved in counter-terrorism activities have in identifying ways to translate the data available into understandable and actionable mechanisms for systematic evaluation - one of the primary goals of this thesis. P5 went on to say "Pointing to activities that have [resulted in] disrupted attacks [can be seen as] a success. I think we can rightly point to the fact that there are people going through the Prevent programme, things like Channel and other things, who are undoubtedly receiving support and are being steered away from terrorist attacks. It is difficult when you go into Protect or Prepare - do putting lots of bollards up in central London help stop an attack? Well, it's quite difficult to demonstrate really. But it may be part of designing a modern city now". This shows just a sample of the many counter-terrorism activities and tools which are implemented and clearly identifies the fact that looking closely at each of these requires a complex and nuanced assessment mechanism. Instead, this thesis seeks to categorise these activities somewhat within the existing 4Ps framework in order to assess more broadly. Interestingly, P5 identified a challenge which was also observed in the research carried out for this project - evaluation within the limbs of Protect and Prepare is particularly difficult to locate and impact is hard to connect with the strategies themselves.

In terms of who should conduct reviews, P5 stated: "Certainly, government has a responsibility and the structure of the counter-terrorism in this country is very much centrally government-driven and delivered through local councils. We would say in London that the London CONTEST Board and the Mayor has a role in the holding to account and oversight of those functions, and quite rightly because

we are the focal point of risk. I don't think we use enough academic work to hold us to account and make sure we are learning. It's very easy for politicians and institutions which are working in that area to not see the wood for the trees really. In similar ways, pressure groups and things like that are all really valuable in asking the questions and keeping government and policy on track". This observation reflects another key element of this thesis - the need for independent oversight of such public policies which, although bias clearly exists, at least provide another avenue for understanding the efficacy of these counter-terrorism programmes. This ties in with the democratic governance framework underpinning the research of this thesis.

P10 responded as follows when asked if an evaluation system was in place: "As far as I know, the Home Office does have an evaluation, structured for the CONTEST strategy ... We were beginning to put one in place and the Number 10 Delivery Unit ... was actually helping construct an evaluating strategy ... before 2005". This supports P3's view in regard to the Home Office's involvement in evaluation for different aspects of counter-terrorism activities. The idea that there is a central body which at least carries out a level of analysis is encouraging but greater transparency on how often and in what manner these reviews are carried out, and what is done with the findings, would be appreciated. While P10 reflects on the development of an evaluation strategy in 2005, nothing was found within the public domain in this regard, fifteen years later. As just noted, there does seem to be a strategy in place but it is not possible to further understand this review framework through open-access documentation. An attempt was made by this researcher to address this issue through an FOI request of the Home Office but the detailed data was not accessible (see Appendix A). When asked who should carry out evaluations, P10 stated "I think those who are responsible for the strategy, which is the OSCT and the Home Office, have a responsibility to advise on how effective it is, and then to adjust course, as and when evidence appears. And that's a primary responsibility. You shouldn't have a policy if you haven't got some way of trying to assess whether or not its successful. You've then got a very different kind of assessment by parliament. So, in this case it would be the Home Affairs Committee, and part of that also would be the Intelligence and Security Committee looking at how effective the intelligence support is from the strategy. So, they've all got something [to contribute]". This multidimensional evaluation system reflects the complex nature of counter-terrorism and the multi-level analysis which can best understand its impact. Certainly, this seems to be an ideal situation and the research carried out for this thesis indicates that the entities mentioned by P10 are indeed involved in assessing CONTEST. However, it remains clear that there is a lack of transparency and potentially a lack of cross-communication between all of these entities' evaluations. In the case of the Home Office, specific detail on evaluations is absent, although information was received which provided a broad stroke insight into the review system in place (see Appendix A). Greater transparency on process and procedure would enhance the general understanding of what type of review is actually carried out. As it stands, one must assume it is fit for purpose. Additionally, there is no real indication that the different entities who do

carry out reviews coordinate or even properly communicate findings across areas. This results in a number of insightful and important reviews taking place, much of which is in the public sphere although not all, but which are all developed differently, with different measures and approaches and in disparate locations. For a researcher looking to better understand the assessment and oversight aspect of CONTEST, a significant amount of work is required, making this an under-analysed aspect of counter-terrorism in the UK. Without greater transparency, and centralisation or cohesion of process, it is almost impossible to know how many pieces of the puzzle are before you.

Finally, P11 said the following in relation to whether there was an evaluation process in place: “There’s a difference between having a process in place and having an effective mechanism. We used to talk about ‘lessons learned’ in my old world in the military, and one thing that was absolutely clear was we never learnt the lessons ... I suggested in MOD we went for ‘lessons identified’, because ‘lessons learned’ was an assumption that simply wasn’t ever true ... So, there needs to be a process by which those lessons are rolled back into the planning, i.e. go through the loop, to the point where those lessons identified are signed off as being resolved”. There is an absence of this ‘lessons learned’ concept throughout the documents studied for this thesis. Certainly, recommendations have been observed but, lacking the cohesion referred to above, it is challenging to understand what has been addressed or not. In some cases, such as the London’ Mayor’s Office’s response to the Lord Harris review, the progress is laid out although it seems to lack the transparency empirical support would provide. In addition, the Government responds to the various IRTL reports but with varying levels and depths of response. Overall, the robustness of the system is somewhat flawed. In terms of who should carry out evaluations, P11 replied: “I think it’s a combination. I think it should be led from the business, they should assure their own performance. And they should seek to get independent assurance about process ... So, to me, it should be evaluated at [all levels]. And, of course, the reason for that, apart from giving you some confidence, is that things are seen and rectified at the earliest possible stage”. This supports the views of the other interviewees, and indeed this thesis, that only through a combination of analyses can the impact of such a complex strategy as CONTEST be truly understood. While different entities focus on different areas of the strategy and provide a variety of perspectives and views, it would nonetheless be of benefit to the greater understanding of the strategy if there was one central and homogenous repository for all of these reviews, with greater detail regarding process and responsibility. This does not seem to be a likely development at any time soon.

In terms of critical voices of CONTEST and the voices of those who feel criminalized by the strategy, there is also an impression that no oversight takes place and that public opinion is not consulted. While this may be the case on occasion, the research undertaken for this thesis indicates that there is a high level of public consultation for issues that are particularly deemed to be ‘in the public interest’. Most recently, the Independent Review of Prevent has been initiated. There has been controversy over who

would lead the Review and this has resulted in delays in initiating the process. Several entities who are critical of Prevent have called for this review to take place, but have also identified problems with the individuals who have been selected to undertake the lead role (initially Lord Carlile and currently William Shawcross) causing significant delays. On the Government's website for the Review, it is possible to contact the review team directly and in addition, a Call for Evidence (which allows any member of the public, both individuals and entities, to provide information or evidence to the review team) was in place for several months. Additionally, public engagement activities usually take place throughout the process of these public reviews. It is relevant to point out that CAGE, an avid critic of Prevent, uses this 'Call for Evidence' mechanism regularly, and in 2018 provided a submission in response to the Call for Evidence for the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Bill (CAGE 2018). The criticisms levelled at the Government can certainly be seen as legitimate, but when these entities say they were not given an opportunity to participate in the consultation process, it seems that this is not entirely the case.

## **4.5 Findings**

This chapter has taken a multi-dimensional exploration of various perspectives regarding counter-terrorism activities. Some general findings can be made from the research carried out for this chapter. These are explored below.

First of all, in terms of interviewees, there is a complex understanding of the efficacy of CONTEST. The views presented by the interviewees expose similarity in terms of respect for the various agencies working in the field but also some acknowledgement of failings or sub-optimal levels of performance in certain areas. There is also a clear indication that these practitioners are aware of the public's views on the subject, particularly in terms of Prevent, but most of the interviewees disagree that this is a failed strategy or workstream. The opinions expressed by the interviewees were informed, albeit often within their own specific expertise or context, and therefore broader views on the entire CONTEST strategy were not truly obtained. This resulted in workstreams such as Prepare having very little presence in the responses of the interviewees. Nonetheless, Prevent, Pursue and, to some extent, Protect were all within the knowledge base of these individuals. These perspectives provide a depth of understanding to CONTEST not achieved before. The combination of data analysis in the previous chapter and perspective analysis of the experts in the field of counter-terrorism presented here has provided far more insights than one or the other could provide individually.

Beyond the perspectives of the practitioners who were interviewed, the exploration of public opinion polls has further illuminated how CONTEST is perceived by the broader public. As CONTEST aims to

protect the public, how it is viewed by the population of a state is very important to consider when exploring the impact of a counter-terrorism strategy. While the public may not know a lot about the workings of counter-terrorism activities, their understanding of whether a strategy is working is important to the overall acceptance, and therefore efficacy, of the strategy. In general, the few opinion polls located through this research indicated a general support for the activities of counter-terrorism practitioners. The dissenting voices which we often hear in the media seemed to gain little traction in these opinion polls. It should therefore be noted that these polls might not be truly representative of the broader public or, alternatively, the dissenting voices, loud as they are, are not representative of a truly significant proportion of the population. Nonetheless, over a period of several years, the opinions expressed in these surveys indicate that the British public, on whole, is satisfied with the work being carried out to protect them from terrorism. In an effort to highlight some of these criticisms, this chapter has attempted to present some of the examples of critical and under-represented voices. In relation to this, it has found that certain organisations perpetuate the negative narratives of counter-terrorism in the UK and fail to acknowledge changes and improvements in the strategy over time. Further, an idea of a lack of transparency and engagement with prominent entities fundamentally damages the strategies, when in fact there is ongoing engagement and open consultations for strategy reviews and the legislation process. These voices are important, but provide a very selective picture of the counter-terrorism landscape. When explored by Lewis and Marsden in 2020, it was found that, based on quantitative research, two thirds of the British public are satisfied with the counter-terrorism landscape, although the evidence that one third of the population is concerned, largely representing BAME voices, is problematic and the Government needs to continue to engage fully with these groups.

Having carried out the largely qualitative research in both Chapter 3 and this chapter, the qualitative phase of the thesis has now been completed. The findings raised throughout these two chapters is taken into Chapter 5 to form the framework of the analytical model explored there and provide the quantitative analysis; the second phase of the sequential research design.

# **Chapter 5: Developing an Analytical Model for Counter-Terrorism Strategies**

## **5.1 Introduction and Outline**

The previous two chapters looked at CONTEST in a multi-dimensional way. By looking at trends and hard data, as well as perspectives, an added depth of understanding was developed, allowing for more nuanced insights into the complexities of the strategy and its potential impact. Multiple methods were used to collect and analyse data and a combination of hard and soft data were explored, resulting in detailed oversight of how the strategy works as well as how it is perceived by both the public and practitioners in the field. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, no such study has been undertaken to date. In order to meet the ultimate goal of this thesis, however, this chapter will now present an analytical tool which can engage with the findings of the previous two chapters to more systematically understand the implications of these findings. In particular, the analytical tool will be applied to CONTEST, but is intended to be relevant to counter-terrorism strategies more broadly.

Ultimately, a model is developed which contains six categories, based on the themes identified throughout the research for the previous chapters: Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perceptions, Events and Goals. The rationale for the application of these six themes is explained below. Through an exploration of all six categories, this model provides the opportunity to study counter-terrorism performance based on common elements of counter-terrorism strategies. Of course, while these categories have been developed following the analysis of CONTEST in the previous two chapters, it is intended that they apply broadly to counter-terrorism strategies which exist in any liberal democracy. Measuring these thematic categories is not easy and, no doubt, the decisions made in terms of scoring the model will be controversial in light of the subjectivity which was found necessary through the analysis. However, transparency in the decision-making is intended to offset this issue. Further, the development of this model is an important step toward progressing the understanding the field of counter-terrorism through a more quantitative and replicable data analysis, facilitating a robust understanding of counter-terrorism strategies which has not been available to date.

This chapter will first provide some insights into the terminology and concepts explored. This is especially important given the shift in achievable outcomes, and thus terminology, for the thesis over the timeframe of the project. Secondly, the steps taken to choose a relevant and effective analytical tool for the purpose of assessing counter-terrorism performance will be presented. In doing this, it will first address the design of an analytical tool, looking at the options available as well as the decisions made

in terms of populating the model. Additional information on the design of the model can be found in Appendix I. The model which is finally developed will then be applied to CONTEST in order to assess its performance specifically. Finally, the findings of this chapter will be presented, both in terms of CONTEST and the implications the model itself has to the broader understanding of the impact of counter-terrorism strategies. These findings are analysed through the Red-Amber-Green ‘Traffic-Light’ model, indicating which elements of CONTEST are performing more or less well.

## **5.2 Conceptual Understanding**

This project has taken place over several years and as the learning has been gained it has become clear that the challenges of the initial goals of the project have had a necessary impact on how the analytical tool is developed. While the research questions set out in Chapter 1 have been explored, the development of an analytical tool to satisfactorily analyse and measure the impact of counter-terrorism has proved beyond the resources of this project at this time. Nonetheless, important insights have been gleaned throughout the previous two chapters, and the triangulation of these qualitative findings through the development of a model with which to better understand the performance of counter-terrorism strategies is both necessary and beneficial to the field. Indeed, reflecting back on Chapter 1 (section 1.5), there are two levels of analysis: the first level reflects on the overall project and the data explored in Chapter 3 and 4, looking at perceptions of counter-terrorism impact and the impact of various counter-terrorism activities; the second level reflects on the more focused and somewhat measurable concept of ‘performance’ as is feasible in terms of the analytical model developed throughout this chapter. So, while impact is not explored in the model, the thesis as a whole reflects on counter-terrorism impact more broadly. With this in mind, this section will explore some of the concepts which were central considerations to this phase of the research as well as the terminology and understandings which were ultimately applied. It does so through the presentation of a number of clarification questions.

### *What Analytical Tool can or should be applied – The Model in Social Sciences*

The analytical tool which was ultimately developed in this chapter is a model. It is appropriate at this juncture to reflect on the usefulness, and perhaps the challenges, of applying a model in social and political sciences. A model is a complex term that over the years has developed many understandings and uses. For the purpose of this thesis, the Cambridge Online Dictionary example was considered appropriate: “[A model is] something such as an object, plan, or set of rules that is used to show what something else is like or how it works” (dictionary.cambridge.org). The usefulness of applying a model to better understand counter-terrorism strategies seems quite clear from this definition. Nonetheless, there are also studies into the usefulness and efficacy of applying models to understand complex

phenomenon in both the social and political sciences (see Fiorina 1975; Brambor, Clark & Golder 2006; Clarke & Primo 2007). These studies, spread over several decades (although with a large gap between the first and the two more recent ones), seek to advocate for the application of models to various scientific research as long as they are utilised appropriately to serve the specific purpose of the specific project. The usefulness of applying models is seldom in dispute, but there needs to be a clear rationale for their application also. This will be addressed, within the framework of this particular thesis, in the next section. Ultimately, a model was deemed both useful and achievable within the constraints of this project whilst also clearly providing an added depth of analysis to the existing literature and subsequent understandings of counter-terrorism strategies.

*Goal of the Model: Can measurement be achieved through subjectivity? Does it need to be?*

Having established that the analytical tool to be developed in this chapter is a model, and that its remit is to assess the performance of counter-terrorism strategies (see Chapter 1, section 1.5), it is now appropriate to address the issue of subjectivity versus objectivity. It would be ideal if the model could provide an objective analysis of the impact of counter-terrorism strategies, with each aspect of the model measurable and robust. While not inconceivable that such a goal may be obtainable, given the restrictions of this research (e.g. accessibility to data) there was no expectation that such a study would be presented in this thesis. Rather, the analysis presented in this chapter, built on the findings of the previous two chapters, was intended to further the study of counter-terrorism in a new and innovative way, addressing a lacuna in the current field through the use of systematic and somewhat quantifiable data. Below, the chapter reflects briefly on alternative analytical tools which were considered for this part of the thesis but which were ultimately not implemented in favour of a bespoke tool. Yet, while the analysis of this chapter may not be at the high end of objectivity, it is nonetheless an important step towards developing more robust and measurable tools through which to better understand counter-terrorism strategies. There is value in the development of a model to better understand this phenomenon, and subjective analysis, built on carefully obtained and in-depth insights, can provide significant and important insights.

In connection with the issue of subjectivity is the notion of bias. Scholars would be naïve to think that they bring no bias to their research projects. Instead, self-reflexivity is required and an awareness of the presence of biases needs to be acknowledged, without undermining the value and potential impact of the findings of research. Every document explored in this thesis, as well as the interviews, contained a level of bias. Each of the documents were created by individuals who all brought their own inherent biases to lesser or greater degrees. Answers to interview questions required the interviewees to make a judgement, based on their knowledge and expertise. This is not to say that there is no value to the publications and the expressed views, but it is important to understand that judgements are made throughout the process.

This is also the case in this chapter. The model is intended to transform the largely qualitative data of the previous two chapters into numerical or quantitative data through a scoring system. While this approach is useful in terms of triangulation and explanatory power, it has its challenges. In order to populate the scoring elements of the model, a certain level of judgement has been applied by this researcher. This judgement is informed, based on insights and knowledge gained throughout Chapters 3 and 4. But it is judgement nonetheless. It is considered, however, that while the model and subsequent analysis carried out for this thesis, being based on one individual's judgment only, is somewhat impacted by this issue, it does not undermine the purpose on which this thesis was intent. Further, by providing the model in a survey format to additional individuals, such as the interviewees or other practitioners or experts in the field of counter-terrorism, additional robustness could be achieved in the future through the triangulation of responses. Time constraints somewhat impeded this element of the research being addressed here, but the potential of the model for further research, based on the initial findings of this particular project and the analysis of the model provided below, cannot be over-emphasised.

Therefore, through the numerical scoring mechanisms of the model, it is asserted that the model does in fact measure the various elements as presented. While acknowledged as informed but somewhat subjective, it is held that the fundamental process of measurement is not undermined by this, but rather any negative impact is contained within the application of the score. To offset this issue, transparency is provided in each of the analytical sections below and, should the model be provided to additional experts in the future in the form of a survey, it is considered that the robustness of the measurement would be adequately, if not wholly, resolved.

### **5.3 Designing an Analytical Tool to Assess the Performance of Counter-Terrorism Strategies**

A number of options were considered when designing what would become the ALTPEG Model<sup>118</sup> (to be explained below and hereafter referred to as 'the Model'), including whether to use an existing tool for exploring counter-terrorism strategies or to create a bespoke one. In particular, the SWOT Analysis Model, the Pestel Analysis and a Composite Indicator (Index) design were considered.

The SWOT Analysis model<sup>119</sup> is a well-established strategic analysis tool which allows organisations to evaluate their strategic status through the development of an understanding of their Strengths,

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<sup>118</sup> ALTPEG is an acronym for the six categories explored in the model: Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perspectives, Events and Goals.

<sup>119</sup> "SWOT Analysis is an analysis method used to evaluate the 'strengths', 'weaknesses', 'opportunities' and 'threats' involved in an organization, a plan, a project, a person or a business activity." (Gurel & Tat 2017)

Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A useful graphic explaining the standard approach and rationale for the four elements of the SWOT Analysis is below.

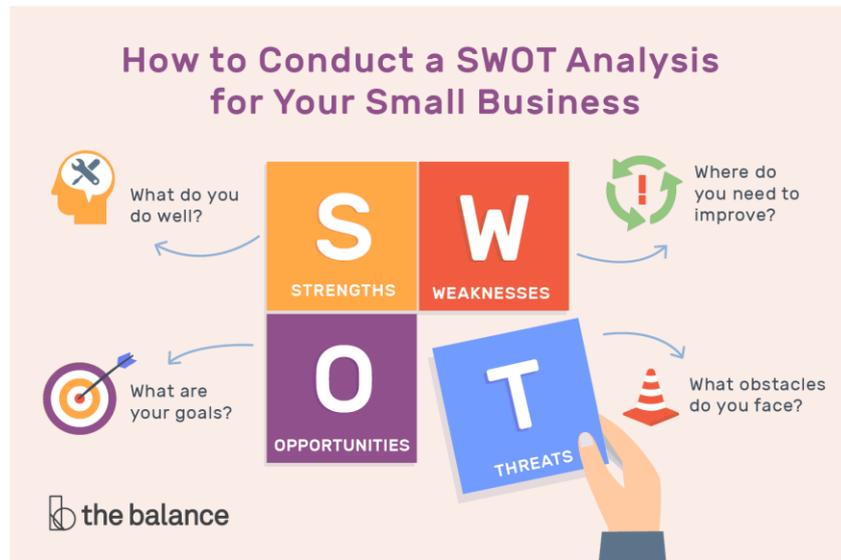


Figure 5.1 SWOT Analysis. Source: Gregory (2019)

The SWOT Analysis model was an interesting option which would allow for the basic analysis of CONTEST, looking at all four elements. Some analysis of SWOT has been carried out by Namugenyi et al (2019) and Heischmidt & Gordon (2020). However, this particular model failed to allow for the nuanced and highly complex elements of a government strategy and was deemed to be better suited to the analysis of organisations rather than broad government strategies. Nonetheless, the four core elements remained an inspiration, and while the categories of the model ultimately developed do not use these four terms, the idea of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats should certainly be part of the considerations when developing any kind of evaluation.

The PESTEL Analysis model<sup>120</sup> goes further than the SWOT model, and includes six elements which contribute to the overall analysis: Political; Economic; Social; Technological; Legal; Environmental. Some interesting commentary and analysis of the usefulness of PESTEL can be found in the studies of Yuksel (2012) and Heischmidt & Gordon (2020). On the face of it, this approach looked interesting, and certainly these elements all play a part in the activity of counter-terrorism strategies. However, the PESTEL Analysis model is designed for marketers, and is used to examine and understand the macro-environmental factors that are impacting on an organisation or broader industry. This was not exactly what was required for evaluating CONTEST's performance, as it was the strategies performance that was under scrutiny in the research, not really the external factors that impact on it. However, the

<sup>120</sup> "PESTEL Technique is a strategic management technique which can be used effectively in external risk identification process of Risk Management Plan. It identifies risks under various subgroups under broad headings of Political, Economical, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental." (Rastogi & Trivedi 2016)

framework of six elements provided by the PESTEL Analysis model was interesting, and established a precedent that a number of themes could be incorporated into an analytical tool which might better reflect the complexity of CONTEST as a strategy.

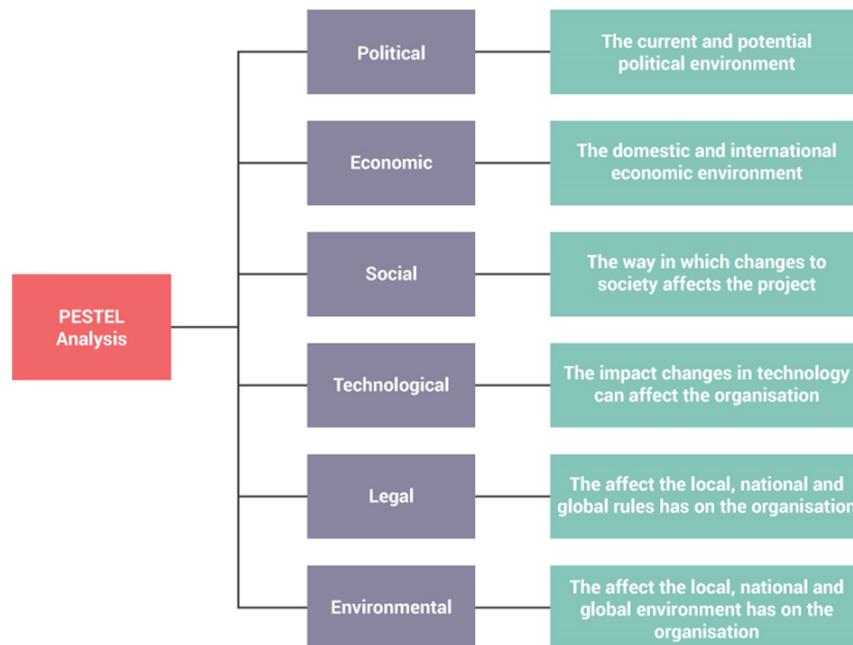


Figure 5.2 PESTEL Analysis. Source: Planium Pro Website

The final analytical tool that was considered for the quantitative evaluation of CONTEST was the Composite Indicator. A significant amount has been written on the efficacy of this tool, including studies by Saltelli (2007) and Barclay et al (2019). This tool was ultimately considered to be an appropriate mechanism through which to explore the performance of CONTEST. However, several issues in particular resulted in the decision to not apply this model in this particular research project. Composite Indicators are large and complex undertakings, usually with multiple teams who provide specific expertise such as statistics and the development of formulae through which to analyse the data. It involves multiple steps<sup>121</sup>, each of which are robust and complex, resulting in a need for a team of individuals to make the analysis timely. As a solo researcher, the application of the Composite Indicator was deemed to be beyond the scope and constraints of this particular project. Finally, the strength of Composite Indicators is ultimately in their ability to compare across multiple cases. Examples can be found in the Global Terrorism Index and the Global Peace Index<sup>122</sup> where multiple countries are analysed through the same methodology of the composite indicator and then ranked. As this research

<sup>121</sup> An in-depth guide on the development of a Composite Indicator, including the steps which should be taken in the design, is provided by the OECD at: <https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/handbookonconstructingcompositeindicatorsmethodologyanduserguide.htm>

<sup>122</sup> The Global Terrorism Index and the Global Peace Index can be accessed at: <https://www.economicandpeace.org/reports/>

was focused on the UK's strategy alone, it was decided that the contribution to the study balanced with the enormity of the work needed to design a robust and appropriate Composite Indicator were not appropriate at this time.

The decision was ultimately taken to develop a bespoke analytical tool that could be applied to counter-terrorism activities, reflecting both the complexity of a composite indicator, or index, and the clarity of the SWOT and PESTEL analyses. By designing a bespoke tool, the qualitative and quantitative worlds could be combined, providing a complex framework through which to build on the multi-dimensional analysis of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. The tool which was developed was designed to be an analytical model that could be applied broadly. Further, the search for inspiration of analytical models in fields outside of International Relations or even the social sciences fitted well with the pragmatic philosophical approach taken throughout this thesis. Details on the development of the basic Model can be found in Appendix I, although some of the process, as well as the specific application to CONTEST is outlined below.

At this point, it is timely to note that a multi-level analysis was considered to be an important aspect of any analysis of counter-terrorism strategies. Therefore, three levels of analysis were incorporated into this Model. The first, the micro level, was populated by the six categories which will be outlined below. Each of these categories received a score through the functionality of the Model. The meso level was represented by the four workstreams (the four Ps). Each workstream could be analysed through the six categories, with an aggregated scoring of these categories resulting in a measure of the performance of each of the workstreams. Finally, the macro level would be represented in the aggregated score of the sub-levels, as well as in the single aggregated score for the entire strategy. This level would become even more insightful when comparing across different countries' counter-terrorism strategies, as will be explained below.

The next task in the development of the Model was to identify the areas being assessed and ascertain the appropriate categories to be measured. In line with the design of this research project, the findings of the preceding two chapters fed into the design of this tool. As a result, six categories were established, considered to be core aspects of counter-terrorism strategies. This finding was borne out of the documentation of the CP as well as the interviews, statistical reports, review documents and media articles which were explored throughout the first phase of the research.

As mentioned above, the categories of the Model were based on the findings of Chapters 3 and 4 where some dominating themes arose. It became clear that perspectives play a significant part in the success of a counter-terrorism strategy. Whether or not members of the public perceive themselves to be safe from terrorism, and therefore that the strategy is working, plays a big part in the performance, and indeed the impact, of a counter-terrorism strategy. Public opinion can motivate changes in legislation

and can push a government to spend money in particular areas. This is particularly the case in liberal democracies where administrations that wish to remain in power come voting day require the public to support their activities. With terrorism maintaining a presence in the mind of the public (albeit a somewhat fluctuating one), issues around security can be considered critical to the survival of a particular government in such political structures (see the various works of Rousseau, Hobbes, Bentham and Mill). However, to balance public opinion, experienced practitioner opinion is also beneficial and adds an additional dimension to this theme. The interviews conducted for this research provided valuable perspectives on the functionality and perceived impact of various aspects of CONTEST from those involved in some of its activities. While public opinion is important in terms of target audience, these expert practitioner opinions are important to gain understanding of the day to day running of the programmes. While this level of detail and individual experience is not necessarily in line with the lofty nature of strategies, what has been clear from the research carried out for this project is that CONTEST, as a strategy, is nothing if not the sum of its parts. Therefore, it would be remiss to consider a category in any analytical tool that dealt with only public perspectives and gave no consideration to those who better understand the component policies and activities. The views of critics and under-represented populations such as the BAME communities were also considered throughout Chapter 4. When it came to scoring the Model, it should be highlighted that no additional weighting was given to the opinions of the interviewees. When considering the elements of the Model which reflected on perspectives, all voices were considered equally.

The three categories of Assessment, Learning and Transparency are connected somewhat through the over-arching theme of Oversight and Analysis. These categories are background issues and less obvious than looking at events or even perspectives. Nonetheless, self-reflexivity is essential for any strategy to grow and improve and these three categories reflect that characteristic. All three categories have the potential to impact the public's trust in a government to fulfil its mandate of protecting its population, and without any one of these areas working well, that trust can be undermined. First to be explored here is Assessment. Without assessment of policies and activities, no government can be confident in its ability to deliver on the strategy it designed and implemented. Deep and ongoing assessment is essential; deep so that multiple levels within the hierarchy are involved in assessment and ongoing so that not only can changes be made, but the impact of changes can be observed over time. Without this foundational mechanism, counter-terrorism strategies cannot adapt to the developing threat of terrorism, which in turn leads to a failed strategy and potential worst-case scenario of loss of life (in the case of counter-terrorism). Assessment is not the foremost issue that people think of when they think of counter-terrorism, but if we want to understand whether counter-terrorism strategies are working and performing as they should, it is a key issue.

The next category is Learning. When a review takes place, ideally it should highlight what is working and what is not working. The outcomes of a review, therefore, should result in clear lessons learned. These lessons can then feed into changes in procedure and processes or the development of new legislation or policies. Combined with Assessment, Learning is intrinsic to the efficacy of a counter-terrorism strategy. Again, this mechanism is an invisible one, with few thinking of it as an important part of what counter-terrorism is. However, for those who wish to understand whether counter-terrorism strategies are achieving what they set out to achieve, there can be little argument as to the importance of an ongoing 'learning' regime.

Finally, the last category of this over-arching theme is Transparency. While this might seem self-explanatory, this is not necessarily the case. Transparency involves governments and agencies involved in counter-terrorism publishing information, including raw data, for public consumption. This should be done regardless of whether the revelations of such information are positive or negative. It is much easier to publish positive information, supporting the work a government is doing to fulfil its mandate to the population. It can be difficult to publish negative information such as failings within the system. Exposing failings can lead some to believe a government is weak, or is not achieving its goals, but this is a truly one-dimension view on what is a complex issue. Not only can publishing negative information gain trust among the public (especially those who have an interest in counter-terrorism policies such as academics, researchers, civil society etc), but it can show integrity. While the above describes an almost utopian level of transparency, not likely to be found in reality, a useful sub-level of transparency could be more realistically found in a government sharing information with certain parliamentary or other oversight bodies. While this partial transparency might not result in information in its entirety getting into the public domain, the fact that, in a democracy, the citizenry elects the members of parliament to act on their behalf and in their best interests (two undoubtedly conflicting notions, but relevant nonetheless) somewhat compensates for this issue. Acting in a transparent manner is more difficult than it seems when it comes to governments as complex governmental activities can lead to implications for other areas of governance. However, assessing this concept is essential to solidifying the population-government relationship, particularly in a liberal democracy. Transparency is therefore a very important element that arose throughout the research, and the perceived lack of it is often focused on by critics of counter-terrorism strategies. Of course, on another level, the issue of transparency around classified information is a consideration which needs to be taken into account when looking at counter-terrorism strategies. This data can impact ongoing investigations or undermine successful tactics and researchers need to proceed carefully when attempting to obtain such data. A further dimension to this issue is the ease at which the public can locate information and whether communication across agencies involved in counter-terrorism is effective. All in all, the three categories explained above were clear and important issues which arose repeatedly throughout the research for this thesis and were considered to be important elements to include in the Model.

Clearly, events are an important aspect of counter-terrorism. What needs to be decided for the Model are the relevant benchmarks. On the one hand, if a state experiences no terrorist attacks, it could be considered a good indication of successful counter-terrorism strategy. On the other hand, if a state experiences even one terrorist attack, this could indicate that the counter-terrorism strategy is failing. However, this thesis argues that this is not an appropriate way to understand this category. Perhaps no terrorist attacks took place, despite the counter-terrorism strategy in place. How do we know that it is the activities of the counter-terrorism experts that stopped an attack or that terrorists simply decided not to carry out an attack in the first place? This question has the added complication of highlighting the challenge of knowing whether a terrorist's behaviour changes because of a strategy i.e. a terrorist decides not to carry out a shooting in a museum because scanners have been set up. This 'non-event' is not easily measurable and therefore some additional thinking needs to be made in terms of the Event category of the Model. In addition, if one event takes place, is that a complete failing of the counter-terrorism practitioners or is there a 'tolerable' (not acceptable) number? How is that number decided? For the purpose of this Model, successful events, failed events and foiled events<sup>123</sup> were all explored. All three sub-categories of events are important to get a rounded perspective on the events category. It was considered that successful events and failed events meant that the security services failed to stop an attack (whether or not the terrorists achieved their aims). Foiled events meant that the security services succeeded in stopping attacks and can be explored in comparison with the other two categories. Ultimately, the Events category was explored in the Model at strategy (macro) level, because not all of the workstreams are involved in the prevention of events themselves. Prevent is somewhat distanced from the occurrence of an event through its placement in the pre-crime and radicalisation worlds, and Prepare cannot be measured in terms of its prevention of an event taking place, simply because its entire purpose is to mitigate the impact of a successful event following its occurrence.

Finally, it is important to look at the goals set out by a government, where available, to see if it is possible to assess the achievement of these goals. Again, decisions need to be made on what is realistically acceptable. No strategy ever meets its goals one hundred percent, so what is acceptable becomes the issue of relevance. Governments who wish to convince the public of the efficacy of their counter-terrorism strategies need to outline their goals clearly and succinctly in policy documents. By doing so, it becomes possible to analyse the efficacy or performance of these policies. Without goals, even the government itself cannot develop an understanding of what it wishes to achieve. Therefore, any assessment of counter-terrorism strategies must look at a government's goals, and its self-defined 'measures of success', when available. When governments are meeting their goals, it can be understood that a strategy is successful, or is performing well, in some way or form. Should a government meet none of its goals, there are clear issues for improvement or change and the strategy can be seen as

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<sup>123</sup> Data and definitions can be found in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1 and in section 3.3.2.

failing, or not performing well. Usually, reality lies somewhere in between, and with strategies as complex as those of counter-terrorism, it can be expected that some policies work some of the time and all policies need adjustment<sup>124</sup> over time in order to adapt to changing circumstances. Either way, looking at the established goals of those who wrote and implemented the strategy is clearly an essential element in any Model which tries to understand the performance of counter-terrorism strategies.

Having identified the six categories that are most relevant to the understanding of the performance of a counter-terrorism strategy, it was then necessary to decide how to measure these categories. This was done through a number of sub-questions. While questions requiring a ‘yes-no’ dichotomy were considered, it was ultimately decided that it would not adequately reflect the complexity of counter-terrorism activities, and on no account would a sweeping ‘yes’ or ‘no’ suffice to fully understand the nuanced impact which has been explored throughout the research. On the other hand, something as complex as a composite indicator was identified as being inappropriate within the constraints of this study. Therefore, a five-point scaling system was chosen, where more nuanced observations could be made. On the one end of the scale, five would be the most positive and at the other end, one would be the most negative. Depending on the specific questions asked under each category, the scores along the scale could be understood in slightly different ways (e.g. a score of five might mean ‘always’ or ‘very positive’, while a score of one might mean ‘never’ or very negative’). These issues would need to be considered if a survey were to be developed based on the Model.

Ultimately, the following scoring scale was developed for the model:

**Scoring Scale for Categories Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perspectives and Goals:**

- 5: Always – positive score
- 4: Sometimes – positive score
- 3: Neutral/Unknown
- 2: Rarely – negative score
- 1: Never – negative score

**Scoring Scale for Category Events:**

- 5: High – positive score
- 4: Medium-High – positive score
- 3: Balanced
- 2: Medium-Low – negative score
- 1: Low – negative score

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<sup>124</sup> This view is also held by P9 and P10 in Chapter 4, section 4.3.1 and 4.4.1 respectively.

The six categories presented above ultimately represent the micro level<sup>125</sup> of the Model. The next level, the meso-level, allowed for the exploration of the workstreams of the strategy individually. Given the complexity of counter-terrorism strategies generally, it can be assumed that most have organisational sub-levels within the strategy itself. CONTEST itself has the ‘four Ps’ (see Chapter 1), and it was deemed appropriate that each workstream be analysed through aggregation of the scores of the six categories as they relate to each workstream. That being said, aggregation was an option but not a necessary component of the Model. It nonetheless ensured a multi-dimensional analytical tool was developed to reflect the multi-dimensional research undertaken for the thesis.

However, not all categories could feasibly be measured in the same way and therefore some additional treatment was required for the category of Events. This additional step allowed for the measurement of both questions under this category through a five-point scale. First, the data presented in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2 was relied on to answer the first question of this category because of its more detailed insights into the overall numbers of foiled events. Second, the number of successful, foiled and failed terrorist events were set out, as reflected on in Chapter 3, Table 3.2.<sup>126127</sup> In total, 31 events took place or were prevented from happening in the UK within the timeframe of the project. Eight of these were classified as successful terrorist attacks, nine were failed attacks and 14 were foiled attacks. This data was explored in terms of percentages, looking at the number of foiled plots versus those which were successful or failed but not because of the activity of the security services. This percentage was then scored on a five point scale, allowing for the consistent analysis across the categories.

Finally, in terms of goals, the Model focuses on the self-defined goals of the Government with both textual and numerical exploration carried out. As has been mentioned previously, CONTEST is a complex strategy made up of many parts. In light of this, the Government has set out in its strategy several levels of goals, or objectives. This thesis focuses on the 2011 publication of CONTEST for two reasons. First, the 2011 version of the strategy had goals which are now ‘met’. The strategy was intended to be relevant from 2012 to 2015. However, there was a significant delay with the publication of a new and updated strategy document, which only took place in 2018. Therefore, the 2011 version of CONTEST was the effective strategy document from 2012 to 2018. This makes this version of the

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<sup>125</sup> This can be argued as not the case, because clearly a significant number of activities fall underneath each of the categories. However, in terms of the scope of model, the categories are the micro level. It is true that Events was looked at only in terms of the macro level, but the framework of the six categories themselves was still considered to be a micro level analysis.

<sup>126</sup> As a reminder, Chapter 3, section 3.2.2 reflects on foiled attacks in more detail, but in terms of broad stroke figures as opposed to publicly available detail on these specific events. In answering the first question of category, this data was deemed more appropriate. However, in light of the lack of detail on each event, and the alternative timeline (based on the data available) these numbers are not reflected on for the second question. Instead, the data from Table 3.2 is relied on here where a comparison across the different types of events is possible.

<sup>127</sup> It should also be noted that success depends almost entirely on the goals of terrorist organisations and on counter-terrorism practitioners. Success is not an objective concept and changes depending on the individual perceiving it.

strategy more relevant to this research, and as a new strategy came into practice in 2018, it is easier to assess the impact of the previous version of the strategy. Secondly, the format of the 2011 document is more straight-forward than that of the 2018 version. It presents, not only levels of objectives, but also presents what the Government considers success to be. This makes it easier to analyse as, if the measures of success are met, or indeed not met, measurement of achievement could be explored and potentially evaluated.

All in all, there are three levels of goals or objectives in CONTEST 2011 (see Appendix J), with an additional level dedicated to measures of success. At the top level sits the overall aim of the strategy. This has not changed over the various publications and its consistency makes the benchmarks for understanding the impact of CONTEST clearer. At the next level, the key objectives of each of the workstreams is outlined. These are also broad, but this level was judged to be the most appropriate level to explore for the Model at this time. The main reason for this is that the aims of the next level down for each of the four workstreams is very detailed, and a significant number of these aims cannot be assessed currently, within the remit of this thesis. Access to data which has already been described above as unavailable means that it is not feasible to look at these aims in any significant depth in this particular project, although future research might provide further opportunity for exploration. Similarly, the indicators of success make up the final level, and while it is very useful to have these outlined, it has not been possible at this time to explore all of these. Additional information on the goals of CONTEST 2011 can be found in Appendix J.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the top two levels of goals for CONTEST 2011 are as follows:

Level 1:

- CONTEST: The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence;

Level 2:

- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks;
- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack;
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

It is important to look at these carefully in order to assess the Goals component of the Model. When looking at the two approaches which could be taken in the Model for the analysis of CONTEST (yes-no or scaled) it is clear that this category requires a scaled approach. This enables us to see whether each of the goals was somewhat met, to what extent and how the various workstreams performed in this regard.

Below, the ALTPEG Model is applied specifically to CONTEST. The scoring scales provided above are used to analyse the six identified categories, the four CONTEST workstreams, and the CONTEST strategy as a whole. It is acknowledged that the application of scores, undertaken solely by this researcher but based on extensive research which has been presented in Chapter 3 and 4, is subjective and open to scrutiny. Every effort has been taken to provide a rationale for the decision process, but the benchmarks between the scores are explained below in qualitative terms. While there is scope for additional robustness of the scoring process, this researcher considers the scoring system below to be a productive and innovative approach to modelling CONTEST's performance.

## 5.4 Applying the ALTPEG Model to CONTEST

Categories	Associated Questions	Prevent Workstream	Pursue Workstream	Protect Workstream	Prepare Workstream	CONTEST Strategy	Score (per Question)	Score (per Category)	Red-Amber-Green Analysis for Categories
Assessment	Are assessments carried out?	4	5	3	4		16		
	Are they independent?	2	4	3	2		11		
	Are the publicly available?	4	4	3	3		14	41	
Learning	Does learning happen?	4	4	3	4		15		
	Can it be measured?	4	4	4	4		16	31	
Transparency	Is the strategy transparent?	2	4	2	2		10		
	Has transparency improved over time?	3	4	4	2		13	23	
Perception	Are the perceptions of the public positive?	1	4	4	4		13		
	Are the perceptions of the media positive?	1	3	3	3		10		
	Are the perceptions of the practitioners positive?	4	5	4	4		17	40	
Events	Are more events foiled than are successful?	-	-	-	-	5	5		
	What is the balance of attacks which are stopped (foiled) versus not stopped (successful or failed)?	-	-	-	-	4	4	9	
Goals	Were terrorist events stopped by the activities of CONTEST?	4	-	-	-		4		
	Were people stopped from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism?	-	2	-	-		2		
	Was the UK's protection against a terrorist attack strengthened?	-	-	3	-		3		
	Were the impacts of any terrorist attack mitigated?	-	-	-	4		4		
	Was the risk to the UK reduced, the risk to the UK's interests overseas reduced and are people able to go about their lives freely and confidently?	-	-	-	-	4	4	17	
	<b>Score (per workstream)</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>				
	<b>Score (Contest total)</b>							<b>161</b>	
	<b>Red-Amber-Green Analysis for Workstreams/CONTEST</b>								

## *Assessment*

### How this category was scored

Question 1: Are assessments carried out?<sup>128</sup>

- Score: 16
  - Prevent (4); Pursue (5); Protect (3); Prepare (4)

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 16 across the four workstreams. This score was based on research carried out for Chapters 3 and 4 through document exploration and the practitioner interviews. It was also the result of a response made by the Home Office to a FOI (Freedom of Information) request (see Appendix A).

Through this research, it became clear that regular assessments are carried out under the **Pursue** workstream. These are carried out by a variety of bodies. The fact that a variety of different bodies, as well as the Government, carry out regular assessments on Pursue in particular is positive, and so the highest score of 5 was applied to this question in terms of Pursue.

**Protect**, on the other hand, was far more challenging, and few references were made to it in regard to assessments in the documentation. This is likely because of the vast array of entities that function under this workstream. Industry is as important as government for this workstream, and transport organisations, architects, engineers, designers, security companies to name a few are all involved in Protect. It proved very difficult to ascertain if any assessments of this workstream, let alone regular and robust assessments, were carried out. While the likelihood is that some internal assessments are carried out and, considering that border security (through Schedule 7) is part of this workstream and is assessed, it was not considered appropriate to score in the lower end of the scoring range. Access to sufficient information was simply not available<sup>129</sup>. It therefore received a score of 3, implying the information is unknown.

Both **Prevent** and **Prepare** scored 4, meaning that assessments are carried out to a relatively good level but are not ideal. With regard to **Prevent**, this is because of the annual publication of the Channel

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<sup>128</sup> While more robust supporting data, such as the number of reports available which would result in a workstream receiving a score of 5 or 4 or 3, would certainly provide a robust insight into the decision making process, this was not feasible at this time. The research undertaken for this paper looked at a variety of samples of publications, some of which were ad hoc and others published annually or quarterly. This inconsistency makes it challenging to identify specific numbers, and therefore the scoring has been made based on contextual understanding as well as focused analysis of certain documents relating to each workstream.

<sup>129</sup> This access was a result of multiple issues such as classified data and time constraints related to FOI requests and contacting all of the organisations to obtain information on internal processes. Further, this thesis seeks to understand what can be learned about CONTEST through publicly available data.

Referrals document, which goes some way to assessing at least part of this workstream. As with Protect, however, a number of bodies carry out the activities under Prevent and so understanding the complex assessment landscape is challenging. Local authorities, health boards, education facilities, community centres and religious centres all have a role to play in this workstream and the likelihood is that there is some assessment going on. However, the regularity, consistency, robustness and transparency of reviews for this workstream are in question, and so it is problematic. The question in the Model “Are assessments being carried out?” takes these elements into consideration.

Some references were made in terms of **Prepare** to assessments, and the ‘Harris Review into London’s Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident’ (October 2016) also relates to the entities that function under Prepare. Therefore, while little or no centralised assessments are carried out for Prepare, some assessments do take place, resulting in a score of 4.

On the whole, this question scored reasonably, with 16 out of a potential 20. It was the highest of the three questions for this category, and is a positive sign that assessments, including reviews, are carried out.

Question 2: Are they independent?

- Score: 11
  - Prevent (2); Pursue (4); Protect (3); Prepare (2)

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 11 across the four workstreams. This question scored the lowest of the three questions, overall showing a barely positive element of independence. It scored lower overall than the question of whether assessments are done at all, because not all assessments were independent, and much of the documentation indicated that research was carried out either by the Government itself or was commissioned by the Government. This question is very important in terms of robustness of findings as in democratic societies there is an expectation that independent reviews, with robust and honest findings, are available. The UK does well on this generally, but there are still issues with independence.

Certainly, **Pursue** performs the best of the four workstreams with a score of 4. This is because of several regular reviews which are carried out. The IRTL, the Intelligence and Security Committee and the Home Affairs Committee all provide regular and robust assessments of various aspects of CONTEST as they pertain to Pursue. Pursue did not achieve the highest score, however, as there are gaps in the data and in some cases the Government directs reviews.

The Channel Referrals is a good assessment of **Prevent**, but is a document presented by the Government and is not deemed independent. The score of 2, indicating that independent reviews are rarely applied, was therefore given to this workstream. Throughout the research for this project, independent assessment of Prevent was found to be lacking. It is proposed that this issue is a result of a blinkered focus on assumptions that Prevent is not working and needs to be completely removed. This attitude simply results in a lack of independent and robust analysis of the strategy itself. The proposed Prevent Review is a good step towards updated analysis of the workstream, but is driven by Government and therefore not considered particularly independent.

**Protect** and **Prepare** scored neutrally and low respectively. Assessments were not easy to find for **Protect** and the rare examples located were generally carried out by the Government or local government as part of a broader study (see Harris 2016).

The research seemed to indicate that various entities which function under **Prepare** carried out their own assessments. The Lord Harris report is a rare example of independence and comprehensiveness, not being focused on any single workstream but rather a large number of activities on the practical level. This meant that Prepare received a score of 3, where assessments carried out were fairly mixed between independent and Government-directed studies. On the whole, it became clear that a certain level of independence did exist but varied between the workstreams.

One of the more positive aspects to this question was the assessment carried out by Lord Anderson QC on the internal reviews carried out by MI5 and the Counter-Terrorism Police following the attacks in 2017. While the document Anderson published clearly stated that it was a public and redacted version of a full document, the rationale for this dual report production was clear and the information presented in the public document was nonetheless informative and critical. Anderson lent an air of independence to this assessment of internal practices, and the document contributes to the next question as well, albeit just in terms of Pursue.

Question 3: Are they publicly available?

- Score: 14
  - Prevent (4); Pursue (4); Protect (3); Prepare (3)

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 14 across the four workstreams. Both **Prevent** and **Pursue**'s assessments were all publicly available, and while there is a high likelihood that additional assessments are carried out internally and are not published, thus preventing the score for these two

workstreams from being 5, there was, in general, a culture of making as much as possible available to the public.

It would have been possible, and perhaps correct, to place **Protect** and **Prepare** on the negative side of the scale, as the research carried out was unable to locate anticipated assessments, potentially suggesting they do not exist at all. However, the broad scope of this research project did not allow for an exhaustive exploration of all documentation and assessments for each of the workstreams. The focus was multi-dimensional rather than focused on a specific aspect of CONTEST and the rationale for this is outlined in Chapter 1. Therefore, the absence of these assessments does not mean that they do not exist in the public realm, but they are certainly extremely difficult to track down. In order to ensure all avenues have been exhausted, a researcher would need to identify the main areas of activity under each of the two workstreams, identify all the organisations and industry participants that function with these two workstreams, and then explore websites etc for assessments. This search could result in the finding of lots of publicly available reviews, or none at all, or just a few. Regardless, they were not possible to find in terms of this research and time constraints. In light of this, the benefit of the doubt was given and kept these two workstreams as unknown.

## *Learning*

### *How this category was scored*

Question 1: Does learning happen?

- Score: 15
  - Prevent (4); Pursue (4); Protect (3); Prepare (4)

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 15 across the four workstreams. Learning is a tricky concept, and the scores given to this question were based on the limited research conducted for the thesis. Again, there is a difference between lessons observed and lessons learned, and both need to be in place for a strategy to improve and address failings and issues. CONTEST 2018 itself states that “This new CONTEST strategy is the result of a fundamental review of all aspects of counter-terrorism, to ensure we have the best response to the heightened threat from terrorism, seen so starkly through the attacks in London and Manchester during 2017 and the lessons we have learned from them” (CONTEST 2018). The document goes on to mention learning in all of the four workstreams, although no detail is provided. Based on this foundational understanding that learning takes place across all elements of

CONTEST, this question needed to be addressed in relation to documentation and data located beyond the pages of the strategy.

All in all, it was found that three of the four workstreams were engaging with learning, while the fourth, Protect, was unclear. Changes in legislation and procedure take place on an ongoing basis for **Pursue**, and the interviewees involved in counter-terrorism policing clearly outlined how they learn from events on all levels. While consistency on how that learning happens is not clear, the fact that learning, on some level, takes place is. Implementation of lessons learned is challenging to assess to say the least. It seems simplest to look at post-event reviews and any responses to those reviews. This provides a relatively clear marker of a failing being identified in the post-event review, a recommendation being made and action being taken. However, it is not always as clear as this, and the effectiveness of this learning is not at all easy to assess. For the purpose of this Model, it was decided that the important thing is to understand whether learning takes place and concluded that it does.

**Prevent** is constantly evolving and at multiple levels. The clearest indicators of this could be found in the various publications of CONTEST itself (specifically the 2011 and 2018 publications) which discuss Prevent. CONTEST states “ Prevent delivery is underpinned by our understanding of the threat and radicalisation process, by assessments of the threat picture in local areas, and through continuous research and evaluation” (2018).

**Prepare** was also considered to engage with a good amount of learning, particularly in light of the ongoing an regular training exercises that take place throughout the country. These exercises are multi-agency and aim to improve the understanding of what type of terrorist incident is taking place (bomb event, marauding gunman, firearms or bladed weapons) and improve the efficacy of the response. On occasion these exercises make the media, but more importantly is the fact that they are ongoing throughout each year and around the country.

**Protect** was scored as neutral because of the illusive nature of this understanding. No progress reports or internal assessment documents were available for public consumption. The only publication which provided any insight into the security agencies’ internal evaluation processes was the Anderson Report of 2017 and its subsequent updating document, published in 2019 (Anderson 2017; Anderson 2019) and neither of these documents reflected on Protect activities. Therefore, it seemed most appropriate to place this workstream in the neutral scoring position, indicating that learning is unknown.

## Question 2: Can it be measured?

- Score: 16
  - Prevent (4); Pursue (4); Protect (4); Prepare (4)

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 16 across the four workstreams. This was a challenging question and providing different scores for each of the workstreams was considered. However, when reflecting on the research that had taken place earlier in the project, there are ways all of them can be measured. The issue becomes what these measurements tell the researcher, and how many elements need to be measured. Each of the workstreams can be reviewed and areas which are working well, are not working well or are working well to some extent can be identified. By carrying out an identical review monthly or annually (or longer), it can be understood if learning is taking place. By applying a scaled scoring system to each of the questions of the assessment, measurement of the learning can then take place. The problem arises, of course, with the measurement process and how decisions are made on how to score the learning. For this reason, surveys are undoubtedly the best way to get unbiased (through large numbers) scores, although the available numbers of participants might not actually be large enough. This is not a perfect system, but as long as it is transparent, the process of scoring through surveys is undoubtedly an effective way to assess if learning is taking place and indeed, how well it is taking place. None of the workstreams can be measured in full, it was concluded, and for this reason **none received a score of 5**. But ultimately, it is possible to measure learning: it just needs cooperation, transparency and the correct questions/indicators to be measured, ideally built into the design of any evaluation or review system, rather than trying to fit the measuring after the fact in a less than ideal manner.

Expected outcomes of applied learning in **Prevent** could be seen in increased community buy-in, improved opinions of local police and various communities, improved funding (whether that is additional funding or less and more targeted funding) and greater understanding in the community of what Prevent is and how to identify individuals at risk of radicalisation. Designing a survey with these elements in mind and ensuring as many individuals as possible from all concerned entities and areas are invited to complete the survey, would ensure that you could measure progress over time, and thus learning.

Examples of learning in **Pursue** could be seen in improved transparency, improved cross-entity cooperation, improved processes and procedures and improved and appropriate resources for carrying

out operations and surveillance, particularly on SOIs (Closed)<sup>130</sup>. By assessing whether or not these areas have improved over time, we can see that learning is happening and measure it.

Examples of learning in **Protect** could be measuring data in terms of Schedule 7 – how many people are stopped and subsequently detained and interviewed, how many people from various ethnicities, how many of these go on to be charged and arrested – and seeing whether this data improves over time. Improvement would mean assessing what is an acceptable number for each step in that process and ensuring that no ethnicity is treated differently than others (within margins of error). Looking at successful terrorist events, such as Westminster Bridge, identifying vulnerabilities and the subsequent addressing of those vulnerabilities (attacks on bridges preventing easy location of bollards, communications on patrol zone updates<sup>131</sup>) would also be a measurable aspect of learning.

Finally, examples of learning in **Prepare**, while more challenging, could be seen in the responses to recommendations following post-event reviews. Improvement in communication technology underground was a significant issue in the 2005 London Bombings (see London Assembly 2006, multiple references), and that has since been addressed, according to the documentation reviewed (see HM Coroner 2011, paragraph 124). Improved communications between the blue light agencies were also something that arose out of previous events, although flaws were still identified in terms of the Manchester Arena Bombing (see the Kerslake Report). Undoubtedly, however, learning can be measured, again through a survey-type analysis, for Prepare.

## ***Transparency***

### *How this category was scored*

Question 1: Is the strategy transparent?

- Score: 10
  - Prevent (2); Pursue (4); Protect (2); Prepare (2)

When looking at each of the four workstreams, a mixed impression of transparency is formed. On the whole, this researcher was relatively impressed with the amount of information that is available to the

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<sup>130</sup> See the ISC's 'Report on the Intelligence Relating to the Murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby' (2014) and Anderson's Report 'Attacks in London and Manchester Between March and June 2017: Independent Assessment of MI5 and Police Internal Reviews', published in December 2017, both of which reflect somewhat on Closed SOIs (also noted in Chapter 4, section 4.4).

<sup>131</sup> See the Westminster Bridge Inquest document titled 'Prevention of Future Death Report' published by the Coroner in December 2018 for information on this issue: <https://westminsterbridgeinquests.independent.gov.uk/documents-and-rulings/prevention-of-future-death-report/>

public because expectations on this area were low before the research started. Nonetheless, the actual usefulness of the available documents does need to be questioned and controversies regarding transparency in terms of Prevent and human rights issues are certainly relevant to the category.

**Prevent** was given a score of 2 because the main element of transparency is through the Channel Referrals reports, published annually. While these publications are very useful and provide a good level of transparency in terms of the numbers of people being processed in the programme, there are many elements of the Prevent workstream that are not available for public digestion. Funding, collaboration and support structures are not clear, and regardless of whether the documentation providing this information is available or not, the public has a poor impression of the workstream (this will be discussed in more detail below). The rationale behind decisions made in regard to individuals are often unclear and there remain gaps in the public understanding of what Prevent is and how to engage with it. For this reason, more than any other, people do not seem to trust Prevent and this undermines the efficiency of the workstream. Should Prevent become more transparent in a number of different ways, additional mitigation could probably improve the perception of the public. Of course, this needs to be balanced with privacy as those who are processed through Channel are often children or vulnerable adults who may have mental health issues. Additionally, many of those referred to Channel are not in danger of being radicalised and may be referred on to another support structure. Information on this pathway is not openly available and involves a number of agencies which make it even more difficult to truly understand the repercussions of referring an individual to Prevent. While the Channel Referral Reports are certainly a positive element to the workstream, they only go so far, and the flawed and complex nature of working in the pre-crime sector makes this particular workstream the most problematic in terms of trust and transparency<sup>132</sup>.

**Pursue**, on the other hand, has a relatively positive level of transparency, with a number of agencies, independent of the Government as well as government based, providing annual insights into the activities that take place under this workstream. It therefore received a score of 4. The challenge with Pursue is that a significant amount of information is classified for state security reasons. This results in a positive but imperfect level of transparency, and independent entities such as the IRTL and the ISC openly discuss the fact that the public versions of their reports are redacted. It could be said that the transparency about the issue of redaction goes some way to alleviating concerns in regard to classified information. But, as already mentioned, not everyone would be so accepting of the statements of these entities. In addition, there are challenges when looking at foiled events, particularly in terms of hard data. While perhaps understandable that not all details of foiled attacks are revealed to the public (for potential abuse by would-be terrorists), there is information, such as the number of foiled plots by year, that could be published and would provide very useful insights when compared to successful terrorist

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<sup>132</sup> See discussion of pre-crime in Chapter 4 under Assessment an Oversight: Interviewees: P4.

attacks and failed attacks. Therefore, Pursue does not receive a full score, but it does receive a positive score of 4.

**Protect** and **Prepare** each received a score of 2, as neither of these two workstreams were found to be particularly transparent. Information contained in the CONTEST publications themselves, the reviews of CONTEST published between 2012 and 2016 and the Harris Report of 2016 all go some way to revealing some information on the activities of the programmes under these workstreams, but the Government documents are biased and provide sweeping and unsubstantiated statements. In addition, the Harris Report touched on all elements of London's response to a terrorist attack and resulted in 127 recommendations. A year after the publication of this report, the London Mayor's Office published a document detailing the developments made on these recommendations<sup>133</sup>. They declared that more than two thirds of those recommendations had been resolved (London Mayor's Office 2017, p.2). This sounds positive, but again, limited information on how these conclusions were formed was provided, and therefore the impact of these documents was somewhat dulled. Overall, public information on these two workstreams was not easy to locate and therefore both workstreams were scored 2.

It is also relevant to note that the critics of the strategy do not believe that it is transparent, and focus on specific elements which are considered shadowy and untrustworthy. The scoring for this question to some extent reflects this issue, as Prevent, Protect and Prepare all scored quite low on the scale. Nonetheless, the research carried out for this thesis ultimately found that the areas the critics most focus on (aside from Prevent), the police and intelligence agencies, have a higher level of transparency than given credit. Additionally, the low scores for Protect and Prepare particularly are a result of the difficulty of finding the information, not that there is a complete lack of it. Critics of the strategy do not often consider these two workstreams as part of CONTEST and so their perception of the strategy as a whole is somewhat flawed.

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 10 across the four workstreams, indicating neither a positive nor a negative impact from this particular area.

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<sup>133</sup> London Mayor's Office (2017) Harris Review into London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident: One Year On, available at [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/progress\\_report\\_-\\_harris\\_review\\_into\\_londons\\_preparedness\\_to\\_respond\\_to\\_a\\_major\\_terrorist\\_incident.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/progress_report_-_harris_review_into_londons_preparedness_to_respond_to_a_major_terrorist_incident.pdf)

Question 2: Has transparency improved over time?<sup>134</sup>

- Score: 13
  - Prevent (3); Pursue (4); Protect (4); Prepare (2)

It is not considered that **Prepare** had improved in regard to its transparency over time. The Harris Report, and the subsequent response of the London Mayor's Office, were positive moves towards a level of transparency, but did not show a trend of improvement and the Lord Mayor of London's response contained many flaws, especially in terms of additional data to support the declarations of achievement which were made. Therefore, while not receiving the lowest available score, it did receive a poor score on the issue of transparency improvement.

However, **Pursue** and **Protect** received a generally favourable score of 4 in this area. This was largely the result of the publication of the Transparency Report, issued by the Government annually since 2015. This report began to be published to meet transparency regulations and provided some reasonable insights into the various activities under Pursue and Protect. In addition to this annual report, there has been a move towards providing information on foiled attacks, and although these insights are provided in general and sweeping statements through largely media interviews, this is an improvement on the previous amount of information published. The report of Anderson on the internal review processes of MI5 and Counter-Terrorism Police published in 2017 in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the UK was a very positive step forward. In this document, which was for security reasons redacted in part, both the successes and the failings of the security services were revealed to the public, with the approval of the agencies. This showed a clear move towards increased transparency, and an awareness that making elements of their processes and procedures open to the public was an important aspect of securing the public's trust in these agencies following what could have been considered a 'disastrous' year in terms of Islamist terrorist attacks. This move was considered by this researcher to be very positive, and such a publication had not been made publicly available previously. The publication of the annual reviews of CONTEST was also very positive move but has been undermined by the fact that these reviews have not been published since 2016. For this reason, the highest score could not be provided to these two workstreams, but a positive score was warranted.

Finally, **Prevent** received a score of 3 because the publication of Channel Referrals has been in place for a number of years showing no actual improvement in transparency here. That being said, the establishment of the Commission for Countering Extremism in 2017 was a positive aspect to the

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<sup>134</sup> In this case, the lowest achievable score is 1, indicating that transparency is worsening. It is not possible for a workstream to be scored as a 1 only for a future analysis through this Model to indicate the workstream has become less transparent and therefore warrants a -1. The scoring designed for this model is indicative only, and therefore 1 is presented as the lowest achievable score.

extremism side to Prevent (despite the fact that in 2015 there was a clear move to separate extremism into its own category outside of CONTEST), not least because it publishes a regular blog on its activities. Further, a Prevent review was announced by the Home Office in January 2019 and would certainly contribute positively to this score.<sup>135</sup> However, to date, no publication has been made, and in fact there has been significant controversy over the nomination of an Independent Reviewer<sup>136</sup>. The first report was supposed to have been published in August 2020<sup>137</sup> but has not been published at time of writing (May 2021). For these reasons, Prevent has scored neutrally, but with the hope that a review report on Prevent will be published by the new deadline of September 2021 and better contribute to this aspect of the Model.

Out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 13 across the four workstreams. Overall, transparency has improved over time, although to greater and lesser extents throughout the four workstreams. The addition of blogs and updates in terms of the Commission for Countering Extremism is positive and something similar in connection with CONTEST would be most welcome but unlikely given the decentralised nature of the strategy overall. The Home Office, ostensibly the central hub of CONTEST, could perhaps develop something in this area, but there are no indications that this is on the Home Office's radar. The publication of statistical reports and factsheets has been ongoing for some years and, although not necessarily an improvement, the development of presentation and what is included in these is positive. The lack of a centralised hub for CONTEST has presented significant challenges to this research, and although OSCT is supposed to be the central body for CONTEST, the body itself publishes no documents and is not contactable by the public. These issues impact the level of transparency of CONTEST.

The three categories discussed above – Assessment, Learning and Transparency – combine to provide a picture of the performance of policies under the CONTEST strategy. Any counter-terrorism strategy can be measured by these indicators, and while the measurement itself might be challenging, insights into the strengths and weaknesses of counter-terrorism strategies can be developed. Below, this understanding is further deepened by exploring the various perceptions of counter-terrorism strategies, focusing on CONTEST, as well as looking at terrorism events and the goals of the Government.

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<sup>135</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-prevent> for some context as well as a collection of documents regarding the Independent Review of Prevent. This process is ongoing and therefore cannot at this time assist the research further.

<sup>136</sup> See Chapter 4 section 4.2.2 for additional commentary.

<sup>137</sup> According to a news briefing of 12 August 2019: “The review will focus on the current delivery of the Prevent programme and make recommendations for the future and is expected to report to Parliament by August 2020” (Home Office, document available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lord-carlile-to-lead-independent-review-of-prevent>).

## *Perception*

### How this category was scored

Question 1: Are the perceptions of the public positive?

- Score: 13
  - Prevent (1); Pursue (4); Protect (4); Prepare (4)

For anyone who studies or is aware of CONTEST, there can be no doubt that the public's perception of **Prevent** is generally negative. Human rights groups and civil society organisations have loud voices and proponents of the workstream tend to be drowned out. This thesis has looked at a number of these views throughout Chapter 4 when considering the perspectives of CONTEST. The media has a significant part to play in the perceptions, seeming to delight in highlighting negative news stories of the floundering workstream. Yet the fact remains that the public either has no particular view, or a negative view, of Prevent. Therefore, there was a clear rationale for saying the public's view of Prevent was predominantly negative.

**Protect** is a little more ambiguous, as the public do not often think about this workstream. In one way, this proves that Protect is doing what it should. The measures associated with Protect are often intended to be subtle; to protect the public while not interfering with the public's activities. For example, the public does not often notice that street furniture is designed and placed in such a way to stop a vehicle from mounting the pavement or crashing into the ground floor of a building. Of course, this is not always the case. Airport security, which is usually considered as part of Protect, has had significant impacts on the public who travel by plane. Although some measures have proved controversial at first, such as the full-body scanners which were introduced in various countries throughout the noughties<sup>138</sup>, the public has been remarkably resilient to these changes, and so longer security lines, leaving water bottles behind at security, removing shoes and belts and even being randomly selected for new x-ray technology all become the norm quite quickly. On the balance, therefore, it is concluded that Protect is viewed neutrally by the public – either the activities are not noticed, they are noticed but become accepted quite quickly or they are acknowledged as keeping people safe from terrorist attacks, giving a slightly higher leaning than purely neutral. Protect was therefore scored as 4.

**Pursue** was also scored as 4. Although people consider successful attacks a negative sign of the security services ability to protect us from terrorist attacks, on the whole, people consider the activities of the security services, under Pursue, as necessary to protect the public. There is a mix of information

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<sup>138</sup> See Alards-Tomalin et al. 2014 and Juvan et al. 2020 for additional insights into this topic.

available under this workstream, where successes as well as failures are featured in the media. In particular, the outcomes of inquests into events and the outcomes of trials receive a lot of attention and the public tends to support these activities. The public opinion polls explored in Chapter 4 suggest that the public, at certain times, has had a heightened level of support for increased legislation at the sacrifice of public freedoms. The critics of CONTEST do focus on some of the activities that fall under Pursue, particularly in terms of the powers given to police through counter-terrorism legislation (e.g. Schedule 7, TPIMs). However, throughout the research carried out for this thesis, their voices were not indicative of the whole. When considering the public's views, therefore, all voices were taken into consideration, and while this prevented Pursue from achieving a score of 5, it meant that it was not appropriate to provide a neutral score of 3. Therefore, this researcher concluded that the public, as a whole, appears to view Pursue positively.

**Prepare** is viewed quite positively by the public, although specific evidence was difficult to locate in the documentation researched for this thesis. In general, there is a tradition of support for the blue light services and the work of the ambulance teams and fire brigades are generally considered to be positive. There is also a high level of support for and trust in the police, as shown in one of the public opinion polls<sup>139</sup>. Quick response times and appropriate action is seen positively, and while post-event reviews can highlight need for change, the public tends to not hold the activities of Prepare accountable for the success of terrorist events (they are designed to mitigate following an attack after all, not prevent one from taking place). Therefore, the public views Prepare positively, on the whole.

All in all, out of a total potential score of 20, this question scored 13 across the four workstreams. This indicates that the public is generally favourable toward the activities of CONTEST, but of course, as indicated above, there is a complexity to that conclusion.

Question 2: Are the perceptions of the media positive?

- Score: 10
  - Prevent (1); Pursue (3); Protect (3); Prepare (3)

The media is intended to be an unbiased entity that provides facts to the public for their own digestion. However, this is not really what takes place. Media are owned by super-entities with their own goals and targets. Independence of government is challenging and most media outlets come down on one side of the political spectrum over the other. Competing with social media has also influenced the reporting among mainstream media outlets, and with newspapers seeing a plunge in sales, they are often

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<sup>139</sup> See Ipsos Mori poll from October 2005 carried out for the BBC and discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.3.2.

motivated to compete for the attention of the public. Further, it is beyond contestation that media reporting can impact the public perception of an issue. A number of studies have been carried out to understand the relationship between media and terrorism, as well as the impact of reporting on the public (see Spencer 2012; Ghazi-Tehrani & Kearns 2020). With all this in mind, it was considered relevant to at least partially understand the perspectives of the media. However, all in all, they seem to be quite balanced. Aside from **Prevent**, which never seems to see positive headlines, all three other limbs receive both negative and positive headlines, resulting in a neutral impression of CONTEST overall. In light of this, **Pursue, Protect and Prepare** all received a score of 3 (neutral).

The negativity assigned to **Prevent** resulted in its receipt of the lowest score of 1. What is most telling in terms of the media is its impact on the view of the public, discussed above. In the UK, therefore, a neutral overall score of 10 out of a potential 20 was assigned to this question.

Question 3: Are the perceptions of the practitioners positive?

- Score: 17
  - Prevent (4); Pursue (5); Protect (4); Prepare (4)

This is where the narrative in terms of perspectives goes down a very different path. Whether the views of practitioners should be given more weight (as they know far more about the impacts and workings of the various activities of CONTEST than the average person on the street) or less weight (as they often have an inherent bias towards portraying their work as successful) remains outside of the purview of the Model. This is because it was decided not to apply a weighting scheme to any of the categories of the Model, at least for this project. Future development of the Model, in addition to employing additional views of experts and practitioners, could also address the issue of weighting. Nonetheless, while those interviewed for this thesis did provide overall positive views of the aspects of CONTEST of which they were aware, there were dissenting voices, and an acknowledgement that there had been failings in the past. Most interviewees believed that the strategy as a whole was on the right track and was as successful a counter-terrorism or criminal strategy as could be reasonably expected.

As before, the case of **Prevent** was the most controversial, with six interviewees considering it to be positive while three interviewees considered it to be more negative. For this reason, on the balance, a score of 4 was deemed appropriate given the dominant support for the strategy. This conclusion was not just based on the interviewees however, as it is acknowledged that a relatively small number of individuals were interviewed and they were selected based on industry interaction with CONTEST.

However, throughout the documentation explored for this thesis, it also became clear that practitioners were generally more supportive of Prevent than the public and media were.

In regard to **Protect** and **Prepare**, the interviewees themselves had varied to limited insights into these workstreams. On the whole, their understanding of these two strategies were positive, and the documentation generally supported this positive impression. For this reason, both workstreams received scores of 4.

All four workstreams received scores in the positive side of the scale, but only **Pursue** received the highest positive view, scoring 5. This is because all of the interviewees considered that the agencies working under Pursue were as effective as could be expected considering the challenges. This, it is argued, is all that can be expected of any criminal strategy, and while it is a subjective point, it is nonetheless reflective of real-world realities. On the whole, therefore, this question scored the highest of all of the questions with 17 out of a potential 20.

It is appropriate at this point to provide a reminder that the categories presented below, Events and Goals, were not scored per workstream. The justifications for this in terms of Events include the fact that events themselves do not apply to all of the workstreams. Prevent, for example, does not specifically deal with terrorists and those engaged in terrorist activity, but rather focuses on those at risk of becoming radicalised. Therefore, the relevance of scoring Prevent in terms of the question on whether attacks are foiled or successful is not relevant or applicable. Likewise, Prepare cannot be expected to contribute to the foiling or preventing of events, as its purpose is to mitigate the impact once an event has taken place. For these reasons, the category of 'Events' best reflects on the strategy as a whole, with the combination of all activities taking place throughout CONTEST contributing to the understanding of events and the strategy's impact on them. Therefore, the scoring system for the two questions under the category of Events is applied to CONTEST as a whole.

Additionally, when exploring the Goals category, these can only apply to specific workstreams. The core goal of Prevent has nothing to do with the core goal of Prepare, and while Pursue and Protect can be seen as working in similar spaces, their goals are individual and not the same. For this reason, the scoring for each of the core goals of each of the workstreams, as well as CONTEST's overall goal, are applied only to the relevant workstream (or CONTEST in the case of the overall goal).

The difference in scoring systems is presented clearly, and does not impact the overall scoring mechanism, including the Green-Amber-Red analysis of the model as a whole.

## *Events*

### *How this category was scored*

Question 1: Are more terrorist events foiled than are successful?

This question was given a score of 5<sup>140</sup> because, given the data available for scrutiny, more events are foiled than are successful. While year on year data was unavailable for this thesis, the likelihood is that more events are foiled than take place in any given year. This is a conclusion reached given the information that was available for this thesis. This includes 2017, where five events took place (four successful and one failed). The data explored specifically in Chapter 3, section 3.3.2<sup>141</sup> indicates that six plots were foiled in the UK between March and September 2017 and so even that particularly active year for terrorist activity saw more events stopped than were successful.

Question 2: What is the balance of attacks which were stopped (foiled) versus not stopped (successful or failed)?

Collecting the data to answer this question was not at all easy but has been described in depth in Chapter 3, as well as in Appendix G. All in all, 40 terrorist plots were foiled between June 2013 and October 2020. In the same time period, 14 events were either successful or failed. This means that 74% of the total of 54 events between 2013 and 2020 were foiled. That is a positive number, but it would be better for analytical purposes if the data was provided by year. It should also be highlighted again that the timespan for this particular data point differs from that of the rest of the project as a result of the availability of data. It is still considered that this analysis is appropriate to take forward for the purpose of this Model, especially given the fact that the Model does not necessarily sit within a specific timeframe. Future analysis would benefit from the availability of year on year data which could sharpen the analytical framework of the Model and provided additional specificity for year on year performance.

In order to treat the data so that it better aligns with the other elements of the Model, it was decided to again apply a five-point scaling system. This would result in the following breakdown:

- 1-19%: 1

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<sup>140</sup> As already mentioned, the scaling of 1 to 5 had slightly different meanings, depending on the question. However, the important aspect of the scale is the directionality of the 1 to 5 scoring. In this model, as score of 1 is consistently negative while a score of 5 is consistently positive.

<sup>141</sup> In this specific instance, given the data on foiled attacks presented in Table 3.2 only demonstrates one foiled attack in 2017, it was deemed appropriate to rely on the data presented in Section 3.3.2 of Chapter 3.

- 20-39%: 2
- 40-59%: 3
- 60-79%: 4
- 80-100%: 5

Given that 74% of the events between 2013 and 2020 were foiled, this results in a score of 4 for this question.

As already mentioned, the category of Events is a little unusual in comparison to the other categories as the data itself has no cap, but rather needs to be treated in order to align with the 1-5 scaling. Additionally, the questions of the Events category of the Model are the first which are applied to CONTEST as a whole, rather than its four workstreams. They therefore feed into the broader comparative goal of the future of the Model, rather than CONTEST's component parts.

## ***Goals***

### *How this category was scored*

The scale for this set of questions, again slightly nuanced in comparison to the first four categories, is as follows: 1 Goal not met; 2 Goal partially met; 3 Unable to ascertain if goal was met or could be met; 4 Goal was mostly met; 5 Goal was fully met.

Question 1: On a scale of 1 to 5, were terrorist events stopped by the activities of CONTEST? (Pursue)

Score: 4

The answer to this is unclear. The documents relating to the 2017 terrorist events focused on events which were not stopped by the security services. However, this needs to be balanced with the number of examples of foiled cases, but we do not know that number for certain. The security services would benefit themselves if they were to publish basic comparables such as the number of foiled plots. The likelihood is that terrorist attacks were foiled during 2012 to 2017, but a number of successful events also took place. This goal was therefore scored as mostly met (4). This was because more events were foiled than were successful. Also, the goal does not clarify how many events should be stopped and

therefore, on a technical basis, as long as any events were prevented this goal has at least been somewhat met.

Question 2: On a scale of 1 to 5, were people stopped from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism? (Prevent)

Score: 2

The answer to this is unclear. Again, the documents explored for the 2017 terrorist events indicate that clearly individuals were not stopped from becoming terrorists and supporting terrorism. The data relating to the CPS prosecutions, which can be found in Chapter 3, also indicates that a number of people had been radicalised and either supported terrorism, carried out terrorist attacks or attempted to carry out terrorist attacks. At the same time, some of the CPS cases indicated that individuals were prevented from taking part in terrorist activities or were stopped from carrying out bigger offences by being prosecuted for lesser offences. It seems more likely than not that at least some individuals who engage with the Channel Programme are prevented from becoming terrorists. However, as the Channel Programme is voluntary, those who may have been flagged as vulnerable to radicalisation but may have chosen not to engage with the system will likely continue on their trajectory. These individuals can only be stopped through arrest and prosecution (and arguably, this might only be temporary given the potential for radicalisation in prison and generally short to medium prison sentences where radicalised individuals, upon release, may reoffend). The phrasing of this goal is purposefully vague, and to answer whether this goal has been achieved honestly, it must be admitted that, yes, some individuals have been prevented from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The issue is the challenge in knowing whether someone has been stopped from acting without the benefit of hindsight to see if the action would actually have been carried out. It becomes slightly more useful when looking at the objectives of Prevent and the measures of success, but as previously mentioned, it is not possible to access much of this information at this time. This goal was therefore partially met (2). There are too many unknowns to ascertain whether this goal has been achieved in any significant way, but also it is necessary to acknowledge that there is a likelihood that many individuals have been prevented from becoming radicalised and from there involved in terrorist activity.

Question 3: On a scale of 1 to 5, was the UK's protection against a terrorist attack strengthened? (Protect)

Score: 3

The answer to this is unclear. This is a problematic question, and it is not particularly easy to see if this goal has been achieved. The main reason for this is that there is an assumption that a future attack would follow the tactics and targets of a previous attack from which learning has been taken. So, from the documentation studied for this thesis, it is clear that issues have been identified for improvement, and in some cases actions have been taken to address these issues. Examples of these actions can be seen in the Mayor of London's response of 2017 to the Harris Report (2016), and the Home Office's letter to the Committee of Home Affairs regarding the Parson's Green attack (2018). These responses to review recommendations provide useful insight into the actions being taken to address identified shortcomings. However, there is no real way to know whether the actions taken to address issues will stop future terrorist attacks. For example, in light of two events involving vehicles on bridges in London, it makes sense that these areas, as well as other bridges in London, are better protected from such attacks. However, there may never be another terrorist attack on a bridge (displacement)<sup>142</sup>. Or the weapon may be different. In assessing whether the UK's protection against a terrorist attack has indeed been strengthened, one can only look at the current status. While actions taken to improve protections may not prevent a future attack, there is no doubt that issues which were identified as needing addressing were acknowledged and, it seems, in many cases acted on. This is evidence of a clear improvement in various areas of Protect and cannot be simply dismissed against a future threat. It is difficult to know what further could actually be done, as all else would only come with the benefit of hindsight. At the same time, the answer to the question is simply not answerable with any certainty in terms of future attacks, and therefore, this goal is not fully achieved (3).

Question 4: On a scale of 1 to 5, were the impacts of any terrorist attack mitigated? (Prepare)

Score: 4

This key objective is not particularly well-worded, as there will always be mitigation following terrorist attacks. How well this mitigation may be is another issue entirely. Aspects to be considered within this area include: the quick and efficient response of the blue light services; saving lives and triaging the wounded; closing down relevant areas to ensure the safety of the public; effective communication between emergency responders; broader agencies (national government and local government) as well

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<sup>142</sup> See Chapter 4, section 4.3.1 where this term is discussed further.

as the public; resilience of the infrastructure so that people can get to work and to their homes through backup or alternative means; where possible the arrest and prosecution of the individual(s) responsible for the attack; and financial support and a swift return to economic stability through the re-opening of businesses affected by an attack. More long-term mitigation would be the learning taken on from the event and the improvement of processes and procedures to address any flaws or failings in the system. As can be seen, this is a complex area to address. In general, the British public seems to view this category positively, with a return to normality tending to come quickly. Looking at the various post-event reports exposes many areas for improvement, as well as providing insight on what worked well. However, when this goal is looked at in a different way, from the perspective of immigration and border security, a different understanding can be developed, accompanied by a range of opinions. When it is found out that perpetrators of an attack had foreign names, there are many people who, in the current climate of racism and societal discord, jump on the idea that they were immigrants. Nonetheless, of the 11 perpetrators who carried out attacks in the UK between 2012 and 2017, six were born in the UK, and three of the individuals who were not born in the UK carried out one attack (the London Bridge and Borough Market attacks). The challenge with this issue cannot be exaggerated: terrorism does not exist in a bubble, and therefore views on counter-terrorism change depending on the narrative and the perspective. Therefore, while the majority of the public may not view the activities of Protect negatively, those who see the problem as interconnected with immigration and border security issues (usually a minority it seems) may view the goal as unachieved. On the whole, however, some of the impacts of terrorist events were at least somewhat mitigated. This goal is generally met, but not fully attained (4).

This next question relates to the overall goal of CONTEST, and therefore cannot be viewed in terms of each of the workstreams. Therefore, as with the second question of the Events category, this particular question was relevant to CONTEST as a whole and not any individual workstream.

Question 5: On a scale of 1 to 5, was the risk to the UK reduced, the risk to the UK's interests overseas reduced and are people able to go about their lives freely and confidently? (CONTEST)

Score: 4

It must be observed that the risk to the UK itself was reduced. Hypothetically speaking, if 10 people intend to carry out terrorist attacks, and only three or five or eight succeed, then the risk has been reduced. There is never an expectation set out by the Government that all terrorist attacks can be stopped, and so regardless of anyone's high expectations that no terrorist attacks should ever take place, this expectation would be unreasonable. This would be similar to expecting no murders to take place,

or no burglaries. It just is not possible to stop all of these crimes. Therefore, in terms of this aspect of the overall goal of CONTEST, yes, risks were reduced in the UK. The research carried out for this thesis did not focus on international aspects of CONTEST in light of the strategy's focus on domestic issues, although there have been brief reflections on, for example, terrorist events which happened in states other than the UK. To answer the last section of this goal, it is most informative to take stock of the public opinion polls outlined in Chapter 4 as well as the views of the experts on this topic. In general, the UK public returned to normality relatively quickly following successful events. Commuters returned to London without much delay as they needed to get to work and visitors continued to travel to and from the capital. In Manchester, a concerted social effort was made not to allow the bombing of the Manchester Arena to hinder normal activities. In fact, more people (55,000) turned out to the benefit event hosted by Ariana Grande (the performer whose concert people were attending when the Manchester Arena Bomb was detonated) just two weeks later than to the original concert (Manchester Arena has a capacity of 21,000), showing a lack of fear of being attacked again. While terrorist events always engender concern in the populace, the vast majority of people in the UK have shown confidence in the security services ability to stop or respond to terrorist attacks, in the physical and procedural measures put in place such as street furniture and airport security activities and in the response of the blue light services (fire brigade, ambulance and police), as well as the transport police (who were the first responders at the Manchester Arena bombing) to save lives and mitigate the impact of the event. There will always be a vocal minority who do not feel such confidence or who feel that they are victimised by the processes in place. The voices of these individuals and groups need to be heard and accounted for in ongoing improvements and developments within the strategy and this has probably been the least successful aspect of the strategy as a whole. Nonetheless, no government strategy makes all members or the public feel confident and happy at all times and expecting this to be the case is unreasonable. Within the realm of reasonableness then, despite its flaws, CONTEST has for the most part succeeded in its overall goal (4).

## **5.5 Findings**

The analysis carried out for this part of the project has provided some interesting insights. By developing a model to assess the performance of highly complex counter-terrorism strategies, a solid foundation for ongoing and future research into the impact, and potentially efficacy, of counter-terrorism strategies can be presented. Applying the Model to different countries would also result in a comparative element of overall country score, which, in theory, would compensate for the fact that different strategies had different components. While many elements to counter-terrorism strategies may be similar, they are often framed or organised in different ways, making comparability at this level challenging. However,

looking at a country level aggregation for comparative purposes might be sufficient to expose trends, indicating strategies that are working better or worse, as appropriate for the specific state.

The benefit of the Model developed is not only the fact that it is multi-dimensional and, hopefully, applicable to any counter-terrorism strategy, making it flexible; it is also that findings can be looked at for individual workstreams (or elements) of the broader strategy, for individual questions and for the categories under which the questions are grouped. The categories and the questions developed for this research are based on the research which has been explored in Chapter 3 and 4. The only category not included in the earlier chapters is that of Goals, which was explored broadly through the reading of all CONTEST publications but was applied more formally to the research in this chapter.

The weakness of the Model should also be acknowledged at this time. In particular, criticism could be levelled at the subjective application of the scaled scoring system. Certainly, statistical analysis and additional quantitative measures could be taken to remove, to the best of our ability, the human error or reliance on judgement on which this Model is based. Yet to take this further, a whole other project could be undertaken. Given the breadth and the goals of this particular project, it was not deemed necessary to go further than designing the analytical tool presented here and presenting quantifiable analysis without the statistical emphasis. However, it was intended that the Model provide a necessary and welcome first step into formally analysing the complexity of counter-terrorism strategies. Further insights will be presented in Chapter 6.

The rationale for the scoring of the individual questions has been provided below. The chapter will conclude by looking at the findings of the categories, the workstreams and, to some extent, CONTEST overall. The overall scores of each of the categories, as well as each of the four workstreams, were finally assessed via a Red-Amber-Green analysis system.

As the Red-Amber-Green analysis system provides three categories for scoring, the total potential scores for each element of the Model were divided into three equal parts. No additional weighting was applied to each of these scoring ranges, although conceivably this could be undertaken in future iterations of the Model.

For the categories of Learning and Transparency, with a total aggregated score of 40, it works as follows:

- 0-13 Red
- 14-26 Amber
- 27-39 Green

For the categories of Assessment and Perception, with a total aggregated score of 60, the following breakdown was applied:

- 0-20 Red
- 21-40 Amber
- 41-60 Green

For the category of Goals, with a total aggregated score of 25, it is presented as follows:

- 0-8.3 Red
- 8.4-16.7 Amber
- 16.8-25 Green

For the category of Events, with a total aggregated score of 10, it is presented as follows:

- 0-3.3 Red
- 3.4-6.7 Amber
- 6.8-10 Green

For each of the four workstreams, the total potential score is 55. This means that the Red-Amber-Green analysis is as follows:

- 0-18.3 Red
- 18.4-36.7 Amber
- 36.8-55.1 Green

Finally, the total score for the CONTEST Strategy can also be assessed in this manner. As the potential score is 235 (aggregating all of the category scores), the following distribution would be applied:

- 0-78.3 Red
- 78.4-156.7 Amber
- 156.8-235.1 Green

## ***Findings***

### *Micro-Level: Individual Categories:*

- Overall Score for Assessment: 41 (out of a potential of 60) – Green
- Overall score for Learning: 31 (out of a potential 40) - Green

- Overall score for Transparency: 23 (out of a potential 40) - Amber
- Overall score for Perception: 40 (out of a potential 60) - Amber
- Overall score for Events: 9 (out of a potential 10) - Green
- Overall score for Goals: 17 (out of a potential 25) – Green

The scores presented above for each of the overall categories represents the aggregation of the sub-questions for each category. Having described the scoring rationale for these questions, it has been deemed sufficient to focus on the Red-Amber-Green analysis here. All in all, four categories – Assessment, Learning, Events and Goals – achieved a Green rating, indicating that in general, these three aspects of CONTEST are performing well. Two categories – Transparency and Perception - achieved an Amber rating, indicating that these are doing well, but there is room for improvement. Finally, no category received a Red rating, which is a positive finding.

Without a doubt, all researchers have expectations of what will be found in the research of counter-terrorism strategies. Depending on world view, experiences, political leanings etc. it might be expected that counter-terrorism strategies are under-performing, are not fit for purpose, are inefficient or not achieving the goals set out. Others might expect to see only positives, allowing for the challenge of the task of countering terrorist activity and the fact that it is a criminal strategy. After all, if crimes can continue, why should we expect terrorism to be fully eliminated?

The landscape presented through the research for this thesis fulfilled one of the initial expectations; the strategy is having a mixed impact on terrorism in the UK. However, it was surprising to find the level of support presented in the public opinion polls (while acknowledging the somewhat flawed nature of this part of the research)<sup>143</sup>. Yet the research for this particular chapter consolidated the findings of earlier research. Yes, the performance of CONTEST is generally mixed, and this should be expected of a complex public strategy dealing with a highly complex phenomenon. But on the whole, the strategy is either working well, or is working moderately well but needs improvement. No part of the strategy, not even Prevent, is failing completely and needs a complete re-working, according to the research undertaken for this thesis.

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<sup>143</sup> The term ‘flawed’ is used here because there were only a few opinion polls, mainly taken after an event and therefore highly biased. Other challenges are further discussed in Chapter 4 in the relevant sections.

*Meso-Level: Findings by Workstream*

Overall score for Prevent: 31 (out of a potential of 55) - Amber

Overall score for Pursue: 45 (out of a potential of 55) - Green

Overall score for Protect: 36 (out of a potential of 55) - Amber

Overall score for Prepare: 36 (out of a potential of 55) - Amber

Looking at the four workstreams is a further level of analysis that provides interesting insights into the workings of CONTEST. Through this research, no workstream was failing, as would have been indicated by a rating of Red. That being said, only Pursue made it to the Green level, largely because of improving transparency, learning and assessment processes. The three other workstreams are doing well in some areas and poorly in other areas, resulting in an Amber rating. Indeed, the potential ambiguity around performance for these three workstreams is further compounded by the fact that the scoring places them at the extreme high end of the Amber level, and only slightly different judgments would likely situate them in the Green level, albeit at the low end of that.

Prevent performed the worst. When scoring through the Model, one category in particular impacted negatively on the score – that of Perception. The public and the media perceptions of Prevent are very negative, and this lowest score undermined the fact that the strategy seems to be working well. The reports of the Independent Reviewer of Prevent would be a welcome additional insight into whether this is actually the case. Recent terrorist attacks expose weaknesses in the system, when considering that several terrorists who successfully carried out attacks in the UK had previously, or at the time of the attack, been under the care of a Channel Panel, or even on the radar of the security services. However, while the media seems to make these negative issues, in terms of the numbers of people being supported through Prevent and the rarity of attacks, it must be acknowledged, even reluctantly, that this problem is not endemic, and these cases are, in fact, outliers. Regardless of how Prevent is perceived, it is a safeguarding strategy and comes with all the challenges of any safeguarding strategy, be it child protection or mental health. Nonetheless, the perception of the public and media (through its highlighting negative stories rather than positive ones) in general is negative on the strategy and this in particular has impacted the scoring of this workstream. In terms of Pursue, the scoring was fairly consistent throughout, with the lowest score going to Perception, again. This seems to indicate the significant power of the public's perception of a policy or strategy, as it can offset other positive metrics. Both Protect and Prepare scored the same (36). Prepare's lowest score came from transparency, as it was incredibly difficult to locate documentation on this workstream. Both Assessment and Transparency score the lowest for Protect, although the Assessment category was more neutral than

negative. Of all the questions, whether or not the workstream was transparent received the lowest score for Assessment. This means that, in terms of both workstreams, transparency is an issue that needs to be addressed for the future.

*Macro-Level: CONTEST Overall:*

- Score for Goals (in relation to the Level 1 question): 4 (out of a potential 5) - Green
- Score for Events (which relates to CONTEST as a whole): 9 (out of a potential 10) – Green
- Score for CONTEST Strategy: 161 (out of a potential 235) - Green

There were a couple of differences with these elements of the Model. First of all, they could not be broken down by workstream and therefore only applied to CONTEST as a whole. Secondly, there was a mix of data: pure numbers and percentages resulting in some light data treatment.

The scoring itself demonstrates an overall positive insight into the strategy as a whole, not just its workstreams. It means that, not only are more attacks being prevented than are taking place, but the overall goal of CONTEST is being achieved. That goal itself is multi-dimensional, and the only part of the goal which this research could not delve into at all was the international element<sup>144</sup>. While some might feel that this is not reflective of reality on the ground, it is argued that the research carried out is in-depth and holistic and takes into account multiple aspects of the domestic strategy. Not only are people going about their lives freely and confidently (for the most part), but terrorist attacks are being stopped and in greater numbers than those taking place. No matter how cynical we may be of the Government's and the intelligence communities' activities, they are achieving what they set out to do. This is not to say that everyone in the UK feels this confidence and freedom, and flaws within the strategy have already been highlighted throughout this thesis. But, in terms of the population as a whole, the strategy is having a positive impact on people's lives and terrorist events.

*Aggregated Score for CONTEST*

The aggregated score for the UK's counter-terrorism strategy is 161. When the Red-Amber-Green analysis is applied to this score, it provides a Green categorisation, if just barely. This is a positive

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<sup>144</sup> Again, not only was there a need to focus this research, the choice being made to focus on domestic aspects of CONTEST, but time and resource constraints prevented this aspect of counter-terrorism from being explored in any real depth.

finding, and while there is scope for improvement within the scale of ‘Green’, there is every indication that CONTEST is achieving what it set out to do. However, the usefulness of the analysis of CONTEST as a strategy will be further improved when this Model is applied to other counter-terrorism strategies. Then, a comparative mechanism is revealed, and will provide an even deeper level of analysis for the performance of counter-terrorism strategies.

The ALTPEG Model developed here has highlighted, in both broad and fine brush strokes, what is working well and what needs improvement, resulting in insights into the performance of CONTEST in the UK. It is anticipated that this could be used as a starting point for both academic and policy analysis, focusing on the areas that need further improvement. The research carried out for this Model indicated that there is a lot of good work being done to protect the UK from terrorist crimes, although, as with any complex security strategy, much more can be done to improve processes, communications, transparency and inclusiveness. The Model works but works better when an in-depth understanding of the strategy being analysed is also carried out. Therefore, all three substantive chapters in this thesis are designed to provide in-depth insights into the workings of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

### 6.1 Overview

This thesis set out to address a lacuna in counter-terrorism research. It sought to do this in several important ways. First of all, a mixed methods approach to the research was taken, applying both qualitative and quantitative methodological elements in order to explore the issue of counter-terrorism strategies from a multi-dimensional perspective. This also combined the exploration of both soft and hard data. Secondly, an analytical tool was developed, based on the systematic approach to the data analysis undertaken in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the thesis. This tool allowed for the triangulation of the understanding of the impact of counter-terrorism strategies, through both textual and numerical data, which had been developed throughout the first phase, specifically focusing on the measurement of performance. Finally, the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, has been the focus of this thesis. However, rather than focusing on one or two particular elements of the strategy, as is commonly done, this thesis explored all four workstreams in an effort to truly understand the strategy's impact overall, and as a comparative exercise across the workstreams. To fully understand the impact of counter-terrorism strategies, it was deemed necessary to study multiple policies, or workstreams, as none exist in a vacuum. Only through understanding the interconnections between these complex elements, it was proposed, can the big picture truly be seen.

The perceived paucity of open-access data has resulted in an apparent reluctance to engage with original research. As a result, the field of counter-terrorism is dominated by secondary source studies focusing on the works of others. The need for original research, as well as more varied methodological frameworks, is bemoaned throughout the field and there is a clear acknowledgement that the field would benefit from such innovative approaches. This is not to say that existing studies fail to add anything to the field. Indeed, some of the most important projects have comprised 'literature review' styled studies focusing on secondary sources and have assisted in the improved knowledge of counter-terrorism over the decades. Further, more recent studies have attempted to address this under-representation of innovation and originality, and increased diversity is certainly on the table for future research. These studies have been explored throughout the literature review of Chapter 1, as well as to a lesser extent in Chapter 2.

Nonetheless, the literature review that was presented at the outset of this thesis highlighted the perceived paucity of innovative approaches and robust data in the field of counter-terrorism. The well-established qualitative research approach dominated, with very limited quantitative studies being published. No mixed methods studies on counter-terrorism were located throughout the research for this thesis.

Additionally, when searching for ‘counter-terrorism’ studies, many ‘terrorism’ studies resulted and while connected, these two fields have differing approaches. Therefore, many of the more rare and innovative studies, applying under-utilised methodological frameworks, which did come up in the research were, in fact, focused on terrorism rather than counter-terrorism.

This thesis is the output of a long and complex project designed to address these issues. Innovative in approach, it sought, as already mentioned above, to address the significant gaps that arose in the research which was carried out for the literature review. The broad focus of this research and spread across all of CONTEST (except for the international element of the strategy), was a central part of the project. Of course, this approach is challenging, and perhaps is a primary reason why such ambitious research has yet to be undertaken. Not only is it daunting to explore multiple elements of a complex public policy strategy, but there is an anticipation that the data required to do so simply does not exist. While some amount of truth is of course present in this perception, it does not alter the value of making some progress in this type of research. Only by understanding what data is available, as well as the data which is not available, can we provide an authoritative account of what improvements need to be made in this area.

## **6.2 Summary**

The first chapter of this thesis established the context within which this research was conducted from multiple levels. It provided a summary of the terrorism landscape in the UK through which counter-terrorism has evolved and it provided a brief overview of the strategy of CONTEST itself. It also sought to establish an academic context through which this thesis can situate itself through a well-developed literature review. Some of the insights which arose from the literature review have been summarised in the analysis above. Chapter 1 also set out the research questions and the conceptual definitions which were deemed important for the reader to understand throughout the thesis. Additional reflection on the research questions are presented below.

Chapter 2 provided an in-depth look at the methodological considerations of this thesis. Through a brief and focused literature review, the state of the field was set out in regard to the methodological approaches to the topic of counter-terrorism. Following this, an in-depth overview of the mixed methodology undertaken for this project, as well as the specific methods utilised, were described in detail. Ultimately, Chapter 2 provided an important foundation to the remainder of the research, while also setting it within the existing field of counter-terrorism research.

Chapter 3 was the first of the two chapters which made up the first phase of the research. This chapter focused on hard data and trends found throughout the research for this thesis. It focused on three primary

themes which arose while exploring the various documentation: Legislation and the Criminal Justice Process; Events and the Threat Landscape; and Assessment and Oversight. Each of the three sections were explored both textually and numerically, although this chapter primarily relied on a qualitative approach. The data explored in this chapter included a large number of documents. A selection of these documents was explored through the CP to enable some in-depth insights and interlinked findings to be developed. This CP provided the foundation for the data explored more broadly throughout this chapter. Other data sources included the GTD, media sources and statistical documents made available by the Government.

Chapter 4 focused on perspectives to bolster the data and the findings of Chapter 3. This was based on the idea that hard data could only tell us so much, but the impact of counter-terrorism strategies could also be found in the views of two groups in particular: the public and the counter-terrorism practitioners. One group has no expertise in the area of counter-terrorism but is the intended target group (in terms of who CONTEST is aimed at protecting) while the other group has direct experience in counter-terrorism activities or in its analysis. By looking at both perspectives, building on the findings of Chapter 3, some interesting insights were gleaned. This presented a multi-dimensional view of the strategy where the public, practitioners and experts' views were all explored for one study, rather than the more usual study which tends to focus on one or the other. Some comparative analysis was facilitated by conducting this research in this way. In addition, the public views also went some way to providing insights into both critical voices and the voices of BAME communities who view CONTEST negatively. While the majority of the research was not focused on this group, it was deemed important to provide some reflection on the perspectives of this minority population in order to explore the counter-argument to the Government, practitioners and the wider public. These voices are important elements of a free and open society, holding the Government to account and pushing it to improve public strategies that are negatively impacting on certain members of the population. Future research could certainly build on what was explored here, providing more in-depth analysis on the contradictory narratives. Ultimately, not only did the differing perspectives offer a rounded view of the strategy but, building on the data findings of the previous chapter, they allowed for an in-depth study to be undertaken.

Chapter 5 presented the analytical tool which was developed to better analyse the impact of counter-terrorism. The ALTPEG Model combined the categorical findings of the previous two chapters with the analytical mechanism of scoring. However, the value of this Model is the ability to provide flexible analysis. Six categories were identified throughout the research of the project, and each of these categories in the Model was further broken down into a number of questions. Each of these questions can then be analysed across individual workstreams, individual categories, or aggregated combinations. Further, should the Model be applied to other counter-terrorism strategies in the future, an aggregated country score (for the counter-terrorism strategy) could be further analysed comparatively in an index.

The purview of this particular study prevented this level of analysis from being carried out at this time. However, as will be noted in the Future Research section below, important comparative analyses of counter-terrorism strategies could be an interesting research option for future studies.

In addition to the analytical options within the Model itself, a further flexible aspect is how the data feeding into the model is analysed by the researcher. The first option reflects what has been done in this thesis, where in-depth, multi-dimensional and structured research is undertaken, allowing the researcher themselves to answer the Model questions, ultimately populating the scoring mechanism. The challenges of this lie in the judgemental aspects inherent in a single researcher analysing the Model, but this can be somewhat offset through transparency of decision-making and by including robust analysis. Further discussion on subjectivity and bias is explored in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5. Alternatively, the second option allows for the Model framework to be presented in a survey format, and can be sent to a group, or multiple groups, for their responses<sup>145</sup>. As a concise and scaled survey, this would not be time intensive for respondents, but would be very impactful in terms of improved robustness of the findings. The challenge with this method would be that of any survey – ensuring the sample is suitably robust and ensuring that responses are received, with minimal gaps in data i.e. unanswered questions.

Overall, it is argued that the analysis undertaken throughout Chapters 3, 4 and 5 have facilitated the answering of the research questions, as set out in Chapter 1.

### 6.3 Research Questions

The research questions set out in Chapter 1 provided the underlying puzzle for the research conducted in this thesis. Below, the answers to those questions are explored. While the ‘responses’ are qualitative in nature, they rely on the complex mix of qualitative and quantitative data analysed throughout the research.

*Primary Question: Is CONTEST, as a counter-terrorism strategy, achieving its self-proclaimed goals<sup>146</sup> and are the various activities which sit under CONTEST improving through ongoing learning and oversight?*

There are two parts to this question. To answer the first element, the research has found that CONTEST has been somewhat effective in meeting its own goals. However, it would not be accurate to say that it

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<sup>145</sup>This could include government departments, parliamentary committees, policing agencies, think tank researchers, academics, industry representatives among others.

<sup>146</sup> The 2011 CONTEST publication is used as the source in terms of these goals. This is because much of this thesis analyses the period of time for which the 2011 publication was valid. The 2018 version, while considered to some extent in this thesis, was ultimately published too late in the research phase to be of significant analytical use. Further, as the 2018 version is currently in effect, it is more difficult to assess progress towards goals.

has achieved, or is achieving, all of its goals. This question is very important in terms of impact, a central issue to the research. This question is assisted by the outlining of clear goals, objectives and measures of success in the various CONTEST publications, particularly the 2011 publication of CONTEST which is relied on for the analysis in this thesis. However, these publications are notably biased, combining some limited data with sweeping interpretations of positive outcomes and achievements. Most of the data supporting these views are inaccessible to the public and the conclusions of these documents therefore present as grandstanding. It falls to other entities to understand whether the goals are being achieved. This is what this thesis sought to do. The fact that there is a mixed answer to this question should not come as a surprise, and it is argued that the value is less in the finding of one answer or the other (yes it is achieving its goals or no it is not) but rather in how the research carried out can highlight what is working or not working at various times. It might be more satisfying to have a definitive answer, but the complex answer provided here indicates better guidance towards improvement. When looking at the research carried out for this thesis, it becomes clear that all of the goals were somewhat met. Access to additional data, unavailable for this research project, would further improve the understanding in regard to this question.

The second part of the question relates to ‘ongoing learning and oversight’. Unfortunately, there is not a stationary goal against which to measure the improvement of a counter-terrorism activity, and as terrorist activity does not have an end point, it is not truly possible to say that counter-terrorism strategies have achieved success. However, this black and white view of success and failure is not necessary for a counter-terrorism strategy to be performing well or have an impact. Looking for a definitive answer to the question is pointless and not an effective use of researchers’ time. Rather, looking to see if the strategy is adapting, is stopping terrorist attacks, is understanding what went wrong when attacks do happen, is addressing the issues and is open to criticism and willing to change are all indications that a strategy is working. The findings of this thesis conclude that CONTEST is learning, albeit its workstreams are learning at different rates. Prevent, for example, experienced significant issues following its launch in 2011. One of these was the police force taking the lead, which seemed to criminalise those who were vulnerable to radicalisation before they had even engaged in terrorist activity. Another issue was the poor training and communication of what a vulnerable person might do or be like, resulting in significant numbers of ineligible referrals to the Channel programme, highlighted almost gleefully by the media. But while the media, and those who consider CONTEST, and Prevent in particular, to be failed strategies, vilified the entire process as a result of these early issues, reality shows us that improvements have been made over time. The police are no longer the lead in terms of Prevent, but work in support of Local Authorities and free online training courses have helped people improve identification of vulnerable people. At the same time, issues remain within the Prevent workstream, and challenges will continue to be faced by those working within the programme as well as by the individuals, families and communities who consider themselves as being targeted and

criminalised. This example nonetheless shows that Prevent has not been a stagnant strategy but has learned from issues and is working towards improved impact. Combined with the establishment of the Commission for Countering Extremism, as well as the Independent Review of Prevent, there is a clear indication that improvements are being made.

*Methodological Question: Does a mixed methods research design provide a superior<sup>147</sup> analytical framework for understanding counter-terrorism activities and impacts?*

It may seem like an obvious answer, given the findings of the thesis presented to this point, but the answer to this question is yes. It has been found that only through the application of mixed methods can a deep understanding of counter-terrorism strategies truly be gained. This is not to say that single method research projects cannot contribute to the field of counter-terrorism. However, only part of the picture can be revealed by this more traditional methodology. With the intense interconnection of the multifarious elements of counter-terrorism strategies, a likewise complex research design is needed. For instance, carrying out textual analysis will certainly provide useful insights, but will lack the scientific robustness and the potential for statistical analysis of quantitative research methods. On the other hand, only looking at statistics and numbers will undoubtedly lose the contextual aspects which are essential for fully understanding the data.

One of the most innovative elements of this research has been the incorporation of an analytical tool to measure counter-terrorism strategies' performance. Building on the mixed methods research of Chapters 3 and 4, the ALTPEG Model provides the opportunity to explore the data and themes in a more systematic way. By applying a scoring mechanism to the Model, a clearer understanding of the data of the first phase of the research can be reached. While the numerical findings of the Model could be regarded as the subjective views of a single researcher, the transparency of justification for the judgements made, as well as the informed basis for such judgements, somewhat offset's this issue. Additionally, the Model provides a solid basis for ongoing research through a survey methodology which would further strengthen the findings of the research and address the issue of subjectivity.

The development of the ALTPEG Model has, through the facilitation of systematic analysis, gone some way to address the methodological lacuna in the field of counter-terrorism. By providing a multi-level analysis framework, organised by thematic category and further analysed through the Red-Amber-Green analytical system, this thesis has gone further than other studies hoping to assess counter-terrorism strategies. In light, therefore, of the multi-method and multi-dimensional framework of this

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<sup>147</sup> As a reminder, superior in this case means "...of higher rank, quality or importance ... excellent of its kind: BETTER" (Merriam-Webster). Superior is therefore taken to be the appropriate term to convey the idea that mixed methods research provides a higher quality and better analysis to that of single method research.

research, this thesis has argued that a superior analytical framework has indeed been developed. Not only does it allow for the systematic answering of the research questions outlined at the outset of this project, but it provides added depth of understanding on the topic. Of course, while declaring the mixed methods research design as the most useful to apply to counter-terrorism activities, it is not without its challenges. Some of the more significant examples of these will now be discussed below.

*Supplemental Questions:*

*Is there support, both public and practitioner, for the activities of CONTEST?*

On one hand, this is an easier question to answer than the previous questions, but on the other it remains complex. In short, this research has indicated that yes, there is overall support for activities under CONTEST, both among the public and among practitioners. However, this support is not universal, over time and space, and is impacted significantly by terrorist activity both at home in the UK and abroad. The most steadfast support is among the practitioners and experts interviewed for this project. These individuals were interviewed during a time of heightened terrorist activity, but while some answers might in hindsight change in light of that activity, on the whole there was an acknowledgement that aspects of CONTEST worked well, and those that did not work as well were being improved. In regard to the public, the opinion polls reviewed for this project indicated general and ongoing support for the strategy (or the aspects of the strategy reflected in the poll questions), while in the aftermath of events, stricter measures were supported and it seemed that the public did not believe the strategy, or associated legislation, went far enough. It is nonetheless to the credit of the Government and strategy/policy makers that, according to the research conducted for this thesis, little or no ‘knee jerk reaction’ to events takes place (see Chapter 3, section 3.2). The implementation of activities and legislation seems measured and reasonable, even if the public wants more hard-line actions and responses. Nonetheless, these polls alone do not reflect all aspects of the population (despite the fact that this is their intention through sampling) and there are certain communities which have consistently negative views of the strategy. Indeed, one of the interviewees expressed support for the security services while clearly considering Prevent as needing a complete overhaul. Critics of CONTEST, also members of the public, do not believe that legislation is appropriate and consider that elements of the Strategy criminalise certain groups within the wider population. Some of these views have been explored throughout Chapter 4 and are also reflected in the scoring of the ALTPEG Model. It therefore needs to be acknowledged that the public, as well as experts, have differing views on CONTEST. While these voices are important and are needed for the improvement of such an important, emotive and challenging aspect to counter-terrorism, the overall view of the perspectives explored in this thesis was supportive of the strategy.

*In terms of the expectations of a population of a liberal democracy, can fundamental principles of transparency and ongoing assessment be observed throughout CONTEST?*

‘Transparency and ongoing assessment’ can certainly be observed throughout the research conducted for this thesis. There is no room for ambiguity that the presence of these two important elements is prevalent throughout the strategy. By saying this, it is not suggested that there is perfect transparency, or that the assessment regimen is ideal. Indeed, this is far from the case. However, it must be considered, if perfection is sought, why this is the case for counter-terrorism when this expectation is not present for other public policy strategies. In the end, are not all public policy strategies somewhat flawed? No doubt, the high stakes involved in counter-terrorism results in this idea that perfection is needed in order to keep the population safe. Yet rationality should prevail when considering the reality of what can be achieved in terms of counter-terrorism activities. Even the strategy documents themselves consciously apply the word ‘reduce’ rather than ‘eliminate’ or ‘defeat’ terrorism.

While a reasonable level of transparency was identified throughout this project, improvement is needed. On some level, the concept of classified information can be understood and respected. Yet it seems to this researcher that ways could be developed in which additional information considered to be classified could be released to researchers for year-on-year analytical purposes. The nuance need not be provided. Perhaps even more importantly, consistency in terminology within the documentation of different agencies (such as definitions, titles, structural elements etc) and increased availability of non-classified information should be facilitated, both for the sake of researchers and those individuals and agencies working in the field. This arises from the observations noted in this thesis regarding multiple entities carrying out a range of assessment activities which are not easily searchable. The fact that so many entities are involved in the various counter-terrorism processes has led to chaotic records, particularly in the areas of Protect and Prepare. A central repository would be immensely useful in addressing this and improving the transparency of the strategy. Despite these challenges and flaws, transparency in the UK has improved and documents such as the newly published Transparency Reports on Disruptive Powers go some way to providing open-access data.

In terms of assessment, this is definitely present although again, consistency across agencies and activities is lacking and in need of improvement. The research showed that a combination of ‘in-house’ assessment (as noted by interviewees and the Home Office response to the FOI request, presented in Appendix A), parliamentary oversight and independent review takes place regularly, and shows a serious approach is taken to assessment and lessons are identified. When looking at post-event reviews, statistical bulletins, annual reports and ad-hoc issue-specific reports, a clear pattern of ongoing assessment and improvement was sketched out. Whether these are acted on is less clear.

## 6.4 Limitations of the Research

There were a number of challenges throughout the research. These are important to note as they provide context and understanding of the findings made. Here, four of these issues are focused on.

The scope of the project was ambitious, and a conscious decision was made to explore all four workstreams of CONTEST as opposed to a single one, or even a comparison of two. This was important to the foundation of this project, where it was intended to understand CONTEST broadly as well as in-depth. The interactions between these workstreams are not usually explored, and this multi-dimensional approach meant that a new perspective could be taken on the topic. Yet, while these positives were significant, they were counterbalanced somewhat by the challenges inherent in looking at the entirety of CONTEST as a solo researcher and within the time constraints of a PhD thesis. For this reason, this project was always intended to be an important first step towards ongoing research, and therefore, the decisions that needed to be made with regard to this thesis were deemed appropriate and worth making.

Additionally, while the thesis focused predominantly on open-access data as well as interviews designed specifically for this project, this was always going to have a profound impact on how the research could move forward. It was expected that this would restrict the scope of the research and, on one level, it did. It became apparent that much data exists beyond the access of the public, certainly in terms of intelligence operations and internal assessment processes. However, what was not anticipated was the vastness of publicly available data. There is a significant amount of data available to researchers, should they choose to look. The biggest issue is therefore not the availability of data, but rather the disorganisation of its existence and the challenges of finding and analysing it (particularly in terms of time and resource constraints). More information is available within open-access documents than had been expected, and this resulted in some difficult culling regarding documents to carry forward in analysis. So, while it was expected that this limitation on access to information would be impactful, it was not necessarily impactful only in the way originally imagined.

A brief but important point to make is in regard to the presence in this project of critical and BAME voices. As the research aimed to focus on official publications, both governmental and independent, and with various time and space constraints on the project, only brief considerations are given to these groups. Particularly present throughout Chapter 4 and certainly reflected in the scoring of the ALTPEG Model, these perspectives were nonetheless problematic in terms of the goals of the research. Largely based on limited or no data, the views, while legitimate, have been problematised by inaccurate reporting, scare-mongering and, especially in terms of the media, sensationalism. Empirically studying these views therefore proved challenging. Instead, a reflection on some of the reports and commentaries

put forward by entities such as MEND, CAGE, Liberty and some academics was considered and explored in a basic way throughout the thesis. The rather minimalist approach to these views is not intended to undermine their importance and relevance to the understanding of CONTEST as a complex strategy, but rather was a result of the robustness of data and accessibility of those views.

The final limitation of particular note for this thesis relates to the subjective nature of the analytical tool. It was initially hoped that a statistically robust analytical tool could be developed through which to measure the impact, or effectiveness, of counter-terrorism strategies. This goal proved challenging for reasons already outlined throughout the thesis, but in particular as a result of challenging access to quantifiable data. With a reliance on open-access data, as well as changes in reporting over time and the broad spread of agencies and entities involved in the counter-terrorism landscape, this particular project was not in a position to present such a tool. Nonetheless, a first and important step was taken into the development of such a tool, and the ALTPEG Model provides solid insights into counter-terrorism as well as a sound basis for future research. The nature of this project, as a solo venture, resulted in necessary limitations on some of the data exploration, and therefore the application of scoring for the Model was based on this researcher's insights alone. However, both of these connected challenges could be addressed with greater collaboration with the Government and various entities involved in counter-terrorism, as well as the employment of a research team. These adjustments would undoubtedly address this limitation for a future project.

## **6.5 Opportunities for Future Research**

With the nature of this project being innovative and addressing a pressing need to build systematic and original studies into counter-terrorism strategies, it was clear from the outset that all of the findings or potential findings could not be fully explored or resolved here. Instead, it was anticipated that this project would provide a springboard for future research, while at the same time developing a robust stand-alone piece of academic research which contributed to the field. In the view of this researcher, it has achieved that. Throughout the thesis, references have been made to research which was restricted by the purview of this thesis but which could contribute immensely to the field should it be carried forward in the future. Here, these opportunities for future research projects are highlighted in the hope that this study inspires others to engage energetically and innovatively in the opportunities raised throughout this thesis.

A large number of documents were collected in the early phase of this project, and indeed, these documents were further built on as time passed. At the time of coding the data in the CP, over a thousand documents had been collected, with over 400 deemed to be particularly relevant to the project in

addition to the selected. Future research would benefit from exploring these additional documents to provide further depth of understanding of counter-terrorism in the UK. Given the time taken to code and analyse all of these documents, additional researchers would be needed to complete the task in a reasonable timeframe.

The extensive number of documents which were located throughout the research (for both the CP and beyond), resulted in difficult decisions having to be made on what to include. Additionally, connecting with industry representatives and other entities such as the emergency services might provide additional data and assessment details which would greatly benefit research into this topic. Future research involving a deeper dive into the counter-terrorism activities at a practical level would potentially provide different insights through the Model.

Research into the various recommendations made, as well as the actions taken as a result of these recommendations, would be an incredibly important area to research in the future. While the scope and remit of this thesis did not allow for in-depth analysis of the recommendations and their status, it was clear that additional and important insights would be revealed through this research and would make a significant contribution to our understanding of counter-terrorism strategies and should be considered for future research.

Difficult decisions needed to be made in terms of analysing the goals of CONTEST (see Chapter 5). However, deeper analysis into the different levels of goals, objectives and measures of success across the various versions of CONTEST would certainly add to the literature and build on the knowledge base developed for this research project. Through the focused exploration of objectives and measures of success, concepts such as success and failure could be further explored and would have a positive impact on both the field of counter-terrorism and the policy world which engages the strategy.

Future research could also build on the findings of this research, further considering the voices of critics of the Strategy, including BAME communities and deepening the multi-dimensional approach presented in the research carried out for this thesis. While the focus of this project limited this exploration here, the findings presented here can provide a springboard for future engagement with critics.

Finally, the very nature of the ALTPEG Model ensures that it is designed to provide the foundation for ongoing research. Whether this is through applying the Model as a survey (and building upon the observations of this research) or carrying out analysis on other counter-terrorism strategies in order to engage in comparative studies, additional insights can only improve the knowledge base of the field in terms of counter-terrorism strategy impact, efficacy, or success. Additionally, through exploring additional counter-terrorism strategies based on the structure of the ALTPEG Model developed here,

the scope for statistical analysis improves, and the development of a composite indicator could be built upon the foundation of this more basic, but nonetheless important, quantitative tool.

## **6.6 Concluding Statement**

This thesis has succeeded in contributing to the field of counter-terrorism by filling a significant gap in terms of methodology and subject matter in particular. Looking at CONTEST through mixed methods, and across all workstreams, has been a challenging but rewarding endeavour. Not only has a greater understanding of CONTEST been presented, but an analytical model has also been developed, demonstrating that a robust assessment can be carried out on counter-terrorism strategies through systematic research and empirical findings.

The literature review conducted at the outset of this thesis demonstrated a field that was lacking in innovation in terms of methodology and type of research. The field was dominated with studies based on secondary sources which contributed to some extent to our understanding of counter-terrorism but made little headway in terms of robust and original data analysis. The paucity of innovation and diversity of research had resulted in a field that was floundering to establish clear and systematic assessments of what counter-terrorism strategies have achieved in the fight against terrorism. In more recent years, some steps have been taken to address this issue, but this thesis in particular stands out as a complex analysis of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy over an extended period of time. By looking at legislation, the criminal justice system, events and other terrorist activities and assessments and reviews a true multi-dimensional project has been presented. To this researcher's understanding, no other study of this scale and depth has been carried out on CONTEST at the time of writing.

This project intended to present clear and informed findings in a standalone way. It is argued that this has been done, and some of the background rationale and data have been presented in various appendices throughout this thesis. However, it was also intended to act as a stepping-stone to future research on counter-terrorism, both within the UK and around the globe. Assessing counter-terrorism strategies need no longer start at the beginning but, instead, has a strong foundation from which to develop deeper and more generalised research. Approaching the Government, for example, with this project completed should encourage further cooperation and potential sharing of data, especially given the interest already expressed in this project.

In particular, the following conclusions have been made:

With a particular focus on CONTEST, this research has found that the strategy is robust, well-developed and fit for purpose across all four workstreams. While Prevent is undoubtedly the most controversial

workstream, this thesis has found that the strategy continues to be developed and has made significant adjustments since it was first put in place. The idea that it should be scrapped and a new strategy initiated is both problematic and lacking in evidence. Rather, the whole of CONTEST is so interconnected, that removing one major aspect to the strategy would undoubtedly have negative repercussions on the other workstreams, particularly Pursue. By looking at all four workstreams of CONTEST, it has become clear that they have developed in tandem with each other and, while flawed to some extent, each has an essential role to play in the overall success of the strategy. Additionally, appropriate levels of oversight are carried out, resulting in the establishment of two entities to further improve on this controversial limb: The Independent Prevent Review and the Commission for Countering Extremism. The establishment of these two entities is significant given that the Government is accused of not listening to those who have issues with Prevent. Further, the research for this thesis found that many of the negative perspectives of Pursue are based on failings identified when first implemented and which have since been somewhat addressed (or at least attempts have been made to address them) and are largely anecdotal. While these views should not be overlooked, and indeed they contribute to a necessary societal oversight mechanism, no empirical data was located to support these views. With this in mind, and based on the empirical insights developed throughout this thesis, the conclusion is that CONTEST, as a whole, is fit for purpose and is performing appropriately as a counter-terrorism strategy.

There is a significant amount of information on counter-terrorism which is available to the public, at least in terms of CONTEST. While the presentation of hard data can be challenging to locate, improvement over time has shown positive actions by the government and the various agencies involved in counter-terrorism activities. Both post-event analysis and ad-hoc reviews are generally presented in some form to the public, and public consultations are established for legislative changes. Significant information is contained on the GOV.uk website, although accessing this information can be challenging and at times frustrating. Additionally, the Parliament.uk website houses a plethora of research briefings on the topic of terrorism, as well as links to the various parliamentary committees which are involved in oversight of the topic. However, beyond these visible entities and their websites, the landscape becomes murkier. In particular, the activities of workstreams Prevent and Prepare generally fall outside of the centralised government purview, rendering data and information challenging to locate. Added to this issue is the range of reporting styles and methodologies of the various police forces throughout the country, often based on localised threat levels and urgency of methodological rigour in terms of counter-terrorism. Even when it comes to academic analysis, the challenge of such a complex strategy has an impact on ease of access to data and publications: a range of fields provide analysis on the subject including, but not limited to, the political and social sciences, international relations, criminology and psychology. All in all, a centralised repository on counter terrorism would enable much better analysis and understanding of the various mechanisms of the strategy for academics as well as policy makers. The lack of this, while far from unique, significantly

undermines the perception of CONTEST's performance as well as the potential impact of counter-terrorism research.

Finally, the mixed method nature of this thesis has provided insights which a single-method analysis could not. Not only was the research multi-dimensional through the exploration of data (numerical and textual), trends over time and perspectives, but it deepened the analytical weight of this understanding through the development of a foundational model for further exploring counter-terrorism strategies. This truly multi-dimensional model has provided insights which had not been located in the literature review carried out for this project and is a step towards the development of a statistically robust model for even deeper insights into the impact of counter-terrorism strategies. Further, this Model allows for multi-level analysis and flexibility regarding the strategy being studied, with the expectation that it would be applicable to counter-terrorism strategies more broadly. This research output has not been achieved to date and provides a formidable contribution to the field of counter-terrorism research.

On the whole, this project has shed light on the interaction of the various component parts of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, showing the value that a mixed methods research design can provide to the field of counter-terrorism. It has further provided a multi-method and multi-level analysis of one of the world's most influential counter-terrorism strategies, showing it to be a strategy that is ultimately achieving its goals, in part if not in the whole. Despite its flaws, it is learning and evolving and therefore adjusting to the complex terrorism landscape as it develops and poses new and evolving threats and challenges. CONTEST will never be fully supported by the entire UK population (as no other counter-terrorism strategy will be supported) in light of the complex nature of the problems it seeks to address. However, in terms of a democratic society's expectation of a strategy that is protecting the public, CONTEST works appropriately within its purview and is undoubtedly, according to the findings of this thesis, fit for purpose.

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## Appendix A:

### Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests and Responses

#### 1. Metropolitan Police

Email response received from the Metropolitan Police, 18 February 2020

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**Official Sensitive**

Our Ref: 01/FOI/20/013107

Date: 18/02/2020

Dear Ms Brady

**Freedom of Information Request Reference No: 01/FOI/20/013107**

I write in connection with your request for information which was received by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on 18/01/2020. I note you seek access to the following information:

*I am completing a PhD in the University of St Andrews, looking specifically at CONTEST. I am not sure if this is the correct email address to connect to, but hopefully you may be able to direct me to the correct contact if I have emailed you erroneously.*

*I am currently looking at building a 'composite indicator' (or Index) on counter-terrorism impact, the second part of this thesis. In regard to Prepare, I hoped to gather some data on the impact of terrorist events, particularly the immediate aftermath. Examples of useful data would be*

- *Number of days a police cordon was in place*
- *Number of additional police officers on duty following an attack, and for how long*
- *Any publicly available policing costs following a terrorist attack/following the arrest of terrorism suspects (foiled plot context)*

*Some of this information is available in the media, but not consistently, and I was hoping it might be possible for Counter Terrorism Police to send me any of the above data? Any assistance or guidance would be greatly appreciated, and should you have any follow up questions, or need clarification, I would be happy to discuss further. .*

## **SEARCHES TO LOCATE INFORMATION**

To locate the information relevant to your request searches were conducted at the Counter Terrorism Policing HQ. The searches failed to locate any information relevant to your request, therefore, the information you have requested is not held by the MPS.

In an effort to assist you with your enquiries, I have been advised that the Home Office may hold information relevant to your request. Please find below details of how to submit a freedom of information request to this Government department.

Post

Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

### **Email**

[foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk)

In addition, you may find the following links of use:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/london-prepared/planning-emergencies-capital>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergency-response-and-recovery>

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter, please contact me via email at [Charmine.Gayle-Petrou@met.police.uk](mailto:Charmine.Gayle-Petrou@met.police.uk), quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

**C. Gayle-Petrou**  
**Information Manager**

## **COMPLAINT RIGHTS**

**Are you unhappy with how your request has been handled or do you think the decision is incorrect?**

You have the right to require the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to review their decision.

Prior to lodging a formal complaint we invite you to email any queries to the case officer who dealt with your request.

### **Complaint**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of the MPS made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information you can lodge a complaint with the MPS to have the decision reviewed.

Complaints should be made in writing, within forty (40) working days from the date of the refusal notice, and addressed to:

FOI Complaint  
Information Rights Unit  
PO Box 57192  
London  
SW6 1SF  
foi@met.police.uk

In all possible circumstances the MPS will aim to respond to your complaint within 20 working days.

### **The Information Commissioner**

After lodging a complaint with the MPS if you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk). Alternatively, write to or phone:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Phone: 0303 123 1113

## 2. Home Office

### 2.1 Email sent to the Home Office, 22 May 2019

#### FoI Case Ref 53813 - (Erika Brady) - Acknowledgment

**From:** Erika Brady [<mailto:eb242@st-andrews.ac.uk>]  
**Sent:** 22 May 2019 11:40  
**To:** Public Enquiries (CD)  
**Subject:** FOI Request

Hello,

I am carrying out PhD research on the efficacy and impact of CONTEST. In the most recent publication of June 2018, CONTEST says the following:

*"We have developed a performance framework that draws together, the range of evidence used across government to monitor delivery, and evaluate success, of the UK's overseas and domestic counter-terrorism response."* (pg 87)

I would like to request access to this 'performance framework'. If sensitive information is contained within, I am happy to received parts of this performance framework which will not have an impact on national security. I intend to use this information within a performance index which I am about to develop in order to assess CONTEST's impact. To do this effectively, the 'performance framework' referred to in CONTEST 2018 will be incredibly helpful in designing actual and useful categories for analysis.

I greatly appreciate your time and assistance.

Kind regards,

*Erika Brady, BA, MA, MIA (Dip. Journalism)*  
Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence  
School of International Relations  
University of St Andrews, UK

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## 2.2 Email response from the Home Office regarding extension, 12 June 2019

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Home Office  
2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF  
[FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk)  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Erika Brady  
eb242@st-andrews.ac.uk

FOI: 53813  
12 June 2019

Dear Ms Brady,

Thank you for your e-mail request of 22 May 2019, in which you specifically request -

- 1) *access to the 'performance framework' mentioned in the CONTEST publication of 2018.*

Your request is being handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

We are considering your request. Although the Act carries a presumption in favour of disclosure, it provides exemptions which may be used to withhold information in specified circumstances. Some of these exemptions, referred to as 'qualified exemptions', are subject to a public interest test. This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information. The Act allows us to extend the 20-working day response target where we need to consider the public interest test fully.

The information which you have requested is being considered under the exemptions at **Section 24 National Security** of the Act. These are qualified exemptions and to consider the public interest test fully, we need to extend the 20-working day response deadline.

We therefore, aim to provide a response on or before 18 July 2019.

Freedom of Information  
Home Office

## 2.3 Email response from the Home Office, 24 July 2019



Home Office

Home Office  
2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF  
[FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk)  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Erika Brady  
[eb242@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:eb242@st-andrews.ac.uk)

FOI: 53813  
24 July 2019

Dear Ms. Brady,

Thank you for your request for access to the CONTEST Performance Framework. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I can confirm that the Home Office holds the information that you requested about the CONTEST Performance Framework. However, after careful consideration we have decided that some of this information is exempt from disclosure. In the circumstances of this case it is not appropriate to provide any information that would undermine national security or reveal the extent of any involvement of the security bodies listed in section 23(3) of the FOIA. We are therefore applying sections 23(1) (information supplied by or relating to security bodies) and section 24(1) (national security) in the alternative. This means that only one of the two exemptions is engaged, but it is not appropriate to say which one.

Section 24(1) is a qualified exemption, which means that the balance of the public interest in applying it must be considered. Arguments for and against disclosure, in terms of the public interest and in relation to section 24(1), if it were to apply, are set out in Annex A. Section 23(1) is an absolute exemption and no public interest test is required, but in citing both exemptions we are required to say how it could be engaged.

I can share some of the broad principles (see attached Annex B outlining the CONTEST performance model).

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to [foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk), quoting reference 53813. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request would be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you were to remain dissatisfied after an internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the FOIA.



Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information  
Home Office

## **Annex A**

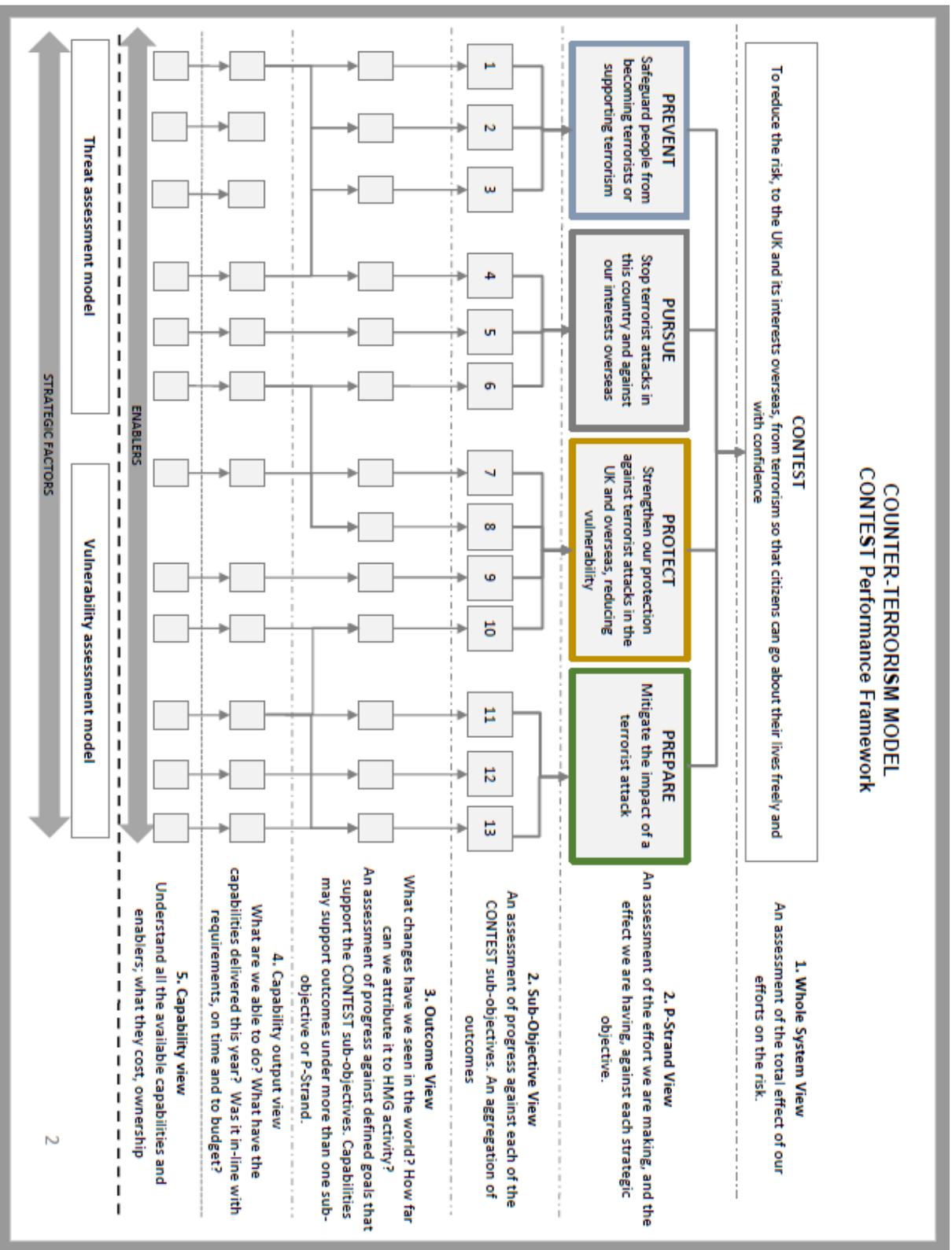
### **Section 23/24 in the alternative**

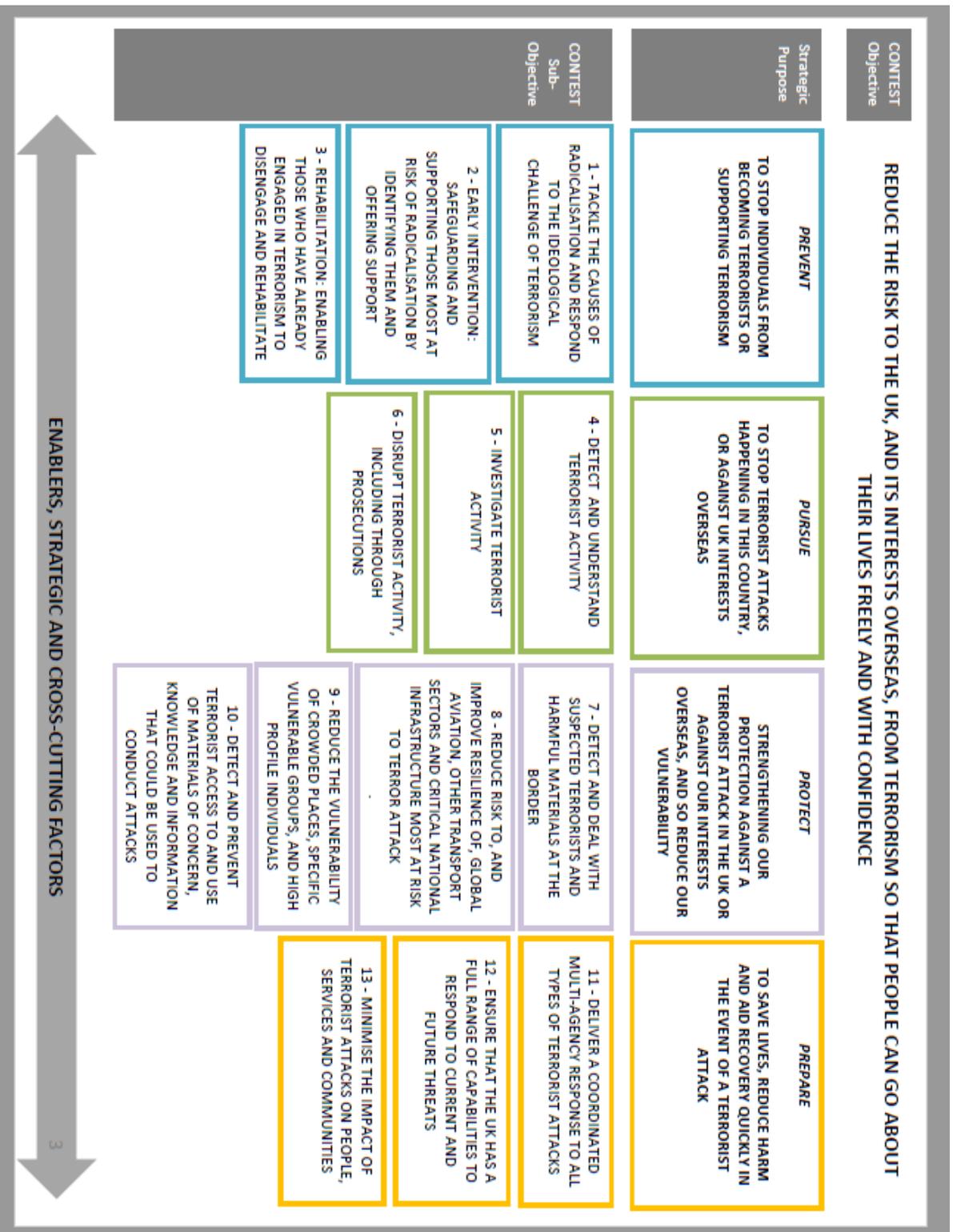
This response does not confirm which of the two exemptions is engaged and, to the extent to which section 24(1) could be engaged we are not obliged to give any further explanation by virtue of section 17(4), because to do so would involve the disclosure of information which would itself be exempt.

The balance of public interest in releasing or withholding this information, in terms of section 24(1), has been considered. Taking into account all the circumstances of this case we have determined that any disclosure that would prejudice national security would be contrary to the public interest.

CT Model -  
CONTEST Performance Framework

## COUNTER-TERRORISM MODEL CONTEST Performance Framework





The model describes how the UK's counter-terrorism capabilities come together to deliver the overarching CONTEST Strategy. The CONTEST Strategy itself defines the overarching objectives, four strands of work (the four 'P's) and thirteen sub-objectives. Below this we have a capability view, an output view and an outcome view. The framework captures a range of data, evidence and information on all views. This has allowed us to develop a method to assess performance at each step in the theory of change from monitoring delivery to assessing outcomes and objectives of CONTEST.

Your PhD research on the efficacy and impact of CONTEST sounds extremely interesting. We are always keen to learn from academic approaches and insight and would welcome an update on your work. If you would welcome a further discussion, please contact [foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk), quoting reference [53813].

# Appendix B:

## Supporting Interview Material

### 1. Interview Questions

**Section 1 (15 questions): I will first ask you some base-line questions, to get an idea for what you do, or did, in connection with CONTEST:**

1. Do you, or have you in the past, worked in the area of counter-terrorism? [CLOSED]
2. How long have you worked/did you work in the area of counter-terrorism? [CLOSED]
3. Describe your work in the area of counter-terrorism? [OPEN]
4. What Limbs of CONTEST do you/did you work most under? [OPEN]
5. What do you know about CONTEST as a broad strategy? [OPEN]
6. What are some of the counter-terrorism policies you are aware of? [OPEN]
7. What do you know about specific elements of CONTEST as they pertain to your area [OPEN]
8. Do you, or did you, work across teams, departments and organisations [CLOSED]
  - a. If yes, who did you interact with – individuals , departments etc [OPEN]
9. Describe your interactions with other teams, departments or organisations. [OPEN]
10. How have terrorist activities changed over the past ten years? [OPEN]
11. How have counter-terrorist measures changed over the past ten years? [OPEN]
12. In your opinion, what failures enabled the attacks of 7 July 2005 to take place? [OPEN]
13. Do you consider that these issues have been addressed? [CLOSED]
14. If no, do you think they are in the process of being addressed? [CLOSED]
15. Can you elaborate on this? [OPEN]

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**Section 2 (30 questions): My next set of questions will address your impression, both professional and personal, of CONTEST as a strategy as well as its various policies and programmes.**

16. What does 'success' mean to you (in terms of [CT] policy)? [OPEN]
17. What does 'failure' mean to you (in terms of [CT] policy)? [OPEN]
18. Do you consider CONTEST, as a strategy, to be a success? [CLOSED]
19. Do you consider any particular policy within CONTEST to be a success? [CLOSED]
20. What is that policy and what indicates its success to you? [OPEN]
21. Do you consider any particular policy within CONTEST to be a failure? [CLOSED]
22. What is this policy and what indicates its failure to you? [OPEN]
23. Has CONTEST had an impact on terrorist activity in the UK? [CLOSED]
24. Can you expand on that? [OPEN]
25. What, in your opinion, are the indicators of a successful policy? [OPEN]
26. Do you consider that the government has achieved its goal of reducing the "risk to the UK and our interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence"? [CLOSED]

27. Can you elaborate on that? [OPEN]
28. Can you give me an example of a counter-terrorism policy, measure or programme which you consider to have had an impact on terrorist activity in the UK? [OPEN]
29. What was in place before this policy was implemented? [OPEN]
30. There have been relatively few ‘successful’ terrorist events in the UK since July 2005. Without this as a measure, are there any other metrics which would enable evaluation of CONTEST or elements of CONTEST to take place? [CLOSED]
31. What would these metrics be? [OPEN]
  
32. Do you consider the impact of an *international* terrorist event, such as the attacks in Paris or in Brussels, results in a change in government policy? [CLOSED]
33. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
34. Do you think these attacks resulted in a change in the public's perception of terrorism, and therefore its willingness to accept changes in counter-terrorism policies and measures? [CLOSED]
35. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
  
36. Do you consider the impact of an *international* terrorist event, such as the attacks in Sousse or Istanbul, results in a change in government policy? [CLOSED]
37. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
38. Do you think these attacks resulted in a change in the public's perception of terrorism, and therefore its willingness to accept changes in counter-terrorism policies and measures? [CLOSED]
39. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
  
40. What has been the most significant change in counter-terrorism policy in the UK since 2004? [OPEN]
41. What has been the most significant change in counter-terrorism practice in the UK since 2004? [OPEN]
42. In your opinion, what event has been the most impactful in motivating change in counter-terrorism? [OPEN]
43. What is the biggest terrorist threat to the UK? [OPEN]
44. Do you think that the UK counter-terrorism strategy appropriately deals or has dealt with that terrorist threat? [CLOSED]
45. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
46. Do you think that international terrorism (crossing borders) or homegrown terrorism has a bigger impact on the terrorist threat to the UK? [CLOSED]
47. Can you expand on that? [OPEN]

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**Section 3 (24 – 31 questions): This next section will consider the evaluation of CONTEST. You may answer these questions to the best of your ability.**

48. Do you consider that there is a robust and/or formal evaluation system in place for counter-terrorism policies in your field? [CLOSED]
  - a. If yes: are you involved in the process in any way? [CLOSED]
    - i. Can you explain your role in this evaluation? [OPEN]
    - ii. Is the evaluation empirical, to the best of your knowledge? [CLOSED]
    - iii. Are flagged issues actioned and followed up on? [CLOSED]

- iv. Who receives the evaluation? [OPEN]
  - v. How regularly are they conducted? [OPEN]
  - vi. What happens in the evaluation process? [OPEN]
  - vii. Would you say that these evaluations are fair/unbiased/accurate/actionable?  
[CLOSED]
- b. If no: Would it be conceivably possible to apply an evaluation process in your field?  
[Closed]
    - i. Do you believe the support would be there for an evaluation to be performed?  
[CLOSED]
    - ii. Is there a reason/are there reasons why an evaluation has not been conducted?  
[OPEN]
49. Who in your opinion should carry out policy and programme evaluations? [OPEN]
50. Consider a counter-terrorism policy/programme you are familiar with. In what way(s) could this policy be improved? [OPEN]
51. What are the anticipated outcomes of this policy/programme? [OPEN]
52. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this policy/programme? [OPEN]
53. Have there been any intended or unintended secondary effects of this policy/programme (either positive or negative)? [CLOSED]
54. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
55. Does this policy/programme possess an inbuilt capacity/mechanism for evaluation?  
[CLOSED]
- a. If yes: Can you tell me more? [OPEN]
  - b. If no: Is an evaluation mechanism in the process of being developed? [CLOSED]
  - c. If no: Are evaluations conducted by an external body? [CLOSED]
56. If the policy/programme does not have a formal evaluation in place, does it have benchmarks to assess whether or not it is accomplishing its targets? [CLOSED]
57. If yes, what are these benchmarks? [OPEN]
58. What does the public do differently as a result of the policy/programme? [OPEN]
59. What does your department/organisation/team do differently as a result of the policy/programme? [OPEN]
60. What do terrorists or terrorist organisations do differently as a result of the policy/programme? [OPEN]
61. Who benefits from the policy/programme? [OPEN]
62. How do they benefit from the policy/programme? [OPEN]
63. What resources are provided to the policy/programme? [OPEN]
64. In your opinion, are the policy/programme's accomplishments worth the resources invested?  
[OPEN]
65. What are the impacts, both positive and negative, on people and communities as a result of the policy? [OPEN]
66. What are the impacts on terrorists and terrorist groups? [OPEN]
67. Which specific activities contribute most to achieving the goals of CONTEST? [OPEN]
68. How well does the policy/programme respond to the initiating need? [OPEN]
69. How effectively are team/department/organisation resources being used? [OPEN]
70. What in the socio-economic-political environment inhibits the policy/programme's success/failure? [OPEN]
71. What in the socio-economic-political environment contributes to the policy/programme's success/failure? [OPEN]

**If there is time at the end of the interview:**

1. Having answered the questions above, do you still consider the government has [or has not] achieved its goal of reducing the "risk to the UK and our interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence"? [CLOSED]
2. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
3. In an ideal world, what would the best counter-terrorism strategy look like? [OPEN]
4. Do you think that the UK's counter-terrorism strategy has had an impact overseas, either in regard to another state's counter-terrorism strategy and/or in regard to reducing the impact of terrorism extra-territorially? [CLOSED]
5. Can you elaborate?
6. Do you think that other countries' counter-terrorism strategies have impacted CONTEST and its development? [CLOSED]
7. Can you elaborate? [OPEN]
8. Do you have anything further you would like to add?
9. Do you have any questions for me?

## **2. Role Classifications for Interviewees**

P1: Legal

P2: Policing

P3: Policing

P4: Policing

P5: MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, Mayor of London)

P6: Legal

P7: Think Tank

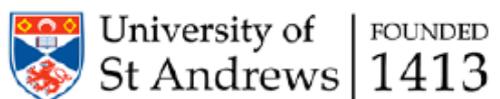
P8: Local Authority

P9: Policing, Retired

P10: Government Policy, Academia

P11: Aviation Industry

### 3. Ethics Committee Approval Letter



#### University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee

16 December 2016

Dear Erika Brady

Thank you for submitting your ethical application which was considered at the IR School Ethics Committee meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December when the following documents were reviewed:

1. Ethical Application Form
2. Participant Information Sheet
3. Debriefing Form
4. Consent Form

The IR School Ethics Committee has been delegated to act on behalf of the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) and has granted this application ethical approval. The particulars relating to the approved project are as follows -

Approval Code:	IR12511	Approved on:	16.12.16	Approval Expiry:	16.12.21
Project Title:	Evaluating the UK's Counter-Terrorism Policies Using a Mixed Methods Approach				
Researcher(s):	Erika Brady				
Supervisor(s):	Dr Peter Lehr/Dr Bernhard Blumenau				

Approval is awarded for five years. Projects which have not commenced within two years of approval must be re-submitted for review by your School Ethics Committee. If you are unable to complete your research within the five year approval period, you are required to write to your School Ethics Committee Convener to request a discretionary extension of no greater than 6 months or to re-apply if directed to do so, and you should inform your School Ethics Committee when your project reaches completion.

If you make any changes to the project outlined in your approved ethical application form, you should inform your supervisor and seek advice on the ethical implications of those changes from the School Ethics Convener who may advise you to complete and submit an ethical amendment form for review.

Any adverse incident which occurs during the course of conducting your research must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee who will advise you on the appropriate action to be taken.

Approval is given on the understanding that you conduct your research as outlined in your application and in compliance with UTREC Guidelines and Policies ( <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/utrec/guidelinespolicies/> ). You are also advised to ensure that you procure and handle your research data within the provisions of the Data Provision Act 1998 and in accordance with any conditions of funding incumbent upon you.

Yours sincerely

Convener of the School Ethics Committee

cc Supervisor

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School of IR Ethics Committee  
irethics@st-andrews.ac.uk

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## **Appendix C:**

### **Coding Project (CP): Additional Information and Data**

#### **1. Overview of CP**

##### **Coding the Data through NVivo**

##### **Stage 1: Oversight and Organisation of the Data Collected (Preparation for Analysis)**

The first step in coding the documentation within the CP was to establish a number of thematic ‘nodes’<sup>148</sup> through which the data would be explored. These nodes were developed in direct response to the research questions, outlined in Chapter 1. These initial core nodes were based in some part on the interview questions but were also based on the ongoing and developing understanding of the documentation, at a very basic level. From this list of nodes, the 103 documents were reviewed, with nodes being added as the research progressed and as deemed appropriate. In all, 202 nodes were created.

The nodes are made up of two tiers: the parent nodes and the child nodes. The parent nodes act as an umbrella for any of the child nodes which relate to a particular topic. For example, in the parent node titled ‘Counter-Terrorism Activities – Broad’, the following nodes have been placed: legislation and CT powers; measures and actions; policies; programmes and projects; rule of law – criminal justice system; and strategy. As the reading proceeded, references to ‘programmes and projects’, for example, were identified and these references were then coded at the relevant child node. Later, when organising the hierarchy, all of the child notes that were considered to relate to broad counter-terrorism activities were collected and were further organised in this way. This provides flexibility when comparing across parent nodes and allows for additional analytical activities within NVivo.

At this most basic level of analysis, NVivo also provides dashboard visibility on the nodes, the number of sources in which references to these nodes were found and the number of references to each node within those sources. An overview of this data as it relates to the parent nodes is provided in the table below.

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<sup>148</sup> A ‘node’ is essentially the term used in NVivo for a code. It is described as “A virtual container that lets you collect content across sources to group related material together.” It can also be referred to, perhaps more traditionally for the coding process, as a “code, theme, category, topic or concept.” (NVivo 11 Help: [http://help-nv11.qsrinternational.com/desktop/concepts/Key\\_terms.htm](http://help-nv11.qsrinternational.com/desktop/concepts/Key_terms.htm)) Nodes will be referred to throughout the appendix, given the usefulness of the term which is inherent to the software itself.

Overview of parent nodes in CP, organised in descending order by references.

	Parent Node Name	Sources	References
1	COUNTER-TERRORISM CONTEXTUAL ISSUES	104 <sup>149</sup>	6668
2	PERCEPTIONS	97	6569
3	COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTIVITIES - BROAD	99	4341
4	COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTIVITIES - FOCUSED	97	4229
5	MEASURABLES AND OUTCOMES	95	2982
6	CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS	99	2689
7	COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTORS	82	2667
8	TERRORIST ACTIVITIES	71	2432
9	CHANGE OVER TIME AND TRENDS	93	2322
10	DATA AND INFORMATION	98	2265
11	EVALUATIONS, ASSESSMENTS AND REVIEWS	89	2044
12	CONTEST	62	1991
13	IMPACTS	87	1557
14	INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS	69	1086
15	COMMUNICATIONS	74	1076
16	TERRORIST ACTORS AND TYPES	60	1033
17	GOALS, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	76	960
18	TERRORIST EVENTS AND RESPONSES	55	784

## Stage 2: The Process of Exploring the CP: Framework for Analysis

Based on the analysis and findings of these initial activities, a list of counter-terrorism activities was compiled in order to get a solid overview of what types of activities take place in the UK. Following this, the above analysis was repeated in relation to the other parent nodes, noting the steps of the process as research progressed. With the list of counter-terrorism activities compiled, it was then possible to analyse the parent nodes on evaluations, the parent nodes on data, and the parent nodes on perspectives in comparison with the other parent nodes. This allowed for the development of a strong understanding of the UK's Counter-Terrorism landscape over the period 2000 to 2018, the timeframe set for this thesis,

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<sup>149</sup> The reason for the higher number of sources recorded in this particular node is because NVivo also relates any Memos which have been written within the project, if it makes mention of the relevant nodes. Therefore, while 103 documents were officially reviewed for the analysis, the Memo document written within NVivo as research progressed has also been included in some way within the data.

with insights into its development over time and in reaction to events as well as the ever-changing narratives and linked perspectives.

## 2. Node structure

Name	Sources	References
<b>ACTORS (INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS)</b>		
Actors	45	1554
Al-Qaeda	20	99
Foreign Fighters	12	41
Frontline practitioners and actors	28	258
Immigration-Immigrants	13	20
Independent actors or bodies	17	97
ISIS	14	75
Lone Wolves	13	31
Media	26	89
Military and Armed Forces	4	16
Stakeholders	2	8
Terrorist Groups	25	146
<b>CONTEST AND CT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES</b>		
CONTEST (as a broad strategy)	18	133
Development and Design of the Strategy	11	23
'Freely'	17	49
Goals-Aims of CONTEST	20	101
Human Rights & Fair Treatment & Discrimination	28	117
Legislation and CT Powers	48	1145
Operational elements of CONTEST (as opposed to policy development)	13	171
Policies	40	281
Prepare	13	81
Prevent	30	715
Proscription	16	57
Protect	16	134
Pursue	19	307
'Reduce Risk'	16	61
Rule of Law - Criminal Justice System	35	272
Stated aims or goals	24	115
Strategy	16	52
'With Confidence'	17	42
<b>COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTIVITIES AND CONCERNS</b>		
Borders	24	152
CBRN	4	20
Challenge	28	416
Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Extremism Comparisons	8	9

Critical National Infrastructure (CNI)	6	17
Deportation and Exclusion	5	21
De-Radicalisation or Counter-Radicalisation	16	60
Disruption of terrorist attacks	22	95
Emergency Planning-Preparedness	13	93
Identification of threat or of vulnerable individuals	25	255
Immediate aftermath of an attack	12	73
Intervention Points	20	119
Investment and Spending	12	37
Location Specific	14	81
Measures or Actions	59	1111
National vs Local Actions, Solutions, Policies or Strategies	4	7
Normality	2	15
Plots and disrupted events	20	98
Response to an attack	11	43
Speed of recovery following an event - return to norms	2	2
Threat or Risk	27	424
Warning of attack	4	34
<b>COUNTER-TERRORISM CONTEXTUAL ISSUES</b>		
Change in counterterrorism policies or strategies	31	197
Change in counterterrorism tactics or actions	17	107
Change in priorities and focus of CT	18	94
Change in terror threat levels	11	16
Change in terrorism activities	11	52
Change in terrorism threat	20	78
Change in terrorist tactics	9	46
Change over time or Trends	38	619
Comparison	16	61
Context	45	809
Dynamic or Changing Policies or Strategies	15	42
Limitations and Considerations	38	517
Limits of capacity	14	30
Strategy levels - tactical, operational, strategic	3	4
Timeline	33	245
Time-Specific	21	287
<b>DATA AND INFORMATION SOURCES AND METHODS</b>		
Counter-terrorist intelligence	33	594
Data and Information	41	737
Empirical Data - Quantitative Analysis	41	439
Evidence	24	99
Information (e.g. from the public, to the public)	14	67
Information and Research	27	98
Investigation	18	212
Statistics - data - facts - trends	13	180
<b>EVALUATIONS, ASSESSMENTS AND REVIEWS</b>		
Accountability and Oversight	38	153

Assessments	35	381
Best practice	13	31
Clarity (e.g. clear processes, clear understanding of ...)	22	81
Complacency	4	6
Consistency	19	42
Effectiveness	50	729
Evaluate and Assess	24	187
Evaluations	22	168
External review or evaluation	30	180
Intended Outcomes	7	19
Internal review or evaluation	22	110
Learning	33	293
Levels of involvement for evaluations	13	24
Metrics and Measures	24	128
Recommendation	20	63
Regulation	5	9
Report & Review Findings and Recommendations	44	790
Reports and Guidance Publications	50	577
Targets and Objectives	23	101
Types of Evaluation and Range of Usefulness	5	7
Unintended Outcomes	18	52
<b>INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS</b>		
Comparison with other countries	24	116
Foreign Policy	11	32
International	40	571
Proximity to the UK of an international attack	6	14
Syria and Iraq	19	79
<b>ISSUES, IMPACTS AND PERCEPTIONS</b>		
Achieved aims or goals	6	8
Achieving aims or goals	9	27
Counter-Productive	16	37
Criticism	38	461
Failure	19	116
Flexibility or Prescriptive	8	17
Government integrity and support	14	31
Ideal Counter-Terrorism Strategy	12	20
Identified improvements	32	221
Identified need for improvement	37	276
Ideological Differences - British Values	8	37
Impact	45	713
Importance or Important	12	44
Improvement	28	223
Indicators of Success	16	81
Long-Term or Short-Term Impacts	5	17
Manage Risk	5	10
Model or Inspiration	5	14

Multi-Dimensional or Complex	16	65
Need for Improvement	24	191
Negative	38	427
Negative Impact	26	148
Not achieved aims or goals	8	33
Not achieving aims or goals	9	17
Objectivity - Bias	26	100
Perspective	40	526
Political Impact	32	140
Positive	47	485
Priority	5	11
Proportionate	36	179
Realistic view of ability to mitigate an attack	8	32
Security Impact	29	273
Solution	11	17
Success	22	183
Transparency	27	133
Unassigned Impact	13	59
Underlying issues or problems	32	294
Working towards a goal or goals	27	221
<b>PHYSICAL TARGETS</b>		
Target Audience (practitioners, public, terrorists)	10	13
Target vulnerability	13	70
Terrorist Target	15	77
<b>TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES</b>		
Attack-Event	25	504
Claims of Responsibility	4	21
Criminality	26	88
Grievance or Motivations	26	78
Inspiration for attacks	4	5
Islamist Profile	7	14
Mental Health (involvement in attacks-perpetrators)	3	5
Radicalisation	30	251
Social Media-Online Activity-Cyber Terrorism	16	83
Tactics	25	191
Terrorist Activity	36	522
Terrorist funding and finances	11	207
Terrorist Networking and Planning	15	128
Terrorist Training	5	6
Vulnerability	17	107
<b>THE PUBLIC - ACTIVITIES, RELATIONSHIPS AND PERCEPTIONS</b>		
Community cohesion - feeling part of society	18	64
Community Engagement	29	259
Community Violence - Hate Crimes	3	6
Legitimacy	13	27
Misunderstanding - failed communication or narrative	14	62

Mitigation	16	77
Negative assessment or opinion	36	337
Perception	41	589
Positive assessment or opinion	31	350
Public Awareness (of threat, events, suspicious behaviours)	7	13
Public Perception or Opinion	37	231
Public Reporting (e.g. vulnerable individuals)	16	49
Public Safety	17	53
Resilience	16	53
Safeguarding	14	76
Societal Risk vs Individual Risk	1	1
Support	25	180
Training and Educating	22	114
Trust (e.g. public trust in the system or in an actor)	24	81
Understanding or Interpretation	41	412
<b>TYPES OF TERRORISM</b>		
Homegrown	15	72
Jihadi-Islamist Inspired Terrorism	27	220
Nationalist-IRA-Irish	18	72
Right-Wing Extremism	18	40
<b>VARIOUS</b>		
Challenges	32	253
Collaboration	31	458
Communication	34	433
Communication between authorities and the public	20	104
Context - international, domestic, pre-event, post-event, community activity	39	1422
Cooperation and inter-agency collaboration	22	241
Interactions	20	100
Issue or problem	29	273
Misinformation	13	43
Narrative	33	240
National-Domestic	17	86
Post-Event Response (public, frontline actors, government)	6	77
Post-Interview Comments	1	1
Processes and Procedures	48	691
Programmes and Projects	32	307
Resources and Capabilities	36	446
Technology - CT and T	12	79

### 3. Exploration of Perspectives in the Coded Data

#### Legislation and Broad Activities: Number of References in Node Cross-Section, Coding Matrix Query, CP

	Identified improvements	Identified need for improvement	Negative assessment or opinion	Perception	Perspective	Positive assessment or opinion	Public Perception or Opinion
Legislation and CT Powers	55	103	165	191	261	184	36
Measures or Actions	108	137	98	199	177	117	60
Policies	27	23	20	50	46	4	20
Programmes and Projects	29	31	28	52	26	8	14
Rule of Law - Criminal Justice System	11	35	32	67	66	19	9
Strategy	3	12	11	18	14	5	3
	<b>233</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>142</b>

**Criminal Justice System: Number of References in Node Cross Section, Coding Matrix Query**

	Identified improvements	Identified need for improvement	Negative assessment or opinion	Perception	Perspective	Positive assessment or opinion	Public Perception or Opinion
<b>Borders</b>	19	11	8	15	13	5	6
<b>Counter-terrorist intelligence</b>	28	42	83	75	54	67	13
<b>Deportation and Exclusion</b>	3	5	5	2	8	2	0
<b>Disruption of terrorist attacks</b>	4	6	2	14	28	12	5
<b>Emergency Planning-Preparedness</b>	10	9	0	4	2	0	1
<b>Evidence</b>	5	7	8	18	10	2	1
<b>Identification of threat or of vulnerable individuals</b>	15	37	7	57	29	5	14
<b>Intervention Points</b>	7	9	7	23	19	2	6
<b>Investigation</b>	4	8	3	16	14	6	7
<b>Investment and Spending</b>	4	8	1	13	8	0	3
<b>Plots and disrupted events</b>	5	4	1	13	17	5	7
<b>Proscription</b>	0	1	4	3	5	1	0
<b>Technology - CT and T</b>	13	9	4	10	11	10	0
<b>Training and Educating</b>	13	29	12	25	17	2	11
	<b>130</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>74</b>

**Terrorists Events and Threats: Number of References in Node Cross-Section, Coding Matrix Query**

	Identified improvements	Identified need for improvement	Negative assessment or opinion	Perception	Perspective	Positive assessment or opinion	Public Perception or Opinion
Threat or Risk	34	73	9	84	59	5	22
Community Violence - Hate Crimes	0	1	7	5	4	0	3
Criminality	5	8	13	27	16	2	8
Radicalisation	8	40	30	75	43	2	24
Social Media- Online Activity- Cyber Terrorism	5	15	9	7	7	2	3
Tactics	11	18	1	26	17	1	7
Terrorist Activity	21	57	28	94	72	14	21
Terrorist funding and finances	19	14	17	13	24	33	1
Terrorist Networking and Planning	2	15	2	12	11	2	1
Attack-Event	13	44	1	76	37	2	53
Immediate aftermath of an attack	4	2	0	7	3	0	3
Normality	2	1	0	7	8	0	2
Post-Event Response (public, frontline actors, government)	17	0	3	1	0	27	1
Response to an attack	7	7	1	9	10	0	7
Speed of recovery following an event - return to norms	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
	<b>148</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>156</b>

### Assessment and Overview: Number of References in Node Cross-Section, Coding Matrix Query

	Identified improvements	Identified need for improvement	Negative assessment or opinion	Perception	Perspective	Positive assessment or opinion	Public Perception or Opinion
<b>Assessments</b>	26	71	13	61	48	25	10
<b>Evaluate and Assess</b>	15	6	17	8	11	34	2
<b>Evaluations</b>	8	41	1	21	28	6	5
<b>External review or evaluation</b>	10	46	15	29	33	27	8
<b>Internal review or evaluation</b>	8	39	11	27	34	27	2
<b>Regulation</b>	1	1	1	2	4	1	0
<b>Reports and Guidance Publications</b>	35	88	25	74	67	38	11
	<b>103</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>38</b>

## Appendix D:

### Global Terrorism Database (GTD): Data Tables

Note: The tables on Northern Ireland Terror Attacks (including republican and unionist attacks) and on Unknown/Unattributed Terror Attacks are large data tables and have therefore not been included in this appendix. This data is available upon request.

#### Islamist Inspired Terror Attacks in the UK, 2000 - 2017

DATE	COUNTRY	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	FATALITIES	INJURED
15/09/2017	United Kingdom	London	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)	0	29
07/06/2017	United Kingdom	London	Muslim extremists	0	1
03/06/2017	United Kingdom	London	Jihadi-inspired extremists	11	48
22/05/2017	United Kingdom	Manchester	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)	23	119
22/03/2017	United Kingdom	London	Muslim extremists	6	50
20/07/2016	United Kingdom	Marham	Muslim extremists	0	1
24/03/2016	Scotland	Glasgow	Muslim extremists	1	1
18/02/2016	United Kingdom	Rochdale	Jihadi-inspired extremists	1	0
05/12/2015	United Kingdom	London	Jihadi-inspired extremists	0	3
17/11/2015	United Kingdom	Bradford	Muslim extremists	0	1
22/05/2013	United Kingdom	London	Muslim extremists	1	0
29/10/2010	United Kingdom	Lockington	Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	0	0
14/05/2010	United Kingdom	London	Jihadi-inspired extremists	0	1
30/06/2007	United Kingdom	Abbotsinch	Al-Qaida in Iraq	1	2
21/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	0	0
21/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	0	0
21/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	0	0
21/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	0	0

07/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	14	110
07/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	7	163
07/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	27	340
07/07/2005	United Kingdom	London	Al-Qaida	8	171

## Extremist or XRW Terror Attacks in the UK, 2000-2017

DATE	COUNTRY	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	FATALITIES	INJURED
24/09/2017	United Kingdom	Hale	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	1
20/09/2017	United Kingdom	Leicester	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	1
16/07/2017	United Kingdom	Manchester	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
23/06/2017	United Kingdom	London	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
21/06/2017	United Kingdom	London	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	2
19/06/2017	United Kingdom	London	Anti-Muslim extremists	1	12
14/06/2017	United Kingdom	Flimby	Neo-Nazi extremists	0	0
06/06/2017	United Kingdom	Prestwich	Anti-Semitic extremists	0	0
02/06/2017	United Kingdom	Prestwich	Anti-Semitic extremists	0	0
25/05/2017	United Kingdom	Halewood	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
23/05/2017	United Kingdom	Oldham	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
08/01/2017	United Kingdom	Braintree	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
12/12/2016	United Kingdom	London	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	1
18/09/2016	United Kingdom	Edinburgh	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
16/06/2016	United Kingdom	Birstall	Neo-Nazi extremists	1	1
06/05/2016	United Kingdom	Prestwich	Anti-Semitic extremists	0	0

<b>09/03/2014</b>	United Kingdom	Milton Keynes	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
<b>12/07/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Tipton	White extremists	0	0
<b>28/06/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Wolverhampton	White extremists	0	0
<b>21/06/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Walsall	White extremists	0	0
<b>18/06/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Gloucester	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
<b>05/06/2013</b>	United Kingdom	London	English Defense League (EDL)	0	0
<b>25/05/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Rhyl	Anti-Muslim extremists	0	0
<b>29/04/2013</b>	United Kingdom	Birmingham	White extremists	1	0
<b>06/11/2008</b>	United Kingdom	Suffolk	Neo-Nazi extremists	0	0
<b>17/10/2000</b>	United Kingdom	London	Anti-Semitic extremists	0	1

## **Appendix E:**

### **Public Opinion Polls and Surveys**

*Note: Where working links were available, they have been provided below for convenience. However, a number of links no longer function, and therefore the screenshots of the relevant questions from the downloaded documents are provided below.*

#### **Ipsos MORI, 2010 to 2019: Issues Index**

- <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/search?search=issues+index>

#### **Populus, July 2007:**

Gordon Brown question “*This week, Gordon Brown [Prime Minister] has been outlining new counter-terrorism measures ... Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.*”

- <https://www.populus.co.uk/poll/counter-terrorism-measures/>

#### **Ipsos MORI, January 2017: ‘Power to the People’ (page 22)**

- <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/six-ten-around-world-think-their-society-broken>

Table 1  
**Q.1 Given the terrorist atrocities on 9/11 and more recently in Madrid, are you more concerned about your safety, less concerned or have they made no difference?**  
 Base: All respondents

	Sex		Age							Social Class					Region								
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	South East London	South East London	Mid-lands	North Eng-land	Wales & South West	Scot-land					
Unweighted base	1011	482	529	83	181	243	181	143	180	321	232	187	271	280	289	140	142	127	265	280	133	88	
Weighted base	1011	495	518	112	184	184	174	133	205	240	280	210	280	289	142	127	261	252	139	90	133	86	
More concerned	518	220	299	57	89	114	81	73	105	129	146	101	143	151	79	72	128	133	61	48	133	61	48
	51%	44%	58%	51%	48%	59%	47%	55%	51%	53%	52%	48%	51%	56%	56%	57%	48%	53%	44%	51%	53%	44%	51%
No difference	489	263	208	51	100	77	91	59	82	107	128	107	129	111	60	51	128	114	75	44	45%	44%	48%
	48%	53%	40%	48%	51%	40%	52%	44%	45%	45%	45%	51%	48%	41%	43%	40%	48%	45%	54%	49%	45%	44%	48%
Less concerned	18	9	8	4	1	2	1	2	7	5	7	-	7	6	3	3	7	1	4	1	4	-	-
	2%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%	-	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	1%	3%	-	-
Don't know	6	3	2	-	4	1	1	-	-	-	2	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
	1%	1%	1%	-	2%	1%	1%	-	-	-	1%	1%	1%	1%	-	1%	-	-	2%	-	-	-	-

Absolute/col percents



**Terrorism Survey**  
 Fieldwork : April 23rd-26th 2004

Absolutes/col percents

Table 1  
 Q.1 Here are some things people have suggested should be done to counter the risks of terrorism. Others oppose them as they say they endanger the rights of everyone. Bearing these two things in mind, for each one please say whether you would support or oppose the measure to counter terrorism?  
 Base: All respondents

	Sex		Age							Social Class							Region			
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	South East	Mid-lands	North Eng-land	South West	Scott-land			
Unweighted base	510	252	258	45	75	119	88	91	92	148	116	93	134	131	128	72	45			
Weighted base	510	250	260	57	98	98	88	67	103	121	141	106	141	136	132	127	70	45		
<b>Indefinite detention of foreign terrorist suspects.</b>																				
Support	314	161	154	39	62	60	47	42	64	66	88	77	83	91	80	77	41	28		
	62%	64%	56%	70%	63%	62%	54%	62%	62%	54%	63%	72%	59%	67%	61%	60%	59%	58%		
Oppose	165	82	83	14	29	34	33	22	35	48	46	23	47	40	43	44	22	15		
	32%	33%	32%	24%	29%	34%	37%	32%	34%	40%	32%	22%	33%	30%	33%	35%	32%	33%		
Don't know/refused	31	7	24	4	8	4	7	4	5	7	7	6	11	5	9	7	8	4		
	6%	3%	9%	6%	8%	4%	8%	5%	5%	6%	5%	6%	8%	3%	7%	5%	8%	10%		
<b>Indefinite detention of British terrorist suspects.</b>																				
Support	324	164	160	43	64	66	45	41	65	74	84	74	92	82	88	80	40	28		
	63%	65%	62%	79%	65%	67%	52%	61%	63%	61%	59%	70%	65%	68%	65%	63%	57%	57%		
Oppose	146	79	67	9	21	29	34	22	31	42	43	25	37	38	37	39	21	12		
	28%	32%	26%	10%	21%	28%	39%	33%	30%	35%	30%	23%	26%	28%	28%	31%	30%	28%		
Don't know/refused	40	7	33	4	13	3	8	4	7	5	15	7	13	6	9	8	9	9		
	8%	3%	13%	8%	13%	3%	9%	5%	7%	4%	11%	7%	9%	4%	7%	6%	13%	17%		
<b>Indefinite detention of those associating with terrorist suspects.</b>																				
Support	297	146	152	38	59	57	47	37	59	66	73	67	82	90	71	77	34	28		
	58%	59%	58%	68%	60%	58%	54%	55%	57%	54%	52%	63%	65%	66%	64%	60%	48%	57%		
Oppose	174	98	78	13	28	38	38	27	32	48	55	34	37	38	50	48	25	14		
	34%	39%	29%	23%	29%	38%	41%	40%	31%	40%	39%	32%	20%	28%	38%	39%	30%	32%		
Don't know/refused	39	6	33	5	11	3	5	3	12	7	14	5	13	7	11	4	11	5		
	8%	2%	13%	6%	11%	3%	5%	5%	11%	6%	10%	4%	9%	5%	9%	3%	15%	12%		

Prepared for The BBC by ICM Research Limited



## Terrorism Survey Fieldwork : April 23rd-25th 2004

Page 2  
Absolutes/col percents

Table 1  
Q.1 Here are some things people have suggested should be done to counter the risks of terrorism. Others oppose them as they say they endanger the rights of everyone. Bearing these two things in mind, for each one please say whether you would support or oppose the measure to counter terrorism?  
Base: All respondents

	Sex		Age							Social Class							Region				
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	South East	Mid-Lands	North Eng-land	Wales & South West	Scot-land				
Weighted base	510	250	280	67	98	98	88	67	103	121	141	106	141	136	132	127	70	45			
<b>All police officers to be routinely armed.</b>																					
Support	241	118	122	33	64	45	35	18	48	45	64	68	65	65	63	60	32	19			
	47%	47%	47%	58%	65%	46%	40%	27%	45%	37%	45%	63%	46%	48%	48%	47%	48%	43%			
Oppose	245	129	116	23	31	52	48	43	49	71	72	38	64	67	63	60	35	21			
	48%	52%	45%	40%	32%	53%	54%	64%	47%	59%	51%	36%	45%	49%	48%	47%	50%	45%			
Don't know/ refused	24	3	21	1	3	1	5	6	8	5	5	2	13	4	5	7	3	5			
	5%	1%	8%	2%	3%	1%	5%	9%	8%	4%	4%	2%	9%	3%	4%	8%	4%	12%			
<b>Bring in the death penalty for terrorist offences that kill people.</b>																					
Support	301	148	166	29	67	64	60	46	65	63	73	71	94	71	79	76	47	28			
	59%	58%	59%	62%	68%	55%	57%	68%	63%	62%	61%	67%	67%	62%	60%	60%	67%	63%			
Oppose	188	98	90	22	37	42	34	20	33	52	63	33	40	56	46	49	22	15			
	37%	39%	35%	39%	38%	43%	39%	30%	32%	43%	45%	31%	28%	42%	35%	38%	32%	32%			
Don't know/ refused	21	8	18	5	4	3	4	1	5	6	6	3	8	8	7	3	1	2			
	4%	2%	6%	9%	4%	3%	4%	2%	5%	5%	4%	2%	5%	6%	5%	2%	1%	5%			
<b>Give police greater powers to eavesdrop on people (like listening to telephone conversations and reading emails)</b>																					
Support	238	125	112	30	42	48	40	30	48	64	67	55	61	64	63	71	34	14			
	46%	50%	43%	63%	43%	48%	48%	45%	44%	63%	40%	52%	43%	40%	48%	56%	48%	32%			
Oppose	253	114	138	25	49	46	43	38	53	54	75	48	76	74	64	51	35	28			
	50%	46%	53%	45%	50%	47%	49%	54%	52%	44%	53%	45%	54%	55%	49%	40%	50%	62%			
Don't know/ refused	21	11	10	1	6	5	4	1	4	4	10	3	4	8	4	6	1	3			
	4%	5%	4%	2%	6%	5%	5%	1%	4%	3%	7%	3%	3%	6%	3%	4%	1%	6%			



## Terrorism Survey Fieldwork : April 23rd-25th 2004

Page 3

Absolute/ou percents

Table 1  
Q.1 Here are some things people have suggested should be done to counter the risks of terrorism. Others oppose them as they say they endanger the rights of everyone. Bearing these two things in mind, for each one please say whether you would support or oppose the measure to counter terrorism?  
Base: All respondents

	Sex		Age						Social Class						Region					
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	South East	Mid-lands	North Eng-land	South West	Scot-land			
Weighted base	510	250	260	67	98	98	88	67	103	121	141	106	141	136	132	127	70	45		
Allow the use of phone tapping and other eavesdropping as evidence in court cases.																				
Support	322	173	148	37	67	72	53	42	50	85	84	81	71	83	81	91	45	20		
	63%	69%	67%	60%	69%	74%	60%	63%	49%	70%	60%	76%	50%	62%	62%	72%	64%	44%		
Oppose	170	72	88	18	27	24	33	22	47	33	48	23	65	50	41	34	22	24		
	33%	29%	38%	29%	29%	24%	39%	33%	46%	27%	34%	22%	46%	37%	31%	27%	31%	52%		
Don't know/ refused	19	5	14	3	4	2	2	3	8	3	9	2	5	2	10	2	3	2		
	4%	2%	5%	6%	4%	2%	2%	4%	6%	2%	6%	2%	4%	2%	7%	2%	6%	4%		
Police powers to stop and search anyone at any time.																				
Support	352	178	174	35	74	73	55	45	69	88	94	77	65	89	97	89	49	28		
	69%	71%	67%	62%	70%	75%	63%	67%	67%	71%	69%	72%	67%	68%	73%	70%	70%	62%		
Oppose	148	70	79	20	22	25	29	21	31	34	44	27	43	44	32	36	19	17		
	29%	28%	30%	36%	22%	25%	33%	32%	30%	28%	31%	26%	30%	33%	24%	28%	27%	38%		
Don't know/ refused	10	2	8	1	2	-	4	1	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	-		
	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	-	4%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	-		
Detain all immigrants and asylum seekers until they can be assessed as potential terrorist threats.																				
Support	335	177	168	40	64	62	49	46	74	65	90	82	98	88	84	84	47	24		
	66%	71%	61%	71%	60%	63%	50%	69%	72%	54%	64%	76%	69%	64%	71%	60%	67%	54%		
Oppose	148	63	85	17	24	33	33	17	24	48	42	23	36	42	30	36	19	18		
	29%	25%	33%	29%	25%	34%	37%	26%	24	40%	29%	22%	25%	31%	23%	31%	27%	40%		
Don't know/ refused	28	9	17	-	9	3	8	3	8	8	10	1	8	7	7	4	4	3		
	5%	4%	7%	-	10%	3%	8%	3%	5%	7%	7%	1%	5%	5%	3%	4%	6%	7%		

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## Terrorism Survey

Fieldwork : April 23rd-25th 2004

Absolutes/col percents

Page 4

Table 1  
 Q.1 Here are some things people have suggested should be done to counter the risks of terrorism. Others oppose them as they say they endanger the rights of everyone. Bearing these two things in mind, for each one please say whether you would support or oppose the measure to counter terrorism?  
 Base: All respondents

	Sex		Age							Social Class						Region				
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	South East	Mid-lands	North Eng-land	Wales & South West	South land	Scot-land		
Weighted base	510	250	280	67	98	98	88	87	103	121	141	106	141	136	132	127	70	34	23	45
<b>Making it easier to get a conviction in cases involving terrorism by changing the rules in court so that someone can be convicted on the balance of probabilities rather than beyond all reasonable doubt.</b>																				
Support	248	127	121	31	51	45	35	31	55	54	65	56	74	59	62	70	34	23	18	23
	49%	51%	47%	65%	52%	40%	40%	47%	53%	44%	46%	53%	53%	43%	47%	56%	48%	51%	33%	51%
Oppose	230	116	114	22	43	47	48	31	40	62	71	41	55	67	63	49	33	18	18	39%
	45%	46%	44%	38%	44%	48%	53%	47%	39%	51%	50%	39%	39%	49%	48%	39%	48%	39%	39%	39%
Don't know/ refused	32	7	25	4	4	5	7	4	8	5	6	9	12	10	7	8	3	4	4	10%
	6%	3%	9%	7%	4%	5%	8%	6%	8%	4%	4%	8%	8%	7%	5%	6%	4%	4	4	10%

**Ipsos MORI, October 2005:**

- <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/post-london-bombings-survey>

**Ipsos MORI, February 2013:**

- <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/events-not-threats-current-public-concern-about-foreign-affairs-defence-and-terrorism>

**ComRes, November 2015:**

- <https://comresglobal.com/polls/daily-mail-terrorism-poll-2/>

**Opinion Poll**  
**ONLINE Fieldwork: 7th-8th August 2017**

Absolute/col percents

Page 1

**Table 1**  
**Q.1 Which of the following are the most dangerous in the world today?**  
**Base: All respondents**

	Gender		Age										Social Grade					Employment Sector	
	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	18-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Public	Private	
Unweighted base	2069	1029	1030	237	371	352	345	288	488	608	607	754	547	580	377	555	251	846	
Weighted base	2069	1005	1054	231	354	331	368	303	474	594	608	777	551	574	424	510	289	887	
Terrorists	1640	762	878	168	236	250	283	267	427	403	543	604	421	433	350	498	210	880	
	80%	76%	83%	73%	67%	75%	80%	88%	80%	69%	78%	80%	76%	75%	83%	85%	73%	78%	
Religious leaders	628	336	292	46	93	94	118	117	160	139	212	278	162	147	139	181	77	284	
	31%	33%	28%	20%	26%	28%	32%	39%	34%	24%	30%	27%	29%	28%	33%	35%	27%	32%	
Fake news	545	261	284	61	103	98	101	72	110	164	188	182	165	151	105	124	78	250	
	26%	26%	27%	26%	29%	30%	28%	24%	23%	28%	28%	23%	30%	28%	25%	24%	27%	28%	
Military leaders	422	214	208	48	37	75	78	65	119	85	152	184	104	117	89	112	61	183	
	20%	21%	20%	21%	11%	22%	21%	22%	22%	15%	22%	24%	19%	20%	21%	22%	21%	18%	
Right-wing pundits, politicians and donors	358	203	153	54	60	74	60	38	52	124	143	80	118	98	62	78	57	182	
	17%	20%	14%	24%	20%	22%	18%	12%	11%	21%	21%	11%	21%	17%	15%	15%	20%	15%	
Left-wing unions, politicians and campaigners	331	202	129	22	36	40	55	48	129	58	95	177	92	92	69	77	30	128	
	16%	20%	12%	10%	10%	12%	15%	16%	27%	10%	14%	23%	17%	16%	16%	10%	10%	14%	
High-taxing governments	276	92	185	32	65	60	64	23	32	97	124	56	77	89	65	65	62	124	
	13%	9%	18%	14%	18%	18%	17%	8%	7%	17%	18%	7%	14%	12%	15%	13%	21%	14%	
Big businesses	267	153	114	56	59	39	54	27	32	115	83	59	76	83	43	65	37	129	
	13%	15%	11%	24%	17%	12%	15%	9%	7%	20%	13%	8%	14%	14%	10%	13%	13%	14%	
Capitalists	187	101	88	27	40	37	31	19	32	68	68	51	60	54	38	35	29	84	
	9%	10%	8%	12%	11%	11%	8%	6%	7%	12%	10%	7%	11%	9%	9%	7%	10%	9%	
Communists	177	95	82	22	20	29	25	28	51	42	54	81	55	47	34	41	27	65	
	9%	9%	8%	9%	6%	9%	7%	10%	11%	7%	8%	10%	10%	8%	8%	8%	9%	6%	

Prepared by ComRes



## Opinion Poll ONLINE Fieldwork: 7th-8th August 2017

Page 2

**Table 1**  
**Q.1 Which of the following are the most dangerous in the world today?**  
**Base: All respondents**

	Total	Region											
		Scotland	Wales	NET: England	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humberside	West Midlands	East Midlands	Eastern	London	South East	South West
Unweighted base	2059	181	113	1755	91	230	186	182	181	223	238	288	178
Weighted base	2059	181	103	1775	86	237	173	185	154	188	274	288	181
Terrorists	1840	140	82	1418	75	188	142	145	133	162	188	235	151
	80%	77%	80%	80%	87%	79%	82%	78%	88%	82%	68%	82%	83%
Religious leaders	628	57	40	531	23	58	62	37	55	60	75	103	57
	31%	31%	39%	30%	26%	25%	36%	20%	36%	30%	27%	36%	32%
Fake news	545	42	24	479	18	68	43	50	31	57	79	87	48
	26%	23%	23%	27%	21%	29%	25%	27%	20%	26%	29%	30%	26%
Military leaders	422	36	16	370	24	61	34	32	36	29	64	51	38
	20%	20%	15%	21%	28%	26%	20%	17%	23%	15%	23%	18%	21%
Right-wing pundits, politicians and donors	356	41	18	298	14	41	32	28	25	31	54	40	34
	17%	23%	16%	17%	16%	17%	19%	14%	16%	16%	20%	14%	19%
Left-wing unions, politicians and campaigners	331	28	11	292	7	30	28	30	26	43	38	55	36
	16%	15%	11%	16%	8%	13%	16%	16%	17%	22%	14%	19%	20%
High-taxing governments	276	24	11	241	20	31	29	21	22	17	46	32	23
	13%	13%	14%	23%	13%	17%	17%	11%	14%	8%	17%	11%	13%
Big businesses	287	28	13	228	10	25	27	29	14	27	33	33	29
	13%	15%	13%	12%	11%	10%	16%	15%	9%	14%	12%	12%	16%
Capitalists	187	17	10	160	8	28	14	18	11	12	30	25	14
	9%	9%	9%	9%	8%	12%	8%	10%	7%	6%	11%	9%	8%
Communists	177	16	9	152	5	22	12	16	18	10	24	29	17
	9%	9%	9%	6%	9%	7%	7%	9%	11%	5%	9%	10%	9%

Prepared by ComRes



**Opinion Poll**  
**ONLINE Fieldwork: 7th-8th August 2017**

Table 2  
Q.2a For each of these pairs of statements which one do you agree with most?  
Base: All respondents

	Gender		Age										Social Grade					Employment Sector	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	18-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Public	Private		
Unweighted base	2069	1029	1030	237	371	362	345	286	488	808	887	754	547	680	377	555	251	848	
Weighted base	2069	1005	1054	231	354	331	388	303	474	584	808	777	551	574	424	510	288	887	
Big business is more of a problem than big government.	914	505	408	112	143	144	158	144	212	255	304	356	252	275	182	205	142	382	
	44%	50%	39%	48%	40%	44%	43%	48%	45%	44%	44%	48%	48%	48%	43%	40%	48%	44%	
Big government is more of a problem than big business	1145	489	845	118	211	187	207	159	283	330	394	421	289	289	241	305	147	505	
	56%	50%	61%	51%	60%	56%	57%	52%	55%	56%	56%	54%	54%	52%	57%	60%	51%	56%	



## Appendix F:

### Comparison of Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Cases: XRW and Islamist

#### 1. XRW Cases Successfully Prosecuted by the CPS

Case	Sentence Date	Plea	Sentence	Charges	Legislation
<b>R<sup>150</sup> v Shane Fletcher</b>	January 2019	Not Guilty	13 years (nine years imprisonment and four years extended)	Two charges, but one changed from possession of terrorist material (pleaded guilty) to incitement to murder (pleaded not guilty)	Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000, but later found not to meet the threshold of the definition of terrorism and so charged under incitement to murder contrary to section 4 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861
<b>R v Jonathan Jennings</b>		Guilty	Two years imprisonment	Six charges (religious hatred) and four charges (intent to cause distress)	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986 and Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988
<b>R v Andrew Littlefair</b>	19 February 2018	Guilty	20 months imprisonment	Six charges	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986.
<b>R v John Hanson</b>		Guilty	12 months imprisonment suspended for two years, 20 days 'think first' course, 300 hours of community service and a surcharge of £100	Three charges	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Peter John Tovey</b>	27 March 2018	Guilty	15 months in prison	Three charges	Public Order Act 1986 i.e. one offence under Section 19 [inciting racial hatred; Count 1 on the indictment] and two offences under Section 29C [inciting religious hatred; Counts 2 and 3 on the indictment].
<b>R v David Bitton</b>	15 February 2018	Guilty	Four years imprisonment	13 charges	Public Order Act 1986 and Section 29C (inciting religious hatred in respect of his tweets against Muslims).

<sup>150</sup> R stands for the Crown (either Rex or Regina) and indicates that the Crown is prosecuting the plaintiffs.

<b>R v Darren Osborne</b>	Convicted February 2018		Life imprisonment with minimum term of 43 years with notification requirements for 30 years.	Two charges	Unidentified but the charges were murder and attempted murder (not necessarily terrorist in nature)
<b>R v Ian Evans</b>	22 June 2018		Nine months imprisonment	Two charges	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Keegan Jakovlevs</b>	7 September 2017	Guilty	12 months imprisonment	One charge	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Lawrence Burns</b>	10 March -2017		Four years imprisonment and Criminal Behaviour Order of six years	Two charges	Sections 18 and 19 of the Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Sean Creighton</b>	22 February 2017	Guilty (to eight of 10)	Five years imprisonment and 15-year Terrorism Act notification	10 charges	Sections of the Public Order Act 1986 and the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Nigel Christopher Pelham</b>	16 June 2017	Guilty	20 months imprisonment	Eight charges	Section 29C of the Public Order Act 1986.

## 2. Islamist Cases Successfully Prosecuted by the CPS

<i>Name of case/defendant</i>	<i>Date sentenced</i>	<i>Plea</i>	<i>Sentence</i>	<i>Number of Charges (total)</i>	<i>Relevant Legislation</i>
<b>R v Omar Ashfaq</b>		Guilty	Five years and six months imprisonment plus notification of 15 years	Eight offenses and three offenses	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Steven Bishop</b>		Changed Not Guilty to Guilty	4 years plus 12 months for terrorism charge	Two charges	Section 5 Terrorism Act 2006 (later replaced by Section 3 Explosives Substance Act 1883) and Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Aweys, Munye &amp; Aweys</b>		Guilty (although Asma at first denied)	Ahmed - a total of three years' imprisonment, reduced to 25 months for his	Each had three charges, two the same and	Section 2 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000

			early guilty plea; Abdulaziz - 22 months' imprisonment reduced to 15 months; and Asma to two years' imprisonment reduced to 19 months for her later guilty pleas. Each was made subject to terrorism notification requirements for 10 years	one slightly different	
<b>R v Ahmed Hussain</b>	January 2019		64 months imprisonment	Four criminal offenses	Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Salim Wakil</b>	8 February 2017		30 months in prison and a ten-year notification charge	One charge - funding	Section 17 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Mohammad Hamza Siddiq</b>	22 February 2019	Guilty	Four years six months in prison, and subject to a 10-year notification period	Two offenses	Section 1 of Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 53 of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
<b>R v Khalid Omar Ali</b>	20 July 2018		Life in prison with minimum of 40 years	Three offences	Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000; Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 3 of the Explosive Substance Act 1883.
<b>R v Husnain Rashid</b>		Guilty	Life in prison with a minimum of 25 years total	Six charges total	Section 5(1)(a) of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 53 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
<b>R v Sudesh Amman</b>	17 December 2018	Guilty	Three years and four months	Unknown but multiple	Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006

<b>R v Abdulraham Alcharbati</b>	14 December 2018	Found Guilty	Seven years' imprisonment and five years imprisonment with a 15-year notification period	Seven charges	Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Atiq Ahmed</b>		Guilty	54 months imprisonment plus a Criminal Behaviour Order (limit online access)	Five offences	Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Arbias Thaqi</b>	05 June 2018	Guilty	18 months Detention and Training Order plus a Criminal Behaviour Order	Eight offences	Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Zana Abbas Sulieman</b>	22 February 2018	Guilty	Nine years imprisonment with an additional extended licence period of five years	Eight charges	Sections 57 and 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Sections 1 and 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006.
<b>R v Sandeep Samra</b>	26 January 2018	Guilty	3.5 years in a young offenders institute, 12 months licensing period and a 10-year terrorism notification period	One charge	Section 5 Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Rabar Mala</b>	27 April 2018	Guilty	Eight years imprisonment	Two charges	Section 16 (1) of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 16 (1) of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Gary Staples</b>			Three years imprisonment and a Terrorism Notification Requirement	Nine offences total (convicted on all but one)	Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Christopher Soares</b>			16 months imprisonment and Terrorism Notification Requirement	One charge	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006

<b>R v Amir Maqbool</b>		Guilty	Two years and three months in prison with further custodial sentences to run concurrently, with Terrorism Notification Requirement for 10 years	Four charges	Section 1 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 2 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 127 Malicious Communications Act
<b>R v Lloyd Gunton</b>	2 March 2018	Found Guilty	Detention at Her Majesty's Pleasure on account of his age with a requirement to serve a minimum term of 11 years' imprisonment. A 10-year notification period was imposed.	Five offences	Section 5 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 1 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Mohammed Khan</b>		Guilty and then found guilty	4.5 years concurrent on each count and a Terrorism Notification Requirement for 10 years	Nine charges	Section 1 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 2 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 29c Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Mohammed Abbas Idris Awan</b>		Not Guilty	13 years imprisonment including 10 years custodial sentence plus three-year extension to the licence term	Three charges	Section 5 Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Nourdeen Abdullah Al-Gharib</b>		Guilty	27 months imprisonment	Four offences	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Ahmed Hassan</b>			Minimum term of 34 years in prison	One offence (plus an alternative)	Not Specified
<b>R v Adam Paul Wyatt</b>		Guilty	Three years and nine months custody plus Notification Requirements for 10 years	16 offences (11 encouraging and dissemination; five in possession of material)	Sections 1 and 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006

<b>R v Mohammed Khilji</b>			Five years imprisonment (would have been six years but for his age - 19)	Eight offences	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Fatimah Peer-Mohd</b>	20 March 2017	Guilty	20 months imprisonment and a notification order for 10 years	One offence	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act
<b>R v Mohammed Addulkadir Osman Mayow and Mohanned Jasim</b>	24 February 2017	Guilty (in part) for both men	Five years and two months imprisonment; two years imprisonment	One offence and seven sample charges; two offences	Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000; Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Akeem Samuels</b>		Guilty	Four years imprisonment	Nine sample offenses (seven regarding Section 1 of Terrorism Act 2000 and 2 regarding Section 29C of Public Order Act 1986)	Section 1 of Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 29C of Public Order Act 1986
<b>R v Ghulam Hussain</b>	04 August 2017	Guilty	Six years imprisonment, a one year extended licence and 15 years notification order	Two offences	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Nadeem Muhammed</b>	23 August 2017	Trial	18 years imprisonment and an extension period of five years	One offence	Section 3(1)(b) of the Explosive Substances Act 1883.
<b>R v Noamaan Ejaz</b>		Guilty (not made at first opportunity and added to his sentence)	34 months imprisonment and a notification order for 10 years.	10 offences	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006

<b>R v Jade Jasmin Campbell</b>	27 April 2017	Guilty	12 months imprisonment (Section 58 offence) and six months consecutive imprisonment for passport offence; notification order 10 years	Two offences	Section 58(1)(b) Terrorism Act 2000 and a passport offence contrary to 36(1) Criminal Justice Act 1925.
<b>R v Saer Hussain</b>	22 September 2017	Guilty	Two years imprisonment for each offence to run concurrently, notification order 10 years	Two offences	Sections 1 and 2 Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Khalil Maher</b>	6 November 2017	Trial	Five years and four months imprisonment, extended licence one year, notification order 15 years	One offence	Section 5 of Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Naweed Ali, Khobaib Hussain, Mohibur Rahman and Tahir Aziz</b>		Trial	Life imprisonment minimum terms 20 years for first three and 15 years for Mr Aziz	Jointly charged with one offence	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Ashaivin Gohill</b>	19 May 2017	Guilty	18 months imprisonment for each count, served concurrently; 10 years notification, victim surcharge	Two offences	Section 2 of Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Taha Hussain</b>		Trial	Four years and six months imprisonment on two charges and three years imprisonment on the remaining five to run concurrently, also 10 year notification period	Seven charges	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Mijanul Haque</b>	18 December 2017	Trial, but after the jury sworn but no case yet presented; he pleaded guilty to	Three years imprisonment and a Terrorism Notification Requirement of 10 years	Three offences, later amended to add three additional offences	Sections 1 and 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006

		three of the six charges			
<b>R v Samata Ullah</b>	2 May 2017	Guilty	Extended sentence of 13 years comprising eight years custodial term and five years extended licence	Five charges	Not Specified
<b>R v Aabid Ali, aka Darren Glennon</b>	19 May 2017	Guilty	Five years and four months imprisonment and 15 year notification period	Three offences	Section 58(1)(b) of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Patrick Kabele</b>		Trial	Six years imprisonment and an extended licence of four years	One offence	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Sabbir Miah</b>		Guilty	18 months imprisonment on the first three charges and 22 months imprisonment on the remaining two charges	Five charges	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Jabed Hussain</b>		Guilty	Nine years imprisonment on one charge and seven years imprisonment concurrent on the other charge and notification requirement for 15 years	Two offences	5(1)(a) of the Terrorism Act 2006.
<b>R v Mohammed Abdallah</b>	8 December 2017	Trial	Five years imprisonment; notification requirements for 30 years	Three offences	Section 57(1) Terrorism Act 2000; Section 15(2) Terrorism Act 2000; Section 11(1) Terrorism Act 2000.

<b>R v Syed Hoque and Mashoud Miah</b>	13 January 2017	Trial	Five years and six months imprisonment; two years and six months imprisonment	One charge	Section 17 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Haroon Syed</b>	3 July 2017	Guilty	Life imprisonment with a minimum of 15 years	One offence	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Nathan Saunders</b>		Guilty	28 Months imprisonment	Five offences	Passport seized pursuant to schedule 1 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; arrested in connection with Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000; charged with Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000.
<b>R v Ummariyat Mirza, Zainub Mirza and Madihah Taheer</b>	13 December 2017	Guilty; Guilty; Not Guilty	Ummariyat received an extended sentence of 21 years' imprisonment; Zainub Mirza was sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment; Madihah Taheer to 11 years' imprisonment.	One offence (Ummariyat); Five offences (Zainub); One offence (Madihah)	Ummariyat - contrary to Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006; Zainub - contrary to Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006; Madihah - section 5 Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Atzaz Khan</b>	20 April 2017	Guilty	12 months' imprisonment and a 10-year notification order.	6 charges	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Shamim Ahmed</b>		Guilty	Six years' imprisonment, one year licence and 15 years notification order.	One offence	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Sagheer Hussain</b>		Trial	Five years' imprisonment and a 15-year notification order.	Three offences	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2
<b>R v Fahim Adam</b>	February 2019	Guilty	30 months in prison	Two charges	Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000

<b>R v a Youth (Operation Group)</b>	6 July 2018	Guilty	Nine years detention and 3-year custodial element followed by 3 years on licence. 10-year notification	One offence; at least one further offences	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006; Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006; Section 57 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Mohammed Rehman</b>		Unknown (first offence); Guilty (second offence)	Life imprisonment with 27 year minimum; three years imprisonment for the second offence	Two charges	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006; Section 57 of the Terrorism Act 2000; Subsequently also Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000
<b>R v Mary Kaya</b>	30 March 2017	Trial	12 months imprisonment and 10-year notification period	One offence	Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006
<b>R v Lewis Ludlow</b>		Guilty	Life in prison with 15-year minimum term and additional 7 years for the funding offense	Three charges	Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and Section 17 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

# Appendix G:

## Foiled and Failed Terrorist Events in the UK

### 1. Calculations for Foiled Plots

#### Source 1: MI5 Website

New Director General Ken McCallum's First Press Briefing, 14 October 2020

- 27 significant terrorist plots had been stopped since 2017, of which 8 were XRW.

(<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/news-and-speeches>)

#### Source 2: FOI Request of the Metropolitan Police

- “Since the Westminster attack in March, there have been **six terrorist plots foiled** in the UK by police and the UK intelligence community, bringing the **number of foiled plots to 19 since June 2013.**” (pg 5 of 5) [up to 21 September 2017, pg 4 of 5]

([https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/disclosure\\_2017/december\\_2017/counter-terrorism-command---information-that-the-mps-had-thwarted-terrorist-attacks-since-march](https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/disclosure_2017/december_2017/counter-terrorism-command---information-that-the-mps-had-thwarted-terrorist-attacks-since-march))

#### Source 3: Media Source A

- 25 Terror Plots have been Foiled since 2017 Westminster Attack Minister Reveals (Security Minister James Brokenshire, 22 June 2020)

(<https://news.sky.com/story/25-terror-plots-have-been-foiled-since-2017-westminster-attack-minister-reveals-12012317>)

#### Source 4: Media Source B

- Foiled Terrorist Attacks on UK Soil Have Risen to 22 [since Westminster attacks] (Neil Basu quoted, 9 September 2019)

(<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/sep/09/foiled-terrorist-attacks-on-uk-soil-have-risen-to-22-says-top-officer>)

By piecing the above sources together, the following data in terms of foiled attacks in the UK is:

- June 2013 – February 2017: 13 foiled plots (about 3.5 years)
- March 2017 – September 2017: 6 foiled plots (6 months)
- October 2017 – June 2020: 19 foiled plots (about 2.5 years)
- July 2020 – October 2020: 2 foiled plots (3 months)

For comparative purposes, the following data reflects the successful terrorist events between 2013 and 2020:

- 2013 – 1 event - Lee Rigby: one dead, terrorists arrested and prosecuted
- 2016 – 1 event - Jo Cox: one dead
- 2016 – 1 event – Asad Shah: one dead
- 2017 – 5 events – Westminster Bridge, Manchester Arena, London Bridge, Finsbury Park Mosque, Parsons Green – many dead, many injured, significant impact.
- 2018 - 2 events – Westminster vehicle attack, Manchester Victoria Station – three injured
- 2019 - 2 events – Thornton Heath S London, Stabbing (perpetrator arrested); London Bridge stabbing – two killed (perpetrator shot dead by police)
- 2020 - 2 events (in prison and Streatham) - multiple injuries, three injured (perpetrator shot dead by police)

This data indicates that While there have been 14 successful or failed terrorist attacks between 2013 and 2020 (Feb), there have been 40 foiled plots. This means that, out of a total number of 54 events, 26% were successful and 74% were foiled.

Neil Basu interviews, referred to earlier in the Chapter, seems to generally corroborates these figures<sup>151</sup>:

- “The police and MI5 say that they have thwarted 13 plots since March 2017.” (22 November 2018)

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/22/world/europe/uk-terrorism-report.html> )

- Security services have “thwarted 18 attacks in under two years” (7 January 2019)

(<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/terror-attacks-plots-uk-police-tips-concerns-appeal-foiled-brexite-basu-a8741411.html>)

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<sup>151</sup> I only refer to the Independent and New York Times articles as these sources provide numbers, whereas the Guardian article provides an estimation only.

## 2. Overview of Foiled and Failed Terrorist Events

Name of Plot	Date	Additional Details	Status of Attack
<b>Two British citizens of Bangladeshi origin arrested in Birmingham</b>	November 2000	First concrete sign that the UK had become a target for Islamist attacks. One of those arrested, Moinul Abedin, was convicted of explosives related offences and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.	Foiled Plot
<b>The ‘Shoe Bomber’, Richard Reid</b>	December 2001	Richard Reid, a British citizen and Islamic convert, attempted to detonate a bomb in his shoe while flying to the US but it failed to detonate. He is serving life in a US prison.	Failed Attack
<b>Ricin Plot, Wood Green</b>	2003	The plot took place over 2002 and 2003. It was planned against British public transport.	Foiled Plot
<b>Fertiliser Bomb Plot</b>	March 2004	Omar Khyam and a number of others planned to attack the Bluewater Shopping Centre in Kent and the Ministry of Sound nightclub in London with homemade explosives	Foiled Plot
<b>The Dirty Bomb Plot</b>	August 2004	Dhiren Barot and a number of others planned to detonate ‘dirty bombs’ containing radioactive material on the London Underground. The plot was disrupted by Operation Rhyme. 13 individuals were arrested and eight of them faced trial.	Foiled Plot
<b>Attempted bombings of London Transportation</b>	July 2005	On 21 July 2005, an additional set of coordinated attacks targeting London’s transportation system failed because of technical reasons. The perpetrators were arrested.	Failed Attack
<b>Birmingham Kidnapping Plot</b>	2007	Birmingham plot to kidnap and execute a British Muslim Soldier	Foiled Plot
<b>London Car Bombs or ‘Tiger Tiger Club’ Bombings</b>	2007	Connected to the Glasgow Airport attack as the same mixture of fuel and gas cylinders as was found in two vehicle-borne devices in London.	Foiled Plot
<b>Glasgow Airport Attack</b>	2007	Connected to the attempted London attacks of the day before. A car, loaded with propane tanks, was driven into the terminal building, but the bomb failed to explode. One perpetrator caught fire and later died; the other perpetrator was arrested and given a life sentence. Five members of the public were injured.	Failed Plot
<b>Attempted suicide bomb – Nicky Reilly</b>	May 2008	Lone Actor Nicky Reilly, an Islamic convert, attempted a suicide bombing of a restaurant in Exeter, in which the bomb detonated prematurely.	Failed Attack
<b>Suicide bombing targeting mall in Bristol</b>	2008	This attack was disrupted after members of the would-be-bomber’s mosque told the police of their concerns.	Foiled Plot

<b>Underwear Bomber</b>	December 2009	Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to detonate a bomb hidden in his underwear on the flight from Amsterdam to Detroit. The bomb failed to detonate and he was arrested.	Foiled Plot
<b>Printer Cartridge Bombing plot</b>	October 2010	Attempts were made to hide bombs in printer cartridges on cargo flights to the US. Al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) claimed responsibility, naming the planned attack as Operation Hemorrhage.	Foiled Plot
<b>Plan to attack London at Christmas</b>	2010	Complex plot involving a large number of individuals from around the country intending to target a number of locations in London, e.g. London Eye, Big Ben, the Stock Exchange and the US Embassy. They had been under surveillance by MI5 while carrying out reconnaissance. All were arrested.	Foiled Plot
<b>Underwear Bomb Plot</b>	April 2012	Another underwear bomb plot was disrupted by intelligence-led operation. The ‘perpetrator’ was believed to have been an undercover agent, and handed the bomb over to the CIA. It was designed to replicate the failed underwear bomb of 2009.	Foiled Plot
<b>Silenced firearms attack</b>	2014	Tarik Hassane and his associate Suheib Majeed plotted to conduct at least one attack using a silenced firearm	Foiled Plot
<b>Plot to behead at least one member of the public</b>	November 2014	Nadir Ali Syed was arrested in November 2014 for his suspected involvement in a plot to behead a member or members of the public. Syed and a number of his associates were charged with preparing an act of terrorism.	Foiled Plot
<b>Attempted attack on US military</b>	July 2015	Junead Khan devised a plot to attack US military personnel at a UK RAF base. Khan was arrested in July 2015	Foiled Plot

## Appendix H:

### Report Recommendations and Conclusions: Sample Overview

Date	Title	Author	Number of Recommendations
<b>May-06</b>	Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London 7 July 2005	House of Commons	11 Conclusions (no recommendations)
<b>May-06</b>	ISC Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005	Intelligence and Security Committee	20 Recommendations
<b>Jun-06</b>	Report of the 7 July Review Committee	London Assembly	54 Recommendations
<b>Mar-09</b>	Lessons Learned by the 7 July Assistance Centre Staff, Steering Group and Partners	7JAC Steering Group	11 Lessons Learned
<b>May-09</b>	Could 7/7 have been prevented? A review of the intelligence on the London terrorist attacks on 7 July 2005	Intelligence and Security Committee	38 observations and conclusions
<b>Jan-11</b>	Review of Counter-Terrorism and Security Powers: A Report by Lord MacDonald of River Glaven QC	Independent Review - Lord MacDonald	3 Conclusions
<b>Jan-11</b>	Review of Counter-Terrorism and Security Powers: Review Findings and Recommendations	Government - Home Secretary	53 Observations and Recommendations
<b>May-11</b>	Operation Gird: Report following Review	IRTL - Anderson	4 conclusions & (11) recommendations
<b>Jul-11</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2010	IRTL - Anderson	9 conclusions/recommendations
<b>Dec-11</b>	First Report on the Operation of the Terrorist Asset Freezing etc Act	IRTL - Anderson	9 recommendations
<b>Feb-12</b>	Government Response to the IRTL's First Report on Operation of Terrorist Asset Freezing etc	HM Treasury	15 responses to 9 recommendations
<b>Mar-12</b>	Control Orders: Final Report on the Prevention of Terrorism Act	IRTL - Anderson	7 recommendations
<b>May-12</b>	Coroner's Inquest into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005: Review of Progress	Government	112 actions/updates
<b>Jun-12</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2011	IRTL - Anderson	9 conclusions & 22 recommendations
<b>Dec-12</b>	Second Report on the Operation of the Terrorist Asset Freezing etc Act	IRTL - Anderson	10 recommendations

<b>Mar-13</b>	First Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act	IRTL - Anderson	8 recommendations
<b>Jul-13</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2012	IRTL - Anderson	8 conclusions/recommendations
<b>Dec-13</b>	Third Report on the Operation of the Terrorist Asset Freezing etc Act	IRTL - Anderson	12 recommendations
<b>Mar-14</b>	Second Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act	IRTL - Anderson	41 conclusions & 10 recommendations
<b>Jul-14</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2013	IRTL - Anderson	11 conclusions/recommendations
<b>Nov-14</b>	Report on the Intelligence Relating to the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby	Intelligence and Security Committee	55 conclusions & recommendations
<b>Mar-15</b>	Fourth Report on the Operation of the Terrorist Asset Freezing etc Act	IRTL - Anderson	13 recommendations
<b>Mar-15</b>	Third Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act	IRTL - Anderson	5 conclusions (no recommendations)
<b>Jun-15</b>	A Question of Trust: Report of the Investigatory Powers Review	IRTL - Anderson	124 recommendations
<b>Jul-15</b>	Government Response to the IRTL's Fourth Report on Operation of Terrorist Asset Freezing etc	HM Treasury	2 responses (only to recommendation 13)
<b>Sep-15</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2014	IRTL - Anderson	6 observations & 3 recommendations
<b>Apr-16</b>	Citizenship Removal Resulting in Statelessness	IRTL - Anderson	4 conclusions
<b>May-16</b>	Addressing Islamic Extremism	Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology	6 Observations
<b>Jul-16</b>	Counter-Extremism	Human Rights Joint Committee	14 Conclusions and Recommendations
<b>Jul-16</b>	Radicalisation: The counter-narrative and identifying the tipping point	Home Affairs Select Committee	24 Conclusions and Recommendations
<b>Aug-16</b>	Report of the Bulk Powers Review	IRTL - Anderson	15 conclusions & 17 recommendations
<b>Oct-16</b>	Harris Report into London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident	Lord Harris	127 recommendations
<b>Dec-16</b>	Report on the Operation of the Terrorism Acts etc 2015	IRTL - Anderson	16 conclusions/recommendations

<b>2017</b>	A Process Evaluation of the Structured Risk Guidance for Extremist Offenders	Prison and Probation Service: (multiple authors)	10 Conclusions and Recommendations
<b>Apr-17</b>	Hate Crime: abuse, hate and extremism online	Home Affairs Select Committee	16 Conclusions and Recommendations
<b>Oct-17</b>	Harris Report into London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident - One Year On		125 responses
<b>Dec-17</b>	Government Response to 'Radicalisation: The counter-narrative and identifying the tipping point'	Government - Home Secretary	12 responses (although several recommendations might be addressed within one response)
<b>Dec-17</b>	Attacks in London and Manchester March-June 2017: Independent Assessment of MI5 and Police Internal Reviews	Lord Anderson	Conclusions only (general)
<b>Feb-18</b>	The Westminster Bridge Terrorist Attack 22 March 2017 - Operation Classific: A Report on the Use of Terrorism Legislation	Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (MH)	4 Recommendations
<b>Mar-18</b>	The Kerslake Report: An independent review into the preparedness for, and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017	Independent Review Committee/Panel	50 Recommendations
	Coroner's Inquest into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005		9 Recommendations

## **Appendix I:**

### **Analytical Model: Additional Information and Data**

#### **Description of the ALTPEG Model<sup>152</sup>**

The following graphic shows the unpopulated ALTPEG Model. The six categories are organised along the left side (Column 1). Column 2 contains the sub-questions for each of the categories. Columns 3 to 6 are placeholders for the various workstreams of a particular strategy – the number of these can be changed as necessary. Column 7 provides a space for questions not assignable to any specific workstream, but which apply to the strategy as a whole. This is particularly relevant to the category of Events and Goals, where questions asked are not applied to individual workstreams but rather to the strategy in its entirety. Column 8 presents the combined scores for each of the questions, while Column 9 provides the category score, combining the total scores (across all workstreams) of each category. Row 19 contains the total scores for each of the workstreams, and Row 20, whose only populated cell is in Column 9, provides the overall score for the strategy, combining the total scores per category<sup>153</sup>.

The design of the Model is intended to allow for multi-dimensional analysis across analytical questions, categories, workstreams and the strategy itself (the levels micro-, meso- and macro-levels presented above). Comparative analysis can be carried out within workstreams as well as between workstreams. Further, should the Model be applied to other strategies, comparative analysis could be undertaken on the efficacy of the strategies and the various elements<sup>154</sup>.

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<sup>152</sup> ALTPEG is an acronym for the six categories explored in the model: Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perspectives, Events and Goals.

<sup>153</sup> This total score must be compiled from the Column 9 scores because combining the workstream scores would omit the scores for Events and for one of the questions under Goals.

<sup>154</sup> There is an important caveat here. If a strategy has a differing number of workstreams or structural components, the scores might not be directly comparable. In other words, a strategy with four workstreams will have a lower score than a strategy that has five workstreams, but a higher score than one that contains only three workstreams. There are two options for addressing this. First, the researcher could circumvent the established workstreams assigned by the relevant government altogether and establish, rather than workstreams, thematic categories for counter-terrorism activities which exist in all strategies regardless of organisation or titles. For example, in the case of CONTEST, the policing and security services workstream is called Pursue. Another strategy might not call similar activities the same name, or have grouped them in a similar workstream, but this does not change the fact that this 'other' strategy contains activities assigned to police and security services agencies. This thematic organisation would likely ensure the broader applicability of the matrix. The alternative option is to treat the data in such a way that eliminates the scoring discrepancies across the strategies.

Categories	Associated Questions	WS1	WS2	WS3	WS4	Strategy-Wide	Score (per Q)	Score (per Cat)
<b>Assessment</b>	Are assessments carried out?							
	Are they independent?							
	Are they publicly available?							
<b>Learning</b>	Does learning happen?							
	Can it be measured?							
<b>Transparency</b>	Is the strategy transparent?							
	Has transparency improved over time?							
<b>Perception</b>	Are the perceptions of the public positive?							
	Are the perceptions of the media positive?							
	Are the perceptions of the practitioners positive?							
<b>Events</b>	Are more events foiled than are successful?							
	What is the balance of attacks which are stopped (foiled) versus not stopped (successful or failed)?							
<b>Goals</b>	[To be completed based on strategy of study]							
	[To be completed based on strategy of study]							
	<b>Score (per workstream)</b>							
	<b>Score (Contest total)</b>							

The ALTPEG Model provides a stepping-stone towards more robust analytical tools for counter-terrorism strategies. Nonetheless, as it stands, the Model provides organizational clarity to the categories established as essential to any counter-terrorism strategy, while allowing for analysis to take place at multiple levels. The scoring system needs to be transparent, but assuming that it is, there is no reason for this tool to not be useful in understanding the impact of counter-terrorism strategies, and measuring that impact quantitatively. Aggregated scoring can be applied for comparative descriptive purposes, but

the scoring can be easily broken back down to its component parts for individual (categorical or workstream) assessment. Importantly, a certain element of analysis, such as has been carried out in Chapters 3 and 4, is required to ensure that a holistic view of the strategy has been developed enabling scoring to be carried out. An alternative would be to present the questions of the Model as a survey and engage with practitioners and academics to understand views held. Either approach would allow for the Model to be sufficiently robust to provide valuable insights into the impact and efficacy of counter-terrorism strategies.

**Scale Code for Categories Assessment, Learning, Transparency, Perspectives and Goals:**

- 5: Always – positive score
- 4: Sometimes – positive score
- 3: Neutral/Unknown
- 2: Rarely – negative score
- 1: Never – negative score

**Scale Code for Category Events:**

- 5: High – positive score
- 4: Medium-High – positive score
- 3: Balanced
- 2: Medium-Low – negative score
- 1: Low – negative score

The important aspect of the scale is the directionality of the 1-5 scoring. In this model, as score of 1 is consistently negative while a score of 5 is consistently positive.

# Appendix J: CONTEST 2011 Goals and Objectives

<p>The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONTEST</b></p>	
<p><b>Pursue</b> Stop terrorist attacks</p> <p><b>Pursue Objectives (2012-2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess counter-terrorism powers and ensure they are both effective and proportionate</li> <li>Improve ability to prosecute and deport people for terrorist-related offences</li> <li>Increase capabilities to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorist threats</li> <li>Ensure that judicial proceedings can better handle sensitive and secret material to serve the interests of both justice and national security</li> <li>Work with other countries and multilateral organisations to enable us to better tackle the threats we face at their source.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pursue: Success will mean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At home, we are able to disrupt terrorist related activity in the UK and prosecute or deport more of those responsible;</li> <li>Overseas, we have seized the opportunity we now have to reduce further the threat from Al Qaeda, its affiliates and other terrorist organisations and we have disrupted attacks planned against this country; and</li> <li>Our counter-terrorism work is effective, proportionate and consistent with our commitment to human rights.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Prevent</b> Stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism</p> <p><b>Prevent Objectives (2012-2015):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;</li> <li>Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and</li> <li>Work with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, the internet and health) where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.</li> </ul> <p><b>Prevent: Success will mean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a reduction in support for terrorism of all kinds in this country and in states overseas whose security most impacts on our own;</li> <li>There is more effective challenge to those extremists whose views are shared by terrorist organisations and used by terrorists to legitimise violence; and</li> <li>There is more challenge to and isolation of extremists and terrorists operating on the internet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protect</b> Strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack</p> <p><b>Protect Objectives (2012-2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen UK border security;</li> <li>Reduce the vulnerability of the transport network;</li> <li>Increase the resilience of the UK's infrastructure; and</li> <li>Improve protective security for crowded places.</li> </ul> <p><b>Protect: Success will mean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We know where and how we are vulnerable to terrorist attack and have reduced those vulnerabilities to an acceptable and a proportionate level;</li> <li>We share our priorities with the private sector and the international community and, wherever possible, we act together to address them; and</li> <li>The disruptive effect and costs of our protective security work are proportionate to the risks we face.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Prepare</b> Mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack</p> <p><b>Prepare Objectives (2012-2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to build generic capabilities to respond to and recover from a wide range of terrorist and other civil emergencies;</li> <li>Improve preparedness for the highest impact risks in the National Risk Assessment;</li> <li>Improve the ability of the emergency services to work together during a terrorist attack; and</li> <li>Enhance communications and information sharing for terrorist attacks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Prepare: Success will mean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our planning for the consequences of all civil emergencies provides us with the capabilities to respond to and recover from the most likely kinds of terrorist attacks in this country;</li> <li>We have in place additional capabilities to manage ongoing terrorist attacks wherever required; and</li> <li>We have in place additional capabilities to respond to the highest impact risks.</li> </ul>