

# **Counter-terrorism policing**

An inspection of the police's  
contribution to the government's  
Prevent programme

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# Summary

We examined how effective the police are in contributing to Prevent, one of the strands of the UK Government's CONTEST strategy for countering terrorism. Fundamentally, we sought to establish whether forces have the capability to meet terrorist threats faced by the UK, only recently downgraded to substantial from severe. And is this capability consistent and communicated well?

This is a largely encouraging report which found that forces understand the purpose of Prevent and are meeting their obligations under their 'Prevent duty'. There are many positive aspects of the Prevent work police forces do. We saw that policies and effective processes designed to protect people from being radicalised are in place, but not all forces have adopted innovative working.

## Are forces capable?

Most forces have mandatory Prevent training but not all forces could tell us how many officers had completed the training because they don't monitor compliance. Nor could all officers recognise the signs of radicalisation, even those who had recently had training. Some forces have designed training packages for frontline staff, but there is no training tailored to the role of each force's strategic lead on Prevent. There are opportunities for adding Prevent to the continuing professional development programme for strategic leads.

We are pleased that, since our inspection, the College of Policing now includes a module on vulnerability to radicalisation in its national safeguarding training programme. The college has developed a training package that promotes the 13 core disciplines of public protection. We think that vulnerability to radicalisation should be included as the 14th discipline.

Most forces had a good and improving capability to support the multi-agency approach to Prevent. Many interviewees were confident in the police's ability to manage the risk from radicalisation. This includes:

- effective use of well-trained specialist counter-terrorism (CT) police-funded posts;
- a willingness of forces to fund necessary additional Prevent roles;
- a supportive and agile national/regional Prevent network;
- satisfactory IT systems; and
- creative use of force staff as 'single points of contact' to increase Prevent awareness.

We also found that some important roles don't have access to the Prevent IT system.

## Are forces consistent?

The Ministry of Defence Police's omission from Schedule 6 to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is something that should be reviewed by the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence as well as consideration of armed services police who may all have a Prevent duty when dealing with internal risks presented by staff.

Police forces don't always recognise vulnerability to radicalisation as an explicit issue; it was more often seen as simply another safeguarding issue, and we found inconsistencies in the links between safeguarding teams and Prevent officers.

We were pleased to find that forces are well supported by the National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (NCTPHQ) policy and readily available advice. The training for dedicated Prevent staff was described as comprehensive and valuable. These staff were later considered Prevent experts by forces and partners. NCTPHQ provides guidance and co-ordination to the activities of forces, making their approach to the Prevent duty more consistent.

The government promotes a 'Channel programme' which is designed to ensure a range of partner organisations including the police, local authority, education and health services work together to deter and prevent people becoming radicalised. We found strong links between forces and these respective partners apparent in Channel programme meetings.

There is a national referral process which is generally clear, understood and adhered to. But NCTPHQ policy could be clearer on how forces bring to notice vulnerable individuals. We recommend a review process is implemented to quality assure police forces' compliance with policy. We found no performance indicators to help forces to measure Prevent contribution.

## Are forces communicating well?

We found an unstructured approach to disseminating lessons learnt for Prevent. We also saw a marked discrepancy between forces' [counter-terrorism local profile](#) (CTLP) documents on governance, purpose, method of creation, structure and dissemination.

There was a range of approaches to Prevent communication strategies. But we believe it is appropriate that the circumstances of each incident should dictate how the communication strategy is implemented.

We make eight recommendations to further improve the effectiveness of CT policing.

## Recommendations

- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and the College of Policing should develop a training and awareness package that encompasses continuous professional development for Prevent strategic leads in forces.
- By June 2020, the College of Policing and the NPCC national lead for public protection and safeguarding should add vulnerability to radicalisation as the 14th core discipline of public protection.
- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead should make sure that all fixed intelligence management units have sufficient access to the Prevent case management tracker.
- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead should create national guidance for the police service on applying Prevent to staff vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism, to identify a range of options, such as selection processes, welfare and vetting, including guidance on risk thresholds.
- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead should review the national business assurance process to assure compliance with NCTPHQ policy.
- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and Office for Security and Counter-terrorism (OSCT) should develop performance measures that will help police forces assess their operational contributions to Prevent.
- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead and each force Prevent lead should review the attendance of force representatives at Channel panels so that police are correctly represented by decision makers who can contribute to managing risk.
- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and OSCT should undertake a national review of counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLP), to include its governance, purpose, method of creation, structure and dissemination, and produce revised CTLP guidance.

# Introduction

## About HMICFRS

HMICFRS independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and fire and rescue services – in the public interest. In preparing our reports, we ask the questions that citizens would ask, and publish the answers in accessible form, using our expertise to interpret the evidence and make recommendations for improvement.

## Context

Terrorism is one of the most direct and immediate threats to the national security of the UK.<sup>1</sup> Throughout 2018 and into 2019, the threat level was severe, meaning an attack is highly likely. In November 2019, it was downgraded to substantial, meaning there is a strong possibility of an attack.

The UK Government's strategy for countering terrorism is called [CONTEST](#) and is co-ordinated by the Home Office. Prevent is one of four strands of CONTEST often referred to as the 4 Ps: prevent, pursue, protect and prepare. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The objectives of the Prevent work strand are to:

- tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism;
- safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support; and
- enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

The CONTEST strategy is clear that the police have a critical role in the Prevent work strand. Police officers are well placed to identify people who are vulnerable to radicalisation and refer them for appropriate support. The police develop and support local partnerships and projects to prevent people from becoming radicalised or support them to disengage from radicalised behaviour. Through the government's [Channel](#) programme, they work with other organisations (like health and education services) to protect vulnerable people being drawn into terrorism by:

- identifying individuals at risk;
- assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and

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<sup>1</sup> [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), HM Government, Cmnd 9161, 2015, page 85, paragraph 4.i.

- developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

## Our commission

In this inspection, we sought to answer the question, “How effective is the police contribution to Prevent?” by considering:

- what capability is in place in police forces to support Prevent;
- whether there is consistency in the way in which police forces operate with regional counter-terrorism (intelligence) units (CT(I)Us) and other organisations; and
- whether there is effective sharing of information: within policing, with other agencies, and their joint approach to communication with the public about Prevent.

We have published reports about Prevent before. [In 2008, we worked with the Audit Commission to assess what works to prevent radicalisation](#), drawing on the knowledge of police and local authorities with experience of tackling violent extremism. [In 2009, we inspected forces’ capabilities to support the Prevent strategy](#).

These reports are now more than ten years old, but some of their comments and recommendations remain applicable today. We recommend that those reports are read alongside this report.

## The Prevent duty

Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is known as the Prevent duty. It places a general duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Most police forces are included in the list of specified authorities.<sup>2</sup>

[Home Office statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#) states “... Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables must demonstrate that they have contributed to the government’s counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST). This includes the Prevent programme, where they are required to take into account the need to identify and divert those involved in or vulnerable to radicalisation.”

An extract from the Home Office guidance on relevant aspects of the Prevent duty is included at Annex A.

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 6 to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, part 1, paragraph 1; all 43 Home Office forces, British Transport Police and other forces are included; the Ministry of Defence Police and the armed service police forces are not included.

# Methodology

We reviewed a wide range of published literature, including legislation, guidance and articles.

We interviewed Prevent staff and their line managers in the [national counter terrorism policing network](#). We also interviewed the national co-ordinator for Prevent and the chief officer with responsibility for the Prevent portfolio at the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

We reviewed a range of documents provided by the NPCC, the NCTPHQ and police forces. These included Prevent implementation or action plans, training material and briefing documents.

Fieldwork for this inspection took place between October 2018 and February 2019. We used a common set of questions and interviewed staff in similar roles in each of the police forces we visited. Guidance from two external reference groups informed the questions we used. More information about these groups is in Annex B.

We sampled the records and forms forces use to assess someone's vulnerability to terrorism or extremism.

We visited all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales. We also visited the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, the Ministry of Defence Police and British Transport Police. In each force, we interviewed the chief officer responsible for Prevent, the strategic lead for Prevent and the head of safeguarding. We held focus groups with community police officers and staff and representatives of other public agencies who work with police forces on Prevent.

Our inspectors were helped by a significant investment of NCTPHQ staff. These staff gave us specialist advice about the systems and processes we should expect to find in forces. In turn, they gained experience of inspection methodology which will help them in future national reviews of Prevent.

A detailed description of the methodology of this inspection can be found at Annex B.



# Capability

This chapter covers:

- the categories of personnel forces allocate Prevent responsibilities to;
- the Prevent-related training the police receive;
- the Prevent-related training and awareness briefings given to external audiences; and
- the technology police forces use to support Prevent work.

The management of Prevent activity is covered in more detail in the Consistency chapter of this report.

## Categories of personnel

Most forces have a nominated chief officer lead for Prevent. Usually, three categories of personnel also have Prevent responsibilities, each with different roles and training needs:

- dedicated Prevent staff;<sup>3</sup>
- single points of contact (SPOCs), or Prevent champions; and
- other police personnel.

### Dedicated Prevent staff

Prevent officers must manage the risk posed by people who are vulnerable to extremism. They manage police-led Prevent referrals, contribute to multi-agency cases (i.e. Channel) and maintain police records.

Most dedicated Prevent staff we interviewed are in positions funded by the national CT policing grant<sup>4</sup> and are managed by supervisors at the regional CTUs and CTIUs. We were pleased to see that when these positions weren't funded by the CT policing grant, they are being funded by the force.

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<sup>3</sup> In this report we use the term 'dedicated Prevent staff' to refer to police officers and staff who have a full-time Prevent role. They are also called Prevent officers or counter-terrorism case officers.

<sup>4</sup> The counter-terrorism policing grant is a national, ring-fenced fund to tackle the threat of terrorism in the UK. In 2018/19 the grant was £751 million.

The distribution of the CT policing grant for Prevent is based on an annual assessment of threat and risk. Most of the people we interviewed were satisfied that funding for Prevent resources was allocated properly, in line with the available intelligence. We saw evidence that resourcing levels were usually kept under review, including changes to staff levels following reassessment of threat and risk.

Nearly all the dedicated Prevent staff we spoke to raise awareness of counter-terrorism in others and provide training (within the forces, to other bodies and to communities). But several interviewees, in forces with a high volume of referrals, told us that they focus largely on reactive case management and can't do much community work.

These are important roles. Targeted training of others and raising awareness in the community are vital for identifying vulnerability and managing risk in the force area. Forces should prioritise this work where possible.

We found good examples of Prevent staff that are funded from the CT policing grant, providing resilience and support across force boundaries. One Prevent supervisor described this approach as enabling "consistency, interoperability and flexibility".

All of the dedicated Prevent staff we spoke to understood their responsibilities. They told us that they had received appropriate training and were rarely taken away from their primary role to carry out other duties.

In 2015, the Home Office introduced the role of Channel police practitioner with responsibility for co-ordinating referrals and managing cases through the Channel process (we explain this process later in this report). We are satisfied that forces have arrangements in place to fulfil the Channel police practitioner role at a force or regional level.

### **Prevent SPOCs or champions – a thoughtful approach**

Most forces have, or are in the process of introducing, SPOCs for Prevent or wider counter-terrorism/right wing terrorism issues. In some forces they are known as Prevent champions.

[CONTEST](#) calls on police to "ensure that Prevent is embedded into all aspects of policing, including patrol, neighbourhood and safeguarding functions" (page 37). We believe that the SPOC role helps with this.

SPOCs hold various ranks and functions depending on local interpretation of the role. Most forces appoint a constable or sergeant who advises colleagues dealing with people identified as potentially vulnerable to radicalisation. Other forces appoint an inspector or chief inspector who leads on Prevent and acts as a link to local interested parties. We were told NCTPHQ is in the process of defining the role to add to the Prevent policy.

Some forces with lower levels of threat and risk told us that they believe SPOCs aren't necessary. The SPOC role is useful for raising awareness among police officers across the country who may encounter, even in routine interactions, people at risk of being radicalised. It is important that police officers can recognise the signs of radicalisation when they see them.

We were impressed by the thoughtful approach that some forces had adopted, combining this Prevent SPOC role with other related responsibilities such as tackling hate crime. A good example of this was mapping across extremist intelligence with locations of hate crime. We consider this to be an example of good practice.

### **Other police personnel**

Many forces told us that their Prevent approach is supported by community and diversity officers, community cohesion officers, hate crime officers or similar staff.

In each force, we interviewed operational staff who weren't routinely involved in Prevent work. They were generally assigned to some form of community, response or safeguarding role. In most forces we found that officers had a good awareness of the Prevent-related responsibilities. But they didn't have a good understanding of the risk of radicalisation and how to recognise its signs, compared with other risks such as child sexual exploitation or hate crime. Many interviewees, who should have had routine and regular training inputs, had only recently been briefed on Prevent.

## **The training the police receive**

### **Comprehensive and valuable national training**

The dedicated Prevent staff told us that the national training provided for their role was comprehensive and valuable. Their forces and other bodies considered them to be the Prevent experts. Part of their role is to provide training to the SPOCs and the wider police family.

### **Forces provide awareness briefings**

Most SPOCs had a sound understanding of Prevent. But their experiences in the role varied. Some described thorough training with regular updates; some had only recently been nominated as SPOCs and hadn't had training; and some had been trained a long time ago and hadn't received an update since.

Most forces provided Prevent awareness briefings and training to new staff on induction courses and continuation training or other developmental training courses, such as for promotion.

### **Computer-based training is less effective**

All forces have used Prevent computer-based or e-training packages.<sup>5</sup> Most have made this training mandatory for officers and staff. But because some forces didn't monitor compliance, not all forces could tell us how many of their officers and staff had done it.

Many of the officers and staff we spoke to felt e-training was less effective than training provided in person. Trainers with the right knowledge could make the subject directly relevant to the local policing environment.

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<sup>5</sup> [National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies](#); a computer-based training system provided for police forces.

We reviewed the Prevent e-learning available to officers and found it lacked all the information needed to help officers identify the risks of radicalisation. We are pleased that since our inspection the Home Office has revised and updated the Prevent e-learning.

### **Gaps in knowledge**

In some forces that had recently provided in person training with a local context (for example, linked to local hate crime reporting), officers we spoke to didn't have a good level of Prevent knowledge, such as the signs of radicalisation. Reminders and awareness briefings in a lot of forces have been irregular, leading to gaps in knowledge of frontline staff.

### **Training is needed for Prevent strategic leads**

Many forces maintain the role of force strategic lead for Prevent, and in our view all forces should have a senior officer in this role. This individual reports to the chief officer responsible for counter-terrorism in their respective force. There is no Prevent guidance or training that is specifically tailored for those undertaking the role of force strategic lead on Prevent. We found very mixed levels of knowledge and a range of approaches in use, particularly in newly appointed staff. Some were unaware of their responsibilities.

There is a wealth of useful information available to strategic leads, in the form of the CONTEST strategy, the Home Office's Prevent duty guidance and the NCTPHQ Prevent policy. But it doesn't provide specific information about how each force should discharge its duty. We think there is a role for the NPCC lead to help force Prevent strategic leads understand fully what is expected of them.

#### **Recommendation 1**

- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and the College of Policing should develop a training and awareness package that encompasses continuous professional development for Prevent strategic leads in forces.

### **Training designed for certain roles**

Some forces have designed training packages to help frontline staff identify people at risk of being drawn into terrorism and extremism. These are for staff working in, for example, multi-agency safeguarding hubs and force control rooms. Although we didn't review the material they had created, we think this approach brings greater national consistency and so has merit. We also think forces could extend this approach to other areas of policing such as public protection teams.

## **Vulnerability to radicalisation is a public protection and safeguarding issue**

Officers and staff told us that training for safeguarding staff is particularly valuable because it links the Prevent duty with other strands of vulnerability. We were also told that vulnerability to radicalisation wasn't always an explicit theme in safeguarding training. Nor is it included in the College of Policing's public protection learning programme, which covers the College's 13 'core disciplines' of public protection.<sup>6</sup> We are pleased that, since our inspection, the College of Policing now includes a module on vulnerability to radicalisation in its national safeguarding training programme. But vulnerability to radicalisation should become their 14th discipline.

### **Recommendation 2**

- By June 2020, the College of Policing and the NPCC National lead for public protection and safeguarding should add vulnerability to radicalisation as the 14th core discipline of public protection.

## **The support the police provides to partner agencies**

### **Mixed experiences**

For many years, police forces have provided Prevent awareness briefings to interested parties and organisations, such as local authority and education staff. Our interviews with staff in other organisations and from interested parties suggested mixed experiences: in some areas, we were told that forces had completely withdrawn from joint briefing, while in others, forces were fully engaged and viewed awareness briefing as a local Prevent priority.

Lack of time and resources have led forces to reduce their efforts in external briefings. Nonetheless, forces still see value in targeted briefing. A few external bodies praised the value and credibility of police-led Prevent awareness briefing, especially specialist presentations about threat and the signs and symbols used by extremists. In general, they thought that the police add value to partner agency training because of their experience and expertise in managing risk. We agree, and believe forces are, in general, able to balance the briefing requirement with other demands.

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<sup>6</sup> The College of Policing's 13 core disciplines of public protection are: adults at risk; child abuse; child sexual exploitation; domestic abuse; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; honour-based violence; human trafficking; managing violent offenders; missing persons; prostitution; serious sexual offences; and stalking and harassment.

## Information technology

Effective communication and information sharing is vitally important to achieving the objectives of Prevent. Overwhelmingly, the dedicated Prevent staff we interviewed told us that they have access to the ICT systems and devices they need to do their job.

### **The Prevent Case Management Tracker: a good tool but lacks connectivity**

Those we spoke to were especially supportive of the Prevent case management tracker (PCMT), introduced in May 2018 to replace all other case management systems. One officer described the PCMT as a good tool for managing cases because, “It allows us to manage cases far more consistently, thoroughly and with good governance”.

PCMT can be used to effectively manage Prevent cases. It makes good mobile working possible because users can log in and use the system while in other police force areas. But, like similar systems, it isn’t integrated with other police computer systems. This lack of integration can inhibit the exchange of intelligence, which introduces inefficiency. Information has to be manually copied – or double-keyed – from one system to another.

We were surprised that, in some fixed intelligence management units (FIMUs), there were no staff who could access the PCMT. This is usually because the dedicated Prevent officer(s) didn’t work in the FIMU or in a nearby office. This should be remedied to allow FIMU officers access to PCMT data, which would be useful during initial assessments of Prevent referrals. It would also make sure case updates recorded on the PCMT are available for later assessments.

### **Recommendation 3**

- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead should make sure that all fixed intelligence management units have sufficient access to the Prevent case management tracker.

# Consistency

This chapter covers:

- our observations of an inconsistency in the Prevent duty's scope, concerning the Ministry of Defence Police;
- whether effective governance structures were in place to secure consistency in forces' Prevent activity;
- how consistently the police functioned as members of local multi-agency Prevent partnerships;
- how well information about people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism was managed by forces to 'prosecute, disrupt and deter'; and
- how well forces respond to Prevent information and work with partners to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.

## Ministry of Defence Police

The Ministry of Defence Police isn't listed in Schedule 6 to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. So the Prevent duty doesn't apply to the Ministry of Defence Police. The 43 English and Welsh forces, the Civil Nuclear Police Authority and British Transport Police are all listed.

Some Prevent-related activities concern insider threats (covered later in this chapter). Ministry of Defence Police interviewees couldn't understand why their force hadn't been listed in Schedule 6. At the time of the inspection, Ministry of Defence Police were drafting a Prevent policy and standard operating procedure, as they believe they should feature in this legislation. Because of this, and similarities between this force and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (and, to a lesser extent, British Transport Police), we believe the Prevent duty should apply. Similar considerations could also apply to the armed services police (the Royal Military Police, Royal Air Force Police and Royal Navy Police).

## Governance structures

Every force and region, working with their local authorities, needs to adapt their governance structure for Prevent-related activities, to work effectively in the local environment. Based on our review of existing structures, we believe governance structures should include:

- strategic oversight – oversight by a designated NPCC lead who governs Prevent activity for the force and, sometimes, regional resources working locally;
- management – in each force, a senior manager responsible for the Prevent work; and
- supervision – the day-to-day supervision of Prevent activity.

### Strategic oversight

In most forces, a board chaired by a chief officer was responsible for strategic oversight of Prevent. This was usually the force CONTEST board, Prevent board or a vulnerability board. We were surprised to find that, in some forces, these boards met infrequently or had only recently been re-established.

A few forces held board meetings but had no underlying management structure to oversee Prevent work, or one had only very recently been put in place.

In some regions, forces chose not to oversee certain Prevent activities. Instead, they made it a function of their regional CTU or CTIU. Generally, we were satisfied with this approach, but some forces lacked a good enough understanding of the regional units' activities on their behalf.

The role of regional units in the strategic oversight of Prevent was less clear to us and to those we interviewed in some forces. For some forces, their representative at the regional CONTEST board wasn't the force NPCC Prevent lead and we weren't convinced that relevant information from the CONTEST board was always passed on effectively to the rest of the force. In a few instances, there was no force representative at the CONTEST board meeting and the force relied on the minutes of the meeting for information. We don't consider this a good enough way of keeping updated.

Regional Prevent co-ordinators<sup>7</sup> manage the dedicated Prevent staff funded by the CT policing grant. We found established links and regular liaison between most regional Prevent co-ordinators (and/or their deputies) and the forces in their region. Most regional Prevent co-ordinators participate in force Prevent meetings and give regular briefings on Prevent matters.

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<sup>7</sup> Regional Prevent co-ordinators are CTU or CTIU staff who have a role in managing implementation of Prevent in their region.



## Prevent partnerships

In September 2018, the Home Office issued a [toolkit](#) “to support local authorities and their partners in their work to protect vulnerable people from radicalisation”. This includes guidance on the operation of Prevent partnership boards and action plans. Because the police are members of these partnerships, we reviewed how consistent they were.

We found good links between forces and their local authority Prevent partnership boards, with regular personal contact, attendance at scheduled meetings and the exchange of information. But representation by forces at these meetings was inconsistent, which caused concern with partner agencies. In some, the NPCC force strategic lead attended; in others, the local policing area representative or the regional dedicated Prevent staff attended. We were told the police’s ability to influence the partnership’s Prevent strategy and its implementation is inhibited by junior staff attending. We believe the benefits from Prevent partnership meetings could be more consistent, and attendance should be set at a minimum of management level.

### **No ‘one-size-fits-all’ model, but generally effective arrangements**

There is no one-size-fits-all model for partnership oversight of Prevent. It should be determined by local authority arrangements and local levels of threat and risk. Police and the representatives of other organisations we interviewed described generally effective joint working arrangements for Prevent. In a few places, we were told that some public services weren’t contributing effectively to the partnership effort. Examining other bodies, as part of any partnership arrangements, wasn’t in the scope of the inspection. As such, we didn’t explore it further and can’t confirm the veracity of the comments. We also heard that the partnership lacked clear direction and so asked to see the partnership action plans in each force area.

### **Prevent partnership action plans not in place everywhere**

We found that up-to-date Prevent partnership action plans weren’t in place in all force areas. The plans supplied to us were a mixture of good and poor. The good plans contained clear objectives that were appropriately linked to the CTLP and had been recently updated. The poor plans lacked timescales and/or identified owners for actions and were up to two years out of date.

In most places, other organisations we spoke to commented that the support they had from forces and regions either met or exceeded their expectations. Police activity was explicitly linked to the Prevent partnership action plan. Partnership board members were able to hold the police and others to account for their Prevent contribution by monitoring the actions in the plans.

## **Partnership plans and police plans created independently**

Most of the plans we viewed incorporated actions for police. But we were troubled to find that some partnership plans and local force plans (used by forces to manage their Prevent work) had been created independently of each other. In some forces, there was no link between them. This means we can't be sure that the police's efforts always complement those of the wider partnership. A more consistently integrated approach to planning would be preferable.

## **Inconsistent links between safeguarding teams and Prevent officers**

Many interviewees considered vulnerability to radicalisation to be simply another safeguarding issue. But we found inconsistencies in the links between safeguarding teams and Prevent officers. Some described close working or improving relationships; others highlighted gaps and felt the link between Prevent and safeguarding wasn't seamless. Some personnel tended to view Prevent-related work as secret work, simply because it is related to counter-terrorism policing. Some aspects of CT policing have to be done in secret, but that generally isn't the case for Prevent-related work.

On balance, we were satisfied. Most interviewees from other organisations saw safeguarding as a thread that runs through many policing activities, including Prevent. And most Prevent and safeguarding staff were confident to share information with one another.

## **An inconsistent understanding of vulnerability to radicalisation**

People we interviewed from other organisations thought that specialist safeguarding teams and police Prevent teams usually work closely together. Prevent is considered part of safeguarding cases. We support the view that integrated working has improved relationships between police and other organisations. Many interviewees were confident in the police's ability to manage the risks from radicalisation.

The same people weren't as confident that their own staff would recognise vulnerabilities relating to radicalisation. Some non-police staff working in multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) teams<sup>8</sup> weren't familiar enough with the guidance on the Prevent duty. We were told most police officers in safeguarding hubs and MASHs have had Prevent awareness training. Therefore, they should understand the concept of vulnerability to radicalisation. Some MASHs had Prevent SPOCs to give advice and guidance.

However, not all police staff understood vulnerability to radicalisation as well as other vulnerabilities. When we reviewed safeguarding training material, posters and force intranet content, we found that information on extremism and radicalisation was often absent.

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<sup>8</sup> In this report we use multi agency safeguarding hub or MASH to describe any arrangement between the police and other organisations that have a role in safeguarding vulnerable people. In some forces these are called safeguarding hubs or safeguarding teams.

We believe that the reason for the limited focus on extremism is that it isn't one of the College of Policing's core disciplines of public protection. As a result, most force safeguarding strategies don't mention it. There needs to be greater awareness of vulnerability to radicalisation so that officers and staff can identify people at risk. This is especially true in frontline policing and safeguarding departments.

Some forces told us of safeguarding cases that hadn't been referred to a Prevent officer to assess the risk of radicalisation. Direct referrals to Prevent teams sometimes aren't passed to safeguarding teams because staff don't know about wider safeguarding opportunities. We believe this risks vulnerable people not getting the support they need. This risk would be reduced through case reviews or auditing as part of a business assurance process; we cover this later in this report.

## **Prosecute, disrupt and deter**

To comply with the Home Office's statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, forces should work in partnership with others to "prosecute, disrupt and deter extremists" (PDD) as shown in Annex A. The guidance gives examples of activities that forces should undertake. This aspect of the Prevent duty wasn't well understood in some forces. In a few forces, interviewees thought PDD was the sole responsibility of CT specialists in the counter-terrorism network.

We found that prosecution is largely seen by forces as the responsibility of CTUs and CTIUs. Forces told us they received good support from these units, including briefings on current local counter-terrorist operations. There were good examples of frontline staff and other force resources being used in support of these operations.

We also found some good examples of disruption activity, such as police dealing with extremist speakers at public meetings. In two regions, there are small disruption teams, funded from the CT policing grant, which can be used to support forces in using the full range of PDD options.

The Channel programme is the main way for forces to engage in deter activity. Dedicated Prevent staff working in forces and with other organisations manage this. We cover Channel in more detail below.

## **Staff vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism**

The [\*UK Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017–22\*](#) seeks to reduce vulnerability to corrupt insiders in critical public sectors, including the police. We were told that NCTPHQ personnel have worked with the military to raise awareness of the risks and support networks available for their personnel who may be vulnerable.

We asked forces to describe their approach to people in their organisations who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Most interviewees assumed that it would be a police officer or member of police staff who was exhibiting extremist tendencies; few recognised the possibility that a police officer or member of staff may be vulnerable because of the influence, for example, of a partner or close family member.

Only one force had arrangements in place acknowledging that members of staff vulnerable to radicalisation might need safeguarding. The remainder would rely on existing counter-corruption or misconduct policies and monitoring by supervisors. Only two forces gave examples of having used a recognised Prevent referral (explained later in this report) approach to deal with a staff member who was vulnerable to extremism. The vulnerability of staff generally wasn't referred to in forces' Prevent training. But it is a real threat.

Few staff we interviewed had considered the possibility that their colleagues could be vulnerable to radicalisation. When the threat was explained, all interviewees described how they would use established confidential reporting mechanisms to refer colleagues to their professional standards departments. No force convinced us that they would make or consider Prevent referrals when extremist vulnerabilities were identified during vetting processes, either for new recruits or staff seeking a specialist post. We consider this an opportunity lost.

Staff employed by the police are in a position of trust and the public expects high standards. The approach adopted by forces doesn't complement Prevent. A referral should at least be considered as part of the risk-assessed response for a member of staff identified as vulnerable to extremism.

#### **Recommendation 4**

- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead should create national guidance for the police service on applying Prevent to staff vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism, to identify a range of options, such as selection processes, welfare and vetting, including guidance on risk thresholds.

## **The referral processes**

### **NCTPHQ Prevent policy**

The Prevent policy<sup>9</sup> is the main document setting out the police process for managing the risk of individuals who are vulnerable to radicalisation. This describes how Prevent referrals from the police or other agencies should be managed by the CT network and forces working together, including the roles and responsibilities of staff in this process.

The Prevent policy was well known among dedicated Prevent staff. It was described as having had a positive effect since it was introduced, bringing consistency to case management. But we did find some gaps in knowledge, particularly among safeguarding staff.

Forces relied on intelligence reviews, keyword searches of computer databases and incident management logs to identify people who were vulnerable to radicalisation.

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<sup>9</sup> NCTPHQ Policy for Prevent Practitioners; Management of CT/DE Risk within the Community, v2.1, NCTPHQ, June 2018.

We found that every force had a process for assessing the vulnerability of people who come to notice, using models such as 'THRIVE' (threat, harm, risk, investigation opportunities, vulnerability and engagement).

## **Internal referrals**

We asked forces how people vulnerable to extremism would be referred for further review and assessment. In all forces, the assessment of vulnerability is recorded on a referral form or intelligence report. There is no standard form used nationwide and the format often depends on the local computer system. Internal Prevent referrals are submitted to the relevant person or team according to local procedures. Cases might be referred to the force intelligence bureau, the force special branch, direct to the dedicated Prevent staff, or into the MASH.

### **Vulnerability to radicalisation should feature among other vulnerabilities on the internal referral form**

In some forces, the internal referral form for vulnerable people didn't include a field for vulnerability to radicalisation. Instead, the form allowed for a free text description of such vulnerability. When specific vulnerabilities are listed on a referral form, we believe they should include vulnerability to radicalisation. Staff are less likely to consider this aspect of vulnerability, at least in comparison to other vulnerabilities, if they don't see it as an option.

## **External referrals**

Forces described different ways that a Prevent referral could come in from external bodies. This could be, for example, by telephone or email to the dedicated Prevent staff, a call to the force control room or an email to the MASH. External referrals to most forces use a local template referral form, which gives some consistency to the information provided to that force.

Interviewees from local authorities and other interested parties identified inconsistencies in the referral process, and several routes by which information could be passed on. Many thought that a standardised referral form would help make sure all the information the police need is recorded. However, we found the referral process worked well. We recognise that it is difficult for the police service to require other organisations to use a standardised form for submissions.

### **Lack of feedback on referrals**

Some interviewees told us that they don't get feedback on referrals, and so were unsure whether they had acted appropriately. One officer commented that, "referral is a one-way street". We were told that a lack of feedback could create unconscious bias towards the subject of the referral. Forces should provide feedback on Prevent referrals where practicable, as this would help build confidence and encourage further referrals.

## **Mismatch between policy and practice**

The Prevent policy states that a Prevent referral should be forwarded to the force FIMU for assessment. All available police information should be considered in making the assessment before any further action is taken.

But in some forces where the referral goes to the MASH or a safeguarding team, initial safeguarding and information collection might happen before, or at the same time as, the assessment by the FIMU. This approach isn't strictly in line with the Prevent policy but we believe it is the right response. It balances the potential risk posed by the individual with the need to provide immediate help, where necessary.

## **Pre-screening hinders understanding of the threat**

Most interviewees from other bodies described established processes for submitting Prevent referrals to police. However, some told us of 'pre-screening' practices that may lead to a decision not to submit the referral. Failing to submit information will hinder organisations and others in better understanding the full extent of the threat of radicalisation in communities.

## **Inconsistent recording of advice**

The Prevent policy describes how dedicated Prevent staff should record advice given to other organisations about potential referrals, for example, in telephone consultations. Forces were inconsistent in their approach. We believe this guidance should be made clearer to make sure forces keep accurate records.

## **Inconsistent decision making leads to different referral rates**

There are two particularly important processes for Prevent referrals:

1. the information handling process within FIMUs; and
2. the force process for handling referrals once the FIMU has completed its tasks.

Both processes need information to be subjectively assessed. Despite national guidance from NCTPHQ, we found a few inconsistencies between similar cases. This has resulted in different referral rates, both across forces and regions. One force told us about the assessment threshold for action changing when the personnel in place had changed. We also found some evidence that the subjective assessment identifying a terrorism element in a case wasn't being correctly applied. This resulted in some cases being incorrectly passed to the Channel referral process. We are satisfied that Channel have systems in place to identify incorrectly referred cases.

This inconsistency is apparent in the NCTPHQ 'Prevent capability' data report, which highlights the differences between regions and suggests reasons for this. In our view, this data needs to be subjected to more rigorous review by forces so that decision making in referrals is more consistent.

We found examples of the Prevent policy not being followed. For example, ‘prevent gateway assessment’<sup>10</sup> forms weren’t being completed as they should for each referral, and reassessments of cases by FIMUs weren’t being done when they should.

### **Recommendation 5**

- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead should review the national business assurance process to assure compliance with NCTPHQ policy.

## **Performance management**

We asked forces how they measured the success of their Prevent activity. Many forces used quantitative data, such as changes in the number of referrals, the number of staff who have had training, or how quickly cases are handled. Some used case studies or reviews (for example, of people referred to Channel) to identify success measures. Others used the source of referrals, or lack of referrals, to target training provided to other organisations.

No forces had a coherent performance management framework for Prevent activity or could show how they used qualitative data to hold people to account for performance. Some referred to indicative data such as measures of public confidence or feedback from independent advisory groups, community surveys and community events, but these weren’t specific to Prevent.

We were provided with NCTPHQ ‘Prevent capability’ data for Q2 2018/19. Of the data analysed, Prevent activity was broken down by regions, including case management data and outcomes. In our view, this data could be useful, but we found very little evidence that it was known about or available within forces. Indeed, its existence only came to light late in the inspection and hadn’t been raised in interviews with any regional or force staff to that point. We weren’t reassured that this information was being used to assess the effect of Prevent work in forces.

There is no national framework or set of indicators that would help police forces or other organisations understand the success of their Prevent work. We think more needs to be done so that forces are more consistent, building on recommendations and comments made in our previous reports (see Annex C).

### **Recommendation 6**

- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and Office for Security and Counter-terrorism (OSCT) should develop performance measures that will help police forces assess their operational contributions to Prevent.

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<sup>10</sup> The police gateway assessment (PGA) is used to identify whether a Prevent referral should be managed under Channel as a multi-agency led case or as a police-led case. The PGA will also identify cases unsuitable for management and exit them appropriately from the process. Completion of the PGA is part of the framework for handling Prevent referrals included in the NCTPHQ policy for prevent practitioners (v2.1, June 2018).

## Channel

Channel is a programme that “focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by: identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned” ([Channel duty guidance](#), page 5).

A proportion of those people referred to the police may be suitable for Channel assessment and intervention. We found that most Channel processes worked effectively in forces and that, in general, the right cases were being referred. Most interviewees from other organisations commented that Channel panels<sup>11</sup> were well attended by statutory agencies and other bodies co-opted onto panels to help manage an identified risk. We were assured that standard forms allow information to be shared effectively. In general, forces are meeting nationally mandated timescales for submission of cases to the Channel process.

Some dedicated Prevent staff discuss cases with their Channel chairs before the full Channel panel meetings. We were told these ‘pre-meets’ are helpful for considering possible interventions and to make sure the most appropriate attendees are present at the full panel. But a few interviewees suggested that these pre-meets act as a filter, removing cases from the Channel process without full scrutiny. This contravenes the Channel guidance. The integrity of the panels must be maintained, and all panels run in accordance with the Channel duty guidance.

Dedicated Prevent staff and their supervisors should regularly attend Channel panels, fulfilling the role set out in the Prevent policy. Most interviewees from other agencies said there was a good dialogue between the police and other Channel panel members. We were disappointed to hear from some panel members that police attendance at the Channel panels was inconsistent, with a different officer attending each meeting, or only attending when there is a specific need.

We were also told that police officers of differing seniority attended from the local force. Attendance varied in rank from police community support officer to superintendent. In a few forces we were told only regionally based dedicated Prevent staff attended panels. In our view, this creates a risk that forces won’t have a good enough understanding of vulnerable people in their area, or be able make decisions on behalf of the police. Forces should review who attends Channel panel meetings and make sure they are properly represented. We believe this shouldn’t be based on rank, but on the ability of the representative to make effective decisions on behalf of the force.

Some Channel panels, we heard, aren’t held in accordance with the timetable set out by the Channel guidance. In about half of forces, meetings are monthly. In some they may be scheduled but cancelled if there are no cases to be discussed. Some forces only held Channel panels ‘when necessary’. This creates a risk that cases aren’t being reviewed well enough to manage the risk effectively.

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<sup>11</sup> The role of the Channel panel is to develop a support plan for individuals accepted as Channel cases. This is a local authority chaired, multi-agency panel.



### **Recommendation 7**

- With immediate effect, the NPCC national Prevent lead and each force Prevent lead should review the attendance of force representatives at Channel panels so that police are correctly represented by decision makers who can contribute to managing risk.

# Communication

In this section we assess:

- how well police and other organisations share Prevent-related information;
- the counter-terrorism local profile (CTLP); and
- the local approach to communicating with communities on Prevent.

## Information sharing

Police and other organisations, such as local authorities, and health and education organisations, had mostly positive views about sharing general and Prevent-related information, including referrals. Most described effective processes for sharing information about individuals or after local or national incidents (such as through a strategic co-ordinating group also known as gold group approach<sup>12</sup>). The evidence we collected supports these views.

Dedicated Prevent staff provide a valued conduit for information to and from other organisations, often based on personal relationships developed over time. Perhaps because of this, some interviewees said that a change in police personnel can temporarily inhibit information sharing as new relationships need to be built. Prevent information is shared more formally through briefings, for example at Prevent boards or Channel panels.

The national security vetting level people have can be a barrier to effective information sharing, but most said that sensitive information would be shared appropriately when needed. We were reassured that when operational demands called for secret information to be shared, a redacted version was made available.

People expressed mixed views about sharing Prevent information within forces. We heard generally positive reports of the quality of the Prevent briefing material made available, such as guidance documents on force intranet systems. But case-specific information and success stories were rare.

Forces use a range of approaches to circulate Prevent information. Examples include intranet sites, briefings from dedicated Prevent staff or SPOCs, conferences and contact points for further advice. There are also some innovative approaches to raising awareness, like using apps, blogs, podcasts and video briefings. Many forces include Prevent awareness in training or briefing days for other purposes such as safeguarding or hate crime. We commend these efforts to raise awareness of Prevent among police officers and staff.

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<sup>12</sup> The gold group is part of a [recognised multi-agency command model](#).

## Learning from experience

We found some good examples of learning from incidents and the experience of others, often referred to as ‘lessons learnt’, being passed on through formal processes or at peer-to-peer events. But, in general, lessons learnt aren’t effectively identified, shared or incorporated into action plans.

This was especially true of forces’ response to the Parsons Green attack review (Operation Air<sup>13</sup>). We were told some forces had reviewed the Operation Air recommendations with other local organisations and some had made changes to their approach. But too many interviewees didn’t know about Operation Air despite efforts to publicise this material.

There needs to be a more structured approach to passing on lessons learnt from Prevent and to making sure action is taken. This resonates with a recommendation in our third inspection of CT policing,<sup>14</sup> and is, we believe, a role for the CT network.

## The counter-terrorism local profile

[Home Office guidance](#) describes the CTLP as defining the threat and vulnerability from terrorism and extremism in a specific area, such as a police basic command unit, a local policing area, local authority area or force. Police forces produce CTLPs using police information and that from other organisations. CTLPs help the police and other organisations understand and prioritise threat and vulnerability and make recommendations to address risk. They are used to inform Prevent partnership action plans.

In March 2018, NCTPHQ and the Home Office jointly agreed a ‘minimum standards document’<sup>15</sup> setting out expectations for CTLPs. It gave guidance on the collecting of information, the content, dissemination and how the CTLP should be used to guide local Prevent plans.

The CTLPs shown to us weren’t produced in a similar format or based on a national template, although they were generally consistent within a region. We were given several CTLPs that were well over a year out of date and most we saw hadn’t been updated through quarterly reviews.

At best, interviewees told us that CTLPs were useful reference documents that were “effective and of great value”. At worst, interviewees from other organisations described the CTLP as a “police driven, police created” document that was limited in its effectiveness. Some felt CTLPs lacked local relevance and expressed comments such as “no more useful than a Google search”. We heard comments that the recommendations in the CTLP were ineffective as drivers for action. It was a common criticism that CTLPs lacked local information and relevance.

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<sup>13</sup> A ‘multi agency learning review of the Prevent response to the subject responsible for the Parsons Green bombing’ commissioned by the Gold Group for Operation Air. This report is marked restricted.

<sup>14</sup> *Counter-terrorism policing: Part 3: A joint inspection of the effectiveness of the CT network in providing the ‘bridge’ between the national and local levels of policing in England, Wales and Scotland to reduce the risk from terrorism*, HMICFRS and HMICS, 2018, page 24.

<sup>15</sup> *Information sharing around counter-terrorism and the role of the CTLP*, Home Office, 2018.

In most forces, we were pleased to find some evidence that CTLP recommendations were addressed in Prevent partnership action plans, at least to some extent. Interviewees from other organisations generally valued the process of working with the police on completing the CTLP, irrespective of their view of the final product.

All forces share the CTLP with senior representatives from other organisations either individually or in Prevent meetings, which many interviewees welcomed. But there was uncertainty about how the CTLP information could be used and shared more widely among staff in their organisations.

Forces take different approaches to sharing CTLPs. Some forces share the whole document with staff at 'official sensitive' level on their intranet or make less sensitive extracts widely available. Some pass on headlines or specific material to frontline staff and some only share the information with senior staff. In several forces, we were disappointed to find that relevant post holders, including dedicated Prevent staff and safeguarding leads, hadn't seen their CTLP.

The frontline staff we spoke to knew little about CTLPs. More worryingly, most had no knowledge of the content relevant to them. Although there was evidence that some frontline officers in a few forces had contributed to the drafting of the CTLP.

In our view, if forces shared CTLP content more widely with staff, more useful information would be gathered to reinforce the understanding of the local threat. This would produce a more comprehensive CTLP and, most importantly, more people who are vulnerable to radicalisation would be identified.

So all aspects of CTLP construction and use were inconsistent. This resulted in varying levels confidence in the document, an inability to compare areas and ultimately limited its usefulness for helping to keep people safe.

### **Recommendation 8**

- By June 2020, the NPCC national Prevent lead and OSCT should undertake a national review of counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLP), to include governance, purpose, method of creation, structure and dissemination, and produce revised CTLP guidance.

## **Communicating Prevent**

We asked the police and other organisations to describe their approach to informing local communities about radicalisation and the Prevent work to combat it. Responses were mixed. They ranged from positive comments about locally developed communication strategies to descriptions of a lack of any collaborative or corporate communication strategy for Prevent.

Communication about local work to deliver Prevent in communities tends to be event driven, rather than as part of a deliberate approach to promote specific messages. Other organisations generally used established processes to share messages with the police, but this was mainly on a case-by-case basis. We found only a few examples of

joint communication between police and other organisations and fewer formal communication or engagement strategies.

NPCC Prevent leads hold a range of views about who should lead communication with the public. Some thought that since Prevent is part of the counter-terrorism/right wing terrorism strategy, that a police lead gives the message credibility. Others thought Prevent messaging should be led by the local authority. Clearer guidance is probably needed, but we consider that each case should be decided on its merits, and it is for forces and their partners to agree how best to respond.

Some forces referred to local initiatives to inform communities about Prevent, such as drop-in sessions or a Prevent stall at community events, usually staffed by the police. Forces also use community engagement plans to include Prevent with other themes, such as hate crime. This has the benefit of using non-Prevent staff (such as community cohesion or hate crime officers) to give out Prevent messages. Most forces and other organisations have used social media and their websites to provide information about Prevent, especially after terrorist incidents, with the aim of providing reassurance to communities vulnerable to extremism.

Most forces also use independent advisory groups and other community reference groups to help get the communication of Prevent right. Some include community and third sector organisations in Prevent oversight to help communicate with communities they represent.

# Conclusion

Our terms of reference required us to answer the question: “How effective is the police contribution to Prevent?”

We found that, in general, forces were meeting their Prevent duty. There are many positive aspects of the Prevent work police forces do, including working effectively with other organisations. We saw examples of innovative working practices, such as SPOCs and mapping hate crime with location-based extremist intelligence. But these approaches weren't replicated across all forces. We also noted that there were inconsistencies in how forms, processes and standards of referrals were used. These would benefit from greater scrutiny by Prevent leads.

Our inspection showed policies and effective processes designed to protect people from being radicalised were in place. They include a national referral process, a supportive national Prevent network and police forces willing to adapt to the varied requirements of their local authorities.

This is a good foundation on which to respond to the recommendations in this report.

We have made eight recommendations for improving the police force approach to meeting their Prevent duty, which we believe are proportionate and achievable.

# Annex A: Police Prevent duty

137. The police play an essential role in most aspects of Prevent work alongside other agencies and organisations. They hold information which can help assess the risk of radicalisation and disrupt people engaged in drawing others into terrorism (which includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit). The Police work alongside other sectors in this document to play a galvanising role in developing local Prevent partnerships and bring together a wide range of other organisations to support local delivery of Prevent.

138. The police are uniquely placed to tackle terrorism and whilst it is acknowledged that the Police Service will designate dedicated Prevent roles within Policing, a key objective for the police is to ensure that Prevent is embedded into all aspects of policing including patrol, neighbourhood and safeguarding functions. In fulfilment of their duties consideration must be given to the use of all suitable police resources, not just those specifically designed as Prevent.

## **Police specified authorities**

139. The police specified authorities listed in Schedule 6 to the Act are as follows:

- police forces in England and Wales;
- Police and Crime Commissioners;
- the British Transport Police;
- port police forces; and
- the Civil Nuclear Police Authority

140. In fulfilling the new duty we would expect the police to take action in the following areas.

## **Prosecute, disrupt and deter extremists**

141. In complying with the duty, police should engage and where appropriate disrupt extremist activity, in partnership with other agencies. We expect the police to prioritise projects to disrupt terrorist and extremist material on the internet and extremists working in this country. Officers should consider the full range of investigative and prosecution options when it comes to disrupting extremist behaviour, including the use of public order powers where appropriate. This may include:

- Enforcing terrorist proscription and public order legislation;
- Working with local authorities to consider municipal powers, including local highways and leafleting by-laws, using safeguarding of young people legislation;
- Advising other specified authorities, for example local authorities or universities, to develop venue booking processes and good practice;
- Lawfully disrupting or attending events involving extremist speakers in both private and municipal establishments;
- Providing high visibility police presence at relevant events in public places.

## **Supporting vulnerable individuals**

142. Prevent requires a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. When vulnerable individuals are identified the police will undertake the following:

- In partnership with other agencies including the local authority, consider appropriate interventions, including the Channel programme, to support vulnerable individuals;
- Work in partnership with and support Channel Panels chaired by local authorities to co-ordinate Channel;
- Support existing and identify potential new Intervention Providers.

## **Partnership and risk assessment**

143. The police should:

- Engage fully with the local multi-agency groups that will assess the risk of people being drawn into terrorism, providing (where appropriate) details of the police counter-terrorism local profile (CTLP);
- Support the development and implementation by the multi agency group of a Prevent action plan to address that risk;
- Support local authority Prevent co-ordinators, regional further and higher education co-ordinators, regional health Prevent leads and regional NOMS Prevent co-ordinators in carrying out their work;
- Co-ordinate the delivery of the Channel programme by accepting referrals, including acting as a conduit for Channel referrals; and
- Ensure Prevent considerations are fully embedded into counter-terrorism investigations.



144. The success of Prevent work relies on communities supporting efforts to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and challenging the extremist ideas that are also part of terrorist ideology. The police have a critical role in helping communities do this. To comply with the duty, we would expect the police, to support others including local authorities, to build community resilience by:

- Supporting local authority Prevent Coordinators in developing Prevent-related projects and action plans;
- Supporting the Charity Commission in providing guidance to avoid money being inadvertently given to organisations which may endorse extremism or terrorism and enforcing legislation where fraud offences are identified.
- Supporting opportunities to develop community challenges to extremists; and
- Collate and analyse community tension reporting across the UK that enables police and other agencies to identify and respond to emerging concerns.

## **Monitoring and enforcement**

145. The Strategic Policing Requirement makes clear that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables must demonstrate that they have contributed to the government's counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST). This includes the Prevent programme, where they are required to take into account the need to identify and divert those involved in or vulnerable to radicalisation. The Home Secretary can direct a PCC to take specific action to address a specific failure.

146. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is the statutory body for inspecting the police. They can carry out thematic inspections and can be asked to inspect a particular force or theme by the Home Secretary.

# Annex B: Methodology

The inspection was carried out in four parts.

## Literature review

In preparation for the inspection we reviewed a wide range of relevant published literature. This included legislation, guidance, articles and open source documents from the press, think tanks, and other government departments, such as HMG's *Counter-Extremism Strategy* (2015), and David Anderson's *Attacks in London and Manchester: Operational Improvement Review* (2017).

## Reference groups

We sought advice from Home Office OSCT and the due diligence and counter-extremism division in the Department for Education, to identify stakeholders who work on Prevent, and others with a more general interest in Prevent.

Two reference groups meetings were held:

- The Prevent users reference group consisted of representatives from the 'specified authorities' in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which are specified in the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent external reference group individuals and organisations who represent people who may be affected by Prevent, or groups and individuals with a strong interest in Prevent.

All invitees who were unable to attend were asked to consider submitting a written response. We received one response.

The comments made in the reference groups were used to guide the structure of the questions we used later in fieldwork interviews.

## Field inspection visits

The field inspection visits took place between October 2018 and February 2019. We visited all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales. We also visited the British Transport Police, Civil Nuclear Constabulary and Ministry of Defence Police.

In each force, we interviewed:

- the chief officer with the counter-terrorism/right wing terrorism or Prevent portfolio;
- the force Prevent lead (normally at superintendent or chief inspector rank);
- the force lead for safeguarding;
- the CT(I)U Prevent lead where they were in place and/or the regional Prevent co-ordinator;
- the Channel police practitioner (if this was an identified and separate post);
- a focus group of the dedicated Prevent staff;
- a focus group of community policing staff;
- a focus group of representatives from other organisations working with the force on Prevent, such as the local authority, health and Channel panel members; and
- staff in a sample of force and CT(I)U fixed intelligence units.

### **Document review**

We reviewed more than 300 documents provided by forces, regions, other agencies and organisations and NCTPHQ, including Prevent policy and strategy, referral reports, Channel documents and briefing material.

# Annex C: Learning and Development

## Exercise 2008

174 During the LDE, some measures were suggested that might help local agencies to monitor progress and which could complement the use of NI35:

- whether the local narrative, agreed by the police, interested parties and the community, describing the local vulnerability to violent extremism is up to date, complete and reflects most recent international and national influences;
- the effectiveness of specific interventions for those individuals at risk of extremism;
- the increasing capacity, capability and resilience of communities;
- the extent to which local people think they can influence local decisions;
- the extent to which Prevent projects draw on the work of the community and how the police and other agencies understand what communities have done for themselves;
- the increasing engagement with communities to identify those vulnerable to ideologies including educated and prosperous individuals as well as relatively deprived people; and
- the extent to which different forms of extremism that exist in other faiths, religions and groups (i.e. not only the Muslim community) are recognised and addressed.

175 During our work, it was suggested that the prospects of success can be assessed by the extent to which partnerships display a number of desirable characteristics. These need to take account of the local context and draw on the factors that contribute to violent extremism. The characteristics are:

- effective information collection is undertaken within agencies and information is properly shared;
- agencies have established effective monitoring arrangements for Prevent initiatives;
- indicators that reflect community confidence and engagement have been reviewed and incorporated into the Prevent approach, for example the reporting of hate crimes;
- the views of participants engaged in specific Prevent projects are sampled through interviews, workshops or questionnaires;
- wider community views on Prevent are obtained through public surveys (for example, Birmingham will be including Prevent questions in a survey of 8,000 households for their LAA);

- the views of a Prevent community consultative group comprising respected faith and secular members are regularly sought and inform the Prevent approach; and
- peer reviews of projects in neighbouring areas or those with similar community or cultural backgrounds are undertaken.

## **Prevent: progress and prospects**

### **Recommendation 5**

ACPO and OSCT should establish and communicate a formal mechanism for collecting, assessing and disseminating learning about effective 'Prevent' interventions. This would incorporate – a central depository for disruption 'case studies' similar to the mechanism employed within the CDRP or CSP environment for partnership related initiatives and projects; and a mechanism for assessing and disseminating good practice in terms of partnership structures and supporting infrastructures that deliver interventions.

### **Recommendation 6**

ACPO and OSCT should collate and assess emerging performance management frameworks and offer a centralised resource for forces and the Home Office in developing performance frameworks for 'Prevent'.

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