

SECURITY INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

MARCH 2024



UK Threat Level: **SUBSTANTIAL**



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About Us

Sentinel Group Security (SGS) was formed in July 2005 and became a fast-growing security services provider within United Kingdom and Ireland. We first partnered with our customers to provide specialised and effective security solutions including open-source intelligence reporting, security vulnerability assessments and training. Our capability is defined by our employees and the high level of skills and experience they possess and the procedures they adopt.

Intelligence led security

With a 360° approach to threat detection and intelligence service provision. Outside of dealing with major incidents, the SGS National Operations Centre proactively assesses the various security threats that your business, people, assets, and brand might face by monitoring social and conventional media to identify:

- On-going threats
- Specific industry threats
- Future trends
- Best practice



Disclaimer

In compiling this report SGS has relied on the veracity of public information available at the time of publication. SGS accepts no legal, equitable or other liability whatsoever for any actual or consequent loss incurred by the client in relation to this report or for the accuracy of any statement herein.

United Kingdom's National Security Threat



Introduction

The main threats to national security are terrorism, espionage, cyber threats and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, many of which impact on the UK's national infrastructure.

National infrastructure sectors represent core strategic interests for foreign intelligence services, whose targeting against the sectors is likely to include espionage for economic, political, military, or commercial gain.

While the threat from terrorism to the UK as a whole is high, and historically both international and Northern Ireland terrorist groups have targeted UK infrastructure, the current terrorist threat to the national infrastructure can be characterised as generally limited and often aspirational.

The exception is transport which continues to face enduringly high levels of threat from international terrorism. In addition, the emergency services and defence sectors,

specifically police and military personnel, also face a high level of threat from both international terrorism and dissident republican groups in Northern Ireland, for whom they are a priority target for attack.

Generally higher levels of effective and visible protective security at national infrastructure sites are likely to act as a deterrent to terrorists, who increasingly favour 'soft' targets which allow them to achieve their aims with greater chance of success. Nevertheless, with the continual diversification of the threat, the ambition and capability of terrorist groups to target UK infrastructure is likely to continue to evolve.

<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/national-security-threats>

United Kingdom's Threat Definitions



International terrorism

International terrorism from groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al Qaida present a threat from many others. They hold territory in places without functioning governments, making it easier for them to train recruits and plan complex, sophisticated attacks. Drawing on extreme interpretations of Islam to justify their actions, these groups often have the desire and capability to direct terrorist attacks against the West, and to inspire those already living there to carry out attacks of their own.

Northern Ireland-related terrorism

Northern Ireland-related terrorism continues to pose a serious threat to British interests. Although the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) has ceased its terrorist campaign and is now committed to the political process, some dissident republican groups continue to mount terrorist attacks, primarily against the security forces.

Domestic extremism

Domestic extremism mainly refers to individuals or groups that carry out criminal acts in pursuit of a larger agenda, such as "right-wing extremists". They may seek to change legislation or influence domestic policy and try to achieve this outside of the normal democratic process.

<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/counter-terrorism>

Cyber

“Cyberspace” is the term used to describe the electronic medium of digital networks used to store, modify, and communicate information. It includes the Internet but also other information systems that support businesses, infrastructure, and services.



Cyberspace lies at the heart of modern society; it impacts our personal lives, our businesses and our essential services. A secure online environment is essential to HM Government, which is providing an ever-increasing number of online services to UK citizens and businesses as part of a major digital services transformation programme. The ability to conduct online transactions securely is central to the delivery of public and commercial services and communications. However, some individuals and groups use cyberspace for malicious purposes. We call these people 'hostile actors' and they exploit cyberspace to conduct espionage operations or launch damaging computer network attacks.

Cyber security affects both the public and the private sector and spans a broad range of issues related to national security, whether through terrorism, crime or state and industrial espionage.

<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/cyber>

Espionage

The potential impact of successful State-sponsored espionage against the UK is both wide reaching and significant. The threat of espionage (spying) did not end with the collapse of Soviet communism in the early 1990s. Espionage against UK interests continues and is potentially very damaging. Several foreign intelligence services (FIS) seek to gather intelligence on a broad range of subjects, including foreign policy, defence, financial, technological, industrial and commercial interests.

<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/espionage>

Serious and Organised Crime



Serious and organised crime is defined in the 2018 Serious and Organised Crime Strategy as individuals planning, coordinating, and committing serious offences, whether individually, in groups and/or as part of transnational networks.

The main categories of serious offences covered by the term are:

- Child sexual abuse
- Modern slavery and human trafficking
- Organised immigration crime
- Illegal drugs
- Illegal firearms
- Organised acquisitive crime
- Cybercrime
- Fraud
- Money laundering, bribery, corruption and sanctions evasion.

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/>

United Kingdom Current Threat Levels

Introduction

Members of the public should always remain alert to the danger of terrorism and **report any suspicious activity to the police on 999** or the **anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321**. If your information does not relate to an imminent threat, you can also contact them at <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/contact-us>

What the threat levels mean

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack.

LOW

- Means an attack is unlikely

MODERATE

- Means an attack is possible, but not likely

SUBSTANTIAL

- Means an attack is likely

SEVERE

- Means an attack is highly likely in the near future

CRITICAL

- Means an attack is highly likely in the near future

Current national terrorism threat levels

The threat to the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) from terrorism is **SUBSTANTIAL**.

The threat to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism is **SEVERE**.



Open-Source Security Incident News

Unlicensed chemist in Chelmsford supplied thousands of prescription drugs to UK customers



Figure 1: Christopher Depp, also known as David Jones, was jailed for six years.

An unlicensed chemist who mailed thousands of prescription pills and medications to customers around the UK has been jailed for six years.

Christopher Depp, also known as David Jones, illegally sold the drugs from his home in Chelmsford in Essex where he posed as an online pharmacist. Police discovered more than 50,000 prescription pills and tablets stashed in boxes around his Wood Street property.

Depp, 49, ran a sophisticated operation, advertising the sale of controlled drugs across social media platforms and messaging apps. He used fraudulently obtained bank accounts to accept payment from his large customer base.

Depp admitted drugs offences and was sentenced to six years in prison at Chelmsford Crown Court.

<https://www.itv.com>

Up to '500' drivers wrongly fined over 'fake' 50mph sign

Up to 500 drivers have been wrongly fined after a 'fake' 50mph sign was placed in a 40mph zone. The speed sign was erected on the A20 in Sidcup, south east London, showing that drivers could travel up to 50mph despite the actual speed limit being 40mph.

Hundreds of drivers have been left furious after receiving fines as a result of the fake sign. Dominic Smith, director at Patterson Law, the biggest national firm specialising in motoring offences, said he's never seen a response like it. An investigation has been launched into the incident as an attempt to 'pervert the court of justice', the Met Police said in a statement.

However, the force has said that it is satisfied that the fines issued are still “within the law” as there were several other speeding signs with the correct limit in the area.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk>

Second scare at UK airport after man without passport or boarding pass evades Gatwick security

A man evaded security checks at Gatwick and got on a passenger jet without showing a passport or boarding pass – the second such alert in a week.

The Brit managed to sneak on to the Norwegian Air flight in a bid to reach Danish capital Copenhagen undetected. But suspicious crew rumbled him before take-off and he was escorted off the Boeing 737 by police. It comes a week after The Sun on Sunday revealed a man flew all the way from the UK to New York without a passport or boarding pass. And the latest security breach is likely to spark fresh Home Office concern over airport checks.



Figure 2: Second scare at UK airport after man without passport or boarding pass evades Gatwick security to board jet to Denmark.

It is understood the unnamed man avoided check-in at Gatwick around noon on Monday, February 5 – heading straight through to the security area and boarding gates.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk>

Fly-tipping blackspot cleaned up after CCTV installed

A fly-tipping blackspot has undergone a major clean-up after CCTV cameras were brought in.

Fridges, washing machines and old furniture were dumped alongside household waste in the alleyway, behind Kensington Road, Middlesbrough. Video surveillance was put in place in October following a “blitz” on rubbish last April, which saw one resident slapped with a hefty fine.

The council said fly-tipping had fallen from around five reports a month to less than two, with none made in November or February. The council removed what it called a “staggering” 2,180kg of waste from the site, in Linthorpe, when the clean-up operation began last year.

Since then, one person has been fined £400 and several others have received fixed penalty notices under the Environmental Protection Act.

A prosecution is also being pursued over the dumping of a white goods item in the alley.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk>

Man who slashed at victim with knife in Elephant & Castle tackled by off-duty cops

A man was hit over the head, attacked by a dog and had a knife slashed at him repeatedly in a huge group fight. Two groups of males had been involved in a skirmish in Elephant & Castle, but unbeknownst to them a group of off-duty police officers were socialising in a bar nearby.

On July 21, 2023, officers from the Gangs & Pro-Active Team in the Central South Command Unit were out socialising after work together at a bar when they noticed a violent altercation unfolding nearby in Elephant Park. Two groups of males had been involved in a skirmish when one was struck over the head and a dog was set on him.

Another male was standing over him, repeatedly trying to slash him with a large knife. The officers immediately sprang into action, rushing to separate the attacker from the victim. On seeing the officers, the suspect threw the knife at them and attempted to run away but was swiftly arrested.

Officers administered first aid to the victim, and he was taken to hospital for treatment for a head injury. The officers' fast action likely prevented him from sustaining any more serious injuries.

An investigation was launched. Police recovered CCTV and witness accounts which would later leave the suspect with no choice but to plead guilty. He was charged on 22 July 2023 and remanded in custody.

Joseph Jimenez, 20 (14.08.03), of Baxter Road N1, appeared at Croydon Crown Court on Wednesday, 14 February having previously pleaded guilty.

He was sentenced to eight month's imprisonment for possession of a bladed article and four months' imprisonment for affray. The sentences will run currently at a young offenders' institute.

<https://www-mylondon-news>

Operation Venetic: Drug smuggler's brother sentenced for role in class A and gun importations



Figure 3: Operation Venetic: Drug smuggler's brother sentenced for role in class A and gun importations.

A former professional footballer who ran a drug and gun importation operation with his brother has been sentenced to 30 years in prison after a National Crime Agency investigation.

Wayne McKenzie, 48, from Manchester, conspired with his brother, Craig, to import cocaine and cannabis from the Netherlands, Spain and North America. He was also involved in importing firearms in the same period during March and June 2020.

McKenzie, of Beckenham Avenue, Liverpool, imported the drugs before arranging for others to transport them through the UK to his customers. The drugs would have been worth more than £2 million at street value.

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk>

Lancashire Police wants locals to register security cameras

A police force has asked the public to register their home security cameras to help gather crucial evidence to help investigate crimes.

Lancashire Constabulary has been using the NICE INVESTIGATE system since July 2021 with businesses registering their CCTV and other recording devices. The force is now expanding the initiative to residential systems. Lancashire Police said it would not have access to the cameras and all footage provided would be voluntary.

<https://www-bbc-co-uk>

Violence and abuse against UK retail staff rises to 1,300 incidents a day

UK shop workers are facing 1,300 incidents of violence and abuse a day and a battle to control “brazen” acts of shoplifting, as pressure mounts on ministers to intervene to protect retail employees.

Retailers saw the number of incidents of racial abuse, sexual harassment, physical assaults and threats with weapons rise 50% last year, while thefts more than doubled to 16.7m incidents, according to the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the trade body which represents most major retailers.

The rise in retail crime has coincided with a period of rampant price inflation, with the cost of everyday goods from eggs to baby formula increasing over the past two years at a rate not seen since records began in the 1970s, leaving many families struggling to make ends meet.

Some experts argue that efforts to cut labour costs by using technology such as self-checkouts have contributed to the problems, while retailers are blaming a rise in organised crime and scarce police resources.

<https://amp-theguardian-com>

Supermarket thief 'struck over 500 times' and hit security worker with car

A prolific supermarket thief has been jailed after he hit a security worker with his car in a desperate bid to escape. Samad Ali stole more than 500 times from 40 stores in the West Midlands between October 2022 and April last year.

It's understood by police that the 26-year-old stole items worth over £18,000. On the last occasion, Ali was spotted by a security worker in Minworth, Sutton Coldfield.

The worker recognised him as a prime suspect for stealing from the supermarket previously. He followed Ali to his car and attempted to stop him from driving off.



Figure 4: Prolific shop thief Samad Ali.

However, Ali drove into the worker and carried him some distance on his car bonnet before the staff member eventually came off. Thankfully, he was not seriously injured.

Police built up a range of evidence to identify Ali as being responsible for the series of offences across stores in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell and further afield in Staffordshire and West Mercia. He was later arrested at his home. Ali, of Lansdowne Road, Lozells, pleaded guilty to 64 counts of theft and asked for further 447 similar offences to be taken into consideration. He also admitted dangerous driving and possession of an offensive weapon. He was sentenced to two years behind bars at Birmingham Crown Court.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Newcastle man charged with inciting racial hatred after counter terrorism investigation



Figure 5: Counter Terrorism Policing Northeast.

A 24-year-old man from Newcastle has been charged with eleven offences following an investigation by Counter Terrorism Policing North East.

Nathan Thompson, of Wickham View, was charged on Thursday, February 8, accused of nine offences of Inciting Racial Hatred and two offences of Malicious Communications. He is due to appear before Newcastle Magistrates Court on March 4, 2024. Six of Thompson's charges for Inciting Racial Hatred are under Section 19(1) of the Public

Order Act 1986, which relates to allegedly publishing or distributing written material which is "threatening, abusive or insulting" and is considered intended to "stir up racial hatred".

The other three offences of this kind relate to Section 21 of the Act, which concerns allegedly distributing, showing or playing a recording which is also considered "threatening, abusive or insulting" and intended to "stir up racial hatred".

The two offences of Malicious Communications were contrary to Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, which concerns sending a message or other matter via electronic communications that is allegedly "grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character".

Thompson was arrested as part of an intelligence led investigation, supported by Northumbria Police, on July 18, 2023. A residential property was searched at the time of his arrest, officers said.

<https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk>

Birmingham teenager to appear in court to face terrorism charges

A teenager from Birmingham will appear before a court in connection with terrorism offences. Shaan Farooq, aged 18, has been charged with one count of possessing terrorism material and three counts of distributing terrorism material. Farooq was arrested in August last year alongside Amir El-Harith, who is 19.

El-Harith was charged last August and is awaiting trial in March accused of three counts of distributing terrorist publications, three of encouraging terrorism and one of possession of information likely to be useful to someone committing or preparing an act of terrorism.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Anti-terror bollards, barges and gates installed in Midlands town centre

Bollards, barges and gates will be installed in Walsall to secure the town centre from a "low but real" terror threat. The temporary safety measures aim to protect shoppers and businesses from "any potential threats posed by vehicles".

Work to install the hostile vehicle mitigation measures, similar to those already in Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull covering large sections of Park Street, Bradford Street, The Bridge and Digbeth Square.

Walsall Council, which has worked with West Midlands Police and Counter Terrorism Policing West Midlands to consider vulnerabilities in the town centre, said it had been funded by cash generated by parking charges. It also said "permanent, less intrusive" measures would later be introduced as part of the ongoing town centre regeneration.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Three people who displayed paraglider images at pro-Palestine rally guilty of terror offence

Three people who displayed images of paragliders at a pro-Palestinian march have been convicted of a terrorist offence.

Heba Alhayek, 29, and Pauline Ankunda, 26, attached images of paragliders to their backs, while Noimutu Olayinka Taiwo, 27, stuck one to the handle of a placard. They were seen at a protest which took place just seven days after militants from Hamas used paragliders to enter Israel from Gaza on October 7.



Figure 6: Women displayed paraglider images at their back.

At a trial at Westminster magistrates court, two of the defendants argued that police had been mistaken about the images, fuelled by a social media storm, and the images were actually parachutes – a "well-known nationalist symbol of peace".

But they were all found guilty by Deputy Chief Magistrate Tan Ikram of a terror offence. Handing the trio a 12-month conditional discharge, Mr Ikram said he had "decided not to punish" the defendants.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Two police officers strangled and one left unconscious in Colchester attack

A police officer was left unconscious after being strangled in a late-night attack on a high street in Essex, with his colleague also assaulted. Essex Police were called to reports that

two men were assaulting another man in North Station Road, in Colchester, at around 10.30pm on Saturday night.

One officer arrived to find two people running from the area, but when he caught up with the suspects he was assaulted and strangled, the force said. The suspects again tried to flee and when a second officer caught up with them, he was too attacked and strangled from behind.

Both police officers were taken to hospital for treatment but have since been discharged. A 37-year-old man and a teenager, aged 17, have now been arrested on suspicion of assaulting an emergency worker and intentional strangulation.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Body found in Thames amid hunt for Clapham chemical assault suspect

Detectives hunting for a man wanted over a chemical assault that injured a vulnerable woman and her two young daughters have recovered a body in the Thames, Scotland Yard has said.

Abdul Ezedi has been sought by police since the attack on 31 January in Clapham, in south London, with officers appealing to the public to call 999 if they saw him. Marine police had been searching the Thames after officers concluded he had gone into the river hours after the attack.

<https://amp-theguardian-com>

Huge rise in antisemitic abuse in UK



Figure 7: Anti-Semitic abuse at record high.

The scale of the surge in antisemitism in the UK since Hamas's attack on Israel on 7 October has been revealed, in data showing a 589% increase in the number of incidents compared with the same period in 2022.

The Community Security Trust (CST), which monitors anti-Jewish abuse and attacks and provides security for UK Jewish communities, said the unprecedented increase was a "watershed moment for antisemitism in the UK".

It recorded 4,103 antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2023, the highest total in a calendar year reported to the organisation. Two-thirds of the 2023 incidents occurred after 7 October – 2,699, compared with 392 over the same time period in 2022.

James Cleverly, the home secretary, said the rise in anti-Jewish hatred and abuse was "utterly deplorable", and Yvette Cooper, his Labour counterpart, said it was a "stain on our society".

The CST said Hamas's attack on Israel on 7 October was a "trigger event [that] had a seismic effect on antisemitic incident levels in the UK ... and the impact was instant".

<https://www.theguardian.com>

Warwickshire residents block in fly-tippers caught in act

Police have detained suspected fly-tippers after a group of residents blocked in their vans, the Warwickshire force has confirmed.

Two vans dumped large piles of rubbish on Packington Estate's Maxstoke Lane near Meriden. Warwickshire Police described it as "some of the worst fly-tipping we had seen in a long time".

The force urged those who witnessed fly-tipping in progress to contact officers.

"If you are witness to an incident of fly tipping in-progress, you should contact the police including any information that might be useful to an investigation," the force said.

Two men were detained and instructed to reload their vehicles with rubbish following the incident.

Once the vans were loaded, they were escorted from the scene and seized under the Environmental Act.

<https://www-bbc-co-uk>

Woman charged with GBH after 'hitting Asda security guard with car'

A woman has been charged after allegedly hitting an Asda security guard after a massive brawl in a car park. Roxanne Louise Dale, 36, of Longbenton has been charged with grievous bodily harm following the hit-and-run, which was caught on camera in Wallsend, Newcastle.

Footage showed the moment the Asda security guard was struck by the vehicle after the altercation. Asda staff were trying to break up an argument between a group in the car park, when an Audi rammed into a car and then drove into a female security guard.



Figure 8: Woman is charged with GBH after Asda security guard was hit by car.

Police said the woman hit by the car suffered a 'serious' leg injury but was later discharged from hospital.

<https://metro-co-uk>

Major supermarket locks up £13 baby formula to deter thieves

A major supermarket has locked up £13 baby formula boxes to deter thieves.

Shocked customers have slammed the giant retailer for caging the most-needed items in a shoplifting crackdown.

A Tesco branch in Birmingham has gone to extreme lengths to keep thieves away from nabbing baby formula. Parents flocking to the Swan Island in Yardley have spotted boxes placed in mesh metal bags and locked behind huge tags. Snaps show the Aptamil brand selling between £13.50 and £18 inside the cages.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk>

Sainsbury's introduces AI security cabinets in latest bid to tackle spike in shoplifting

Sainsbury's is introducing AI security cabinets in a bid to tackle growing numbers of thefts.

The supermarket giant has started trialling locked self-service cabinets in its alcohol aisles.

The Freedom Case tech has only been rolled out across a few stores so far, including in St Albans, but could be used more widely if it proves successful.

Customers are required to go through a four-step touchscreen process to open the cabinet, with built in sensors being used to track activity and identify potential thefts.

The 'Active Deterrence' system can be triggered depending on the length of time the doors are open and if anything inside has been moved, according to creators Indyme.

A Sainsbury's spokeswoman said: "The version we are trialling does not require any customer information, data, or loyalty card."

<https://www.lbc.co.uk>

UK's largest ever class A drugs haul found hidden in bananas in Southampton



Figure 9: UK's largest ever class A drugs haul found hidden in bananas at port.

The largest-ever haul of class A drugs has been seized at a port in the UK hidden in a bunch of bananas. The drugs, found at Southampton Port, are worth an estimated £450 million.

The previous largest UK seizure was 3.7 tonnes of cocaine, also found at Southampton, in 2022, and 3.2 tonnes were found on board the tug boat MV Hamal in Scotland in 2015. The National Crime Agency (NCA) and Border Force seized 5.7 tonnes of cocaine found in a container carrying the fruit from South America on February 8.

The NCA has said the illicit drugs were heading to the Port of Hamburg in Germany for onward delivery.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Counter-terror scheme failures are endangering public, warns ex-adviser

The public is being put at risk because recommendations made to the Government's counter-terror scheme have been ignored, the man who reviewed it has warned. Sir William Shawcross said ministers had "ignored" some of his key recommendations for Prevent, a scheme to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Hastings man, 47, attacks person after being caught attempting to steal from shop

Police said officers received a report of a theft and an assault having taken place on January 27 at Marks and Spencer in Priory Meadow Shopping Centre.

The suspect was spotted attempting to steal from the shop and when confronted, assaulted the victim causing injury requiring hospital treatment, Sussex Police added. A police spokesperson said: "Ryan Etherton, of Godwin Road, Hastings, was identified via the DISC system, a free online app connecting businesses to their local policing teams, where users can share information such as CCTV images to help recognise prolific offenders.

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk>

Drug dealer with laughing gas 'party bags' first to be jailed for possessing nitrous oxide since ban

A drug dealer caught with "party bags" containing canisters of laughing gas has become the first person to be jailed for possessing the drug since it was outlawed, the Crown Prosecution Service has said. Thomas Salton, 30, from Brentwood in Essex, had gift boxes for customers which included the nitrous oxide, banned by the Government in November 2023, along with ketamine, balloons and candy canes.

A spokesman for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said Salton was found with 60 small canisters of the Class C drug, 48 one-gram bags of ketamine and £39,000 in cash when police pulled over his Range Rover on December 1 last year. The CPS spokesman said Salton was sentenced to 35 months in prison at Basildon Crown Court after pleading guilty to possessing nitrous oxide with intent to supply.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Shop worker attacks robber with shoe after he hit her with fake crutch during theft

A robber was attacked by a shop worker's shoe after faking an injury to use a crutch as his weapon, in a confrontation caught on CCTV.

Liam Tristram, 35, went into a shop in St Johns Street, Peterborough in June 2023, asking a shop worker for a pack of tobacco. Once her back was turned, he went behind the counter and hit her several times with the crutch, knocking her over. He then stole nearly £500 worth of tobacco, two bottles of spirits and attempted to steal the till unsuccessfully. Once Tristram and the shop worker left the shop, he was attacked by the shop worker who used her shoe to defend herself before he cycled away.

Cambridgeshire Police identified him using the CCTV from outside the shop. He was found with an empty bottle of vodka and a pouch of tobacco believed to have been stolen in the



Figure 10: Shop worker attacks robber with shoe after he hit her with fake crutch during theft.

robbery. Tristram, of London Road, Yaxley denied the robbery but was found guilty at Peterborough Crown Court. He was jailed for six years.

<https://www.itv.com>

More than 3,000 residents evacuated after discovery of WWII bomb sparks major incident

More than 3,000 people are leaving their homes after an unexploded Second World War bomb was found in the back garden of a home in Plymouth.

Devon and Cornwall Police declared a major incident on Tuesday and evacuated properties within 200 metres of the bomb. One hundred armed forces personnel were on the scene to assist the evacuation, and the Ministry of Defence said bomb disposal teams were helping to make the device safe.

<https://news.sky.com>

Newham man who shared terror videos on Instagram facing jail

Shafi Saleem, 34 – who has two previous terror-related convictions – was arrested at Heathrow Airport as he landed on a flight from Pakistan in February last year. On July 7, 2022, he had posted Daesh propaganda footage on a private social media feed showing a series of suicide bombings.

They were uploaded on the anniversary of the 2005 London 7/7 attacks, which killed 52 people on three Underground trains and a double-decker bus. At the Old Bailey, Saleem, of Forest Gate, Newham was convicted by a jury of dissemination of a terrorist publication. He will be sentenced at a later date.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Home Office rejects claims security checks missed on 'high-risk' flights



Figure 11: Home Office rejects claims security checks missed on 'high-risk' flights.

The Home Office “categorically rejects” claims that hundreds of high-risk flights landed in the UK without security checks, according to an immigration minister.

Tom Pursglove disputed warnings made by chief inspector of borders and immigration David Neal, who the Daily Mail reported had received Home Office data showing UK Border Force failed to check the occupants of hundreds of private jets arriving at London City airport.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Teen drug dealer stabbed by group of masked men

A drug dealer has been spared jail after he was caught driving his drug boss around in an Audi A1. Mohammed Husnen was a teenager at the time of the incident in 2021. The now 20-year-old student was knifed by a group wearing face coverings in a terrifying attack. The assault occurred last year and Husnen was unable to identify those responsible.

Speaking of the drug incident, prosecutor Richard McConaghy told Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court that police stopped an Audi A1 being driven by the defendant in Normacot, Stoke-on-Trent, on December 6, 2021. Mr McConaghy said: "In the centre console they found two iPhones and a single deal of cocaine.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Police officer is convicted of 13 rapes while serving in the Met

A Metropolitan Police officer and serial rapist who once told one of his victim's they'd 'met the devil' while he kidnapped her has been convicted of 13 counts of rape - six years after an investigation into previous attacks on a young girl were discontinued.

Cliff Mitchell, 24, approached one of his victims with a knife in September 2023 and told her to put her arms behind her back, before tying her up with cable ties and putting tape over her mouth. He was found guilty of 10 counts of rape, three counts of rape of a child under 13, one count of kidnap and breach of a non-molestation order following a trial at Croydon Crown Court.

<https://www.dailymail-co-uk>

Birmingham Ramadan markets to have 'nightly police patrols' for the first time

West Midlands Police (WMP) have announced nightly patrols on Coventry Road in response to concerns over the Ramadan markets. The annual, pop-up markets, have been blasted by Small Heath residents for contributing to anti-social behaviour.

The move was revealed in a statement was published today (February 21) in a bid to ensure Muslims could celebrate the Islamic month of Ramadan peacefully. The West Midlands force addressed the 'pockets of anti-social behaviour' that disrupted Eid celebrations last year.

They also claimed they would work closely with Birmingham City Council, Trading Standards, environmental health and licencing teams in a bid to tackle and illegal trading on Coventry Road.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Homeless man charged with attempted murder after 'pushing Tube passenger on to tracks' at Oxford Circus

A homeless man accused of pushing a Tube passenger on to the tracks has been charged with attempted murder.

Kurdish migrant Brwa Shorsh, 24, allegedly shoved stranger Tadeusz Potoczek at Oxford Circus station. Shorsh is said to have been living rough there. Mr Potoczek narrowly missed touching the live rail on the southbound Victoria Line. He was helped back up to the platform by other passengers before a train arrived at the station.



Figure 12: Railway Track.

Shorsh was arrested a mile away and appeared at Westminster magistrates' court.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk>

Machete wielding youths clash outside art gallery in city centre

Police are on the hunt for a group of armed young men in Nottingham. The three suspects were caught on CCTV 'wielding machetes' outside of Nottingham art gallery on Friday afternoon.

Footage has since been shared via social media, showing the young man wearing dark clothes and brandishing the large blades, seemingly at one another, as a woman attempts to disperse them. Eventually they are seen to run off down a nearby flight of steps.

Nottingham Police Chief Inspector Karl Thomas said: 'Detectives are investigating what happened as a matter of urgency and are working at speed to identify all the young people involved.'

<https://metro.co.uk>

Bury man charged after CT police investigation

A man from Bury has been charged as part of an ongoing investigation led by Counter Terrorism Policing North West.

Muhammad Zakir Arif has been charged with one count of assault occasioning actual bodily harm, contrary to Section 47 Offences Against the Person Act 1861; one count of strangulation or suffocation, contrary to Section 75A(1)(a) and (5) Serious Crime Act 2015; two counts of possession of a bladed article in a public place, contrary to Section 139(1) and (6) Criminal Justice Act 1988; and two counts of breaching a Section 49 RIPA Court Order.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Taxpayer-funded bodyguards and cars 'provided to more MPs due to safety fears'



Figure 13: Taxpayer-funded bodyguards and cars 'provided to more MPs due to safety fears'.

Taxpayer-funded bodyguards and cars have reportedly been provided to more MPs amid growing fears for their safety.

A rising number of politicians have been assessed to be at risk and are being provided with close protection by private security personnel, the Sunday Telegraph reported.

Meanwhile, the Sunday Times reported that three female politicians, including representatives of the Conservative and Labour parties, have been given taxpayer-funded bodyguards and cars.

Chauffeur-driven cars and close protection are normally only provided to senior members of the Cabinet and the Leader of the Opposition.

We've been reviewing existing security measures for MPs in the wake of the murder of my colleague and friend Sir David Amess

The newspaper reported that the three MPs, who have not been named, had their security upgraded after a risk assessment was carried out with support from the Ravec committee, which is responsible for the security of the royal family and senior politicians.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said MPs had been “verbally threatened and physically, violently targeted” in recent weeks as protests were “hijacked by extremists to promote and glorify terrorism”.

The Sunday Telegraph reported that Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle has written to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor to seek more funding for the scheme to protect politicians by installing security measures at MPs' homes and constituency offices.

Sir Lindsay, who has faced calls to resign after going against convention during the SNP's Opposition Day debate on a ceasefire in Gaza, said his motivation for widening Wednesday's discussion was fuelled by concern about MPs' security after intimidation suffered by some parliamentarians.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Security guard caught with 11 knives and blades said he was 'in training'

A security guard said he was "in training" after being caught carrying 11 knives and circular saws in his rucksack. The bounty of weapons was revealed after Stefan Marin was spotted waving the blades around on a busy street in Maghull. The incident unfolded in front of shocked motorists, who had been stopped at a set of traffic lights mere metres away while making their way to work.

Liverpool Crown Court heard today, Friday, that the 35-year-old was "observed brandishing knives and other bladed articles" at a pedestrian crossing at the junction of Maghull Lane and School Lane, near to Ashworth Hospital, at around 8.45am on May 3 last year. Joanne Daniels, prosecuting, described how Marin, of Linaker Street in Southport, first took out a circular saw blade before returning it to his bag and "replacing it" with a knife with a 10-inch blade.

Marin, who was assisted by a Romanian interpreter in the dock, admitted 11 counts of possession of a bladed article in a public place. He was handed a 12-month imprisonment suspended for 18 months, 150 hours of unpaid work and a rehabilitation activity requirement of up to 30 days.

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk>

Three teens arrested and weapons seized as balaclava clad gang run amok in city centre

Three teenagers have been arrested and an array of weapons seized after a large gang of males gathered in Birmingham city centre. Plain clothes officers gave chase to members of the group who were said to be wearing balaclavas.

They arrested three youths -who were all under the age of 18- and they remain in custody. Police also recovered knuckledusters and combat knives during the chase.



Figure 14: General image of police in the city centre.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Asylum seeker boat pilot locked up after deaths of four migrants

An asylum seeker will be detained for nine years and six months for the manslaughter of four fellow migrants who drowned attempting to cross the Channel to the UK.

Ibrahima Bah, who is over 18, piloted the "unseaworthy" boat which got into trouble after setting off from France on 14 December 2022.

During a trial, jurors were told the home-built, low-quality inflatable should have had no more than 20 people on board but carried at least 43 people that night.

Bah told Canterbury Crown Court that smugglers threatened to kill him if he did not drive the vessel.

But prosecutor Duncan Atkinson KC said the Senegalese national was not telling the truth.

<https://news.sky.com>

Police confirm what was inside 'bomb' found near Meadowhall

A suspected bomb near Meadowhall turned out to be just an empty shell, the police have said. Police were called to the scene after a member of the public thought they saw a bomb in the river near Meadowhall in Sheffield. Officers closed the roads around Meadowhall Way from Meadowhall Drive to Meadowhall Road.

A bomb disposal team came and took the suspected bomb. However, police have now confirmed it was not a real bomb but an empty shell, Yorkshire Live reports.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk>

Hundreds of small boat migrants charged with illegal entry to UK after new powers come into force



Figure 15: Hundreds of small boat migrants charged with illegal entry to UK after new powers come into force.

Hundreds of small boat migrants have been charged with arriving illegally in the UK, or arranging the arrival of others, in the year after new powers came into force.

New analysis from the University of Oxford and a coalition of charities shows that in the year following the expansion of the government's new laws on restricting channel crossings, the Nationality and Borders Act, some 240 small boat migrants were charged with illegal arrival to the UK.

Of those, 165 were convicted, data from June 2022 to June 2023 showed. The prosecutions have largely gone unreported, but last week asylum seeker Ibrahima Bah was convicted of manslaughter after he piloted an "unseaworthy" dinghy across the Channel.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Drug gangs are recruiting and sexually exploiting more girls and women, warn charities

Growing numbers of girls and women are being recruited into county drug gangs - putting them at risk of violence at the hands of criminals, survivors and campaigners have warned. It is estimated that up to a third of young people in gangs are girls - equating to tens of thousands of people across the country. In the first part of a special investigation series, ITV News Anglia has been exploring the evolving world of county lines drugs gangs - and spoke to campaigners who warn that the exploitation of young women is "a volcano that's going to explode".

<https://www.itv.com>

Sixth 'Russian spy' charged with espionage conspiracy in UK after major probe by counter-terror cops

Tihomir Ivanchev, of Acton, west London, will appear in court. He is the sixth person to be charged with conspiracy in an investigation into people suspected of spying for Russia, the Crown Prosecution Service said.

Nick Price, Head of the CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division, said: "The CPS has authorised a charge of conspiracy to conduct espionage against a sixth person suspected of spying for Russia.

"Tihomir Ivanchev, 38, will be charged with conspiring to obtain, collect, record, publish or communicate documents or information which might be or was intended to be directly or indirectly useful for a purpose prejudicial to the safety and interest of the state.

“On September 21, 2023, Orlin Roussev, 46, Bizer Dzhambazov, 42, Katrin Ivanova, 32, Ivan Stoyanov, 32, and Vanya Gaberova, 29, were charged with conspiring to collect information intended to be directly or indirectly useful to an enemy for a purpose prejudicial to the safety and interest of the state between 30 August 2020 and 8 February 2023.

“The charges follow an investigation by the Metropolitan Police’s Counter Terrorism Command. “Criminal proceedings against the six individuals are active and they each have the right to a fair trial.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk>

Teenager due in court after walking into University Hospital of North Tees with machete

A teenager is due to appear in court after he walked into a Teesside hospital armed with a machete.

Kian Bramley, of Stockton, carried a machete into the University Hospital of North Tees on December 4, 2022. According to court documents, the 19-year-old admitted the offence on January 5 and is due to be sentenced.

The charge states: "On December 4, 2022 at Stockton had with you, without good reason or lawful authority, in a public place University Hospital North Tees, Stockton, an article which had a blade or was sharply pointed, namely a machete." Bramley, of Droitwich Avenue, will appear at Teesside Magistrates' Court.

<https://www.gazettelive.co.uk>

Home Office unveils £31m security package as Cleverly vows to 'protect MPs from intimidation'

James Cleverly will meet with police chiefs to discuss what more can be done to improve the safety of MPs and “protect democratic processes from intimidation, disruption or subversion”. The Home Office said the latest funding package will provide increased security provisions for MPs.

Under the plans, all elected MPs and candidates will have dedicated named police contact they can discuss security matters with, officials said.



Figure 16: Home Office unveils £31m security package as Cleverly vows to 'protect MPs from intimidation'.

The investment will also boost police capabilities, increase private sector security provisions for those facing a higher risk and expand cyber security advice to locally elected representatives.

Announcing the new funding, Mr Cleverly said: "The Government will take every possible step to safeguard the people, processes and institutions upon which our democracy relies.

"I take the safety and security of all members of the House with the utmost seriousness.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk>

More than £5k raised for Chesham Bois shop worker after axe attack



Figure 17: More than £5k raised for Chesham Bois shop worker after axe attack.

A fundraiser to help a shop worker who was attacked with an axe by two robbers has raised over £5,000. The victim was taken to hospital with serious injuries after the incident at Chesham Bois Store, Buckinghamshire. Thames Valley Police have appealed for witnesses and information.

Markus Green, the shop's manager, thanked the community for their support and said the incident was unusual. Police said men entered the store on Bois Lane

and one was carrying an axe. After making threats, one of the men walked behind the counter towards the till and hit the shop worker on the head with the back end of the axe causing "significant injuries".

<https://www-bbc-co-uk>

Dungiven pipe bomb find

Police have urged the public in Co Londonderry to remain vigilant after a security operation in the area has ended. A fourth man, aged 55, has now been arrested in connection with the viable pipe bomb discovered in the Curran Road area of Dungiven.

The PSNI is still urging the public to remain vigilant amid claims a second device has been left in the area. Area Commander for Causeway Coast and Glens, Superintendent Mark Roberts said: "I would like to thank the community in Dungiven for their patience and understanding during the significant three-day policing operation.

"Officers recovered a viable pipe bomb type device at Curragh Road. The device was made safe and was removed for further forensic examination.

<https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk>

Three charged with terrorism offences

Three people have been charged with preparing an act of terrorism after an investigation into suspected "Extreme Right Wing" activity.

Brogan Stewart, Marco Pizzettu and Christopher Ringrose are due to appear at Westminster Magistrates Court.

All three had their homes searched during the pre-planned, intelligence-led operation. Each of the trio are charged with preparing an act of terrorism under Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006. A 46-year-old man was also arrested and released without charge.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Liverpool man convicted of preparing acts of terrorism

A man from Liverpool has been convicted of terrorism offences at Manchester Crown Court.

Jacob Graham was convicted of preparation of terrorist acts, contrary to section 5(1)(b) of the Terrorism Act 2006; two counts of dissemination of terrorist publications, contrary to Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006 and four counts of possession of material likely to be useful to a terrorist, contrary to Section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000.



Figure 18: 20-year-old man from Liverpool jailed for preparing for acts of terrorism.

The 20-year-old was arrested on Friday 26 May 2023 under section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 by officers from Merseyside Police and Counter Terrorism Policing North West.

A warrant was carried out at his address, as part of an investigation into purchases of chemicals that could have been used to make explosives.

Officers searched his media devices and found that he had collected manuals, instructions and publications, which focused on providing instructions for the manufacture of firearms, ammunition and explosives. Some of these were printed out and stored in a folder at his home. He has been remanded into custody until Monday 18 March for sentencing.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Former security boss pleads guilty to supplying unlicensed security

Former company director Shaun O'Neill and his company were sentenced at Warrington Magistrates' Court.

Mr O'Neill pleaded guilty to employing unlicensed security operatives. He was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay costs of £423 and a victim surcharge of £400.

I Guard Security entered guilty pleas to three separate offences of employing unlicensed security operatives in Merseyside and Cheshire. The company was fined £3,000 with £424 in costs and a victim surcharge of £1,200, amounting to a total of £4,624.

Jack O'Neill, the nephew of Shaun O'Neill, pleaded guilty to working without a licence, for which he was fined £202, £423 in costs and a victim surcharge of £81.

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) brought the prosecutions following a joint enforcement initiative on 22 October 2022 with Cheshire Police and Cheshire West Council licensing officers at licensed premises in Northwich, Cheshire.

<https://www.gov.uk>

Security boss prosecuted for breaching the Private Security Industry Act

David Martyn Hill, the sole director of ACE Security Specialist Ltd. was prosecuted at Doncaster Magistrates' Court. Hill was found guilty of negligence in his duty as a director, under Sections 5 and 23 of the Private Security Industry Act (PSIA) and fined £150. He had already pleaded guilty on behalf of the company at first appearance in June 2023. His company ACE Security Specialist Ltd. was fined £100. He was also ordered to pay court costs of £500.

This was the final case in a series of prosecutions resulting from the Security Industry Authority's (SIA) inspection and enforcement operation in venues across Telford, Shrewsbury, and Wolverhampton. The operation was carried out with the assistance from West Mercia Police on 22 October 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk>

Clapham shooting: Three hurt during mopeded police pursuit



Figure 19: Clapham shooting: Three injured after shots fired by moped driver in police pursuit.

Three people have been injured in Clapham, south London, in a shooting that happened during a police pursuit. Two people suffered shotgun pellet injuries when a weapon was fired by a moped rider being pursued by officers near Clapham Common South Side, the Metropolitan Police said.

A third person was injured by the moped during the incident the two suspects fled the scene. London Ambulance Service took two of the injured to a major trauma centre. Another was taken to hospital and police said a firearm was recovered at the scene.

<https://www-bbc-co-uk>



Security industry news

Retail Crime Surges by 50% to 16.7m Incidents Last Year



Figure 20: Violence, Abuse against UK Retail Staff Rises to 1,300 Incidents A Day.

Violence and abuse against shop workers rose to 1,300 incidents a day last year, according to a leading trade body.

According to the British Retail Consortium (BRC), incidents targeting staff escalated by 50% in the period leading up to September 2023, marking a stark increase from the previous year's count of 870 incidents daily.

Criticism was directed at the government by the BRC for what it deemed as "woefully inadequate" measures to address the burgeoning "crisis".

The Home Office has been approached for comment on this concerning trend. The toll exacted by shoplifting in the past year hit a record high, as per the survey conducted by the BRC.

Various business leaders have urged for specific legislation in England and Wales to criminalize violence against shop workers, akin to existing laws in Scotland.

The BRC outlined a range of incidents faced by retail staff, spanning from racial abuse and sexual harassment to physical assaults and threats involving weapons, with approximately 8,800 of these occurrences resulting in injuries throughout the year.

<https://www.infologue.com>

Car cloning: innocent UK motorists get fines as scams accelerate

Bouchaib Moussaid's £8,000 Kia Sportage car was all set to be sold at auction by bailiffs. The care worker, who lives in St Albans in Hertfordshire, and his extended family have spent the last few weeks trying to stop the sale.



Moussaid is one of a growing number of people who have had their car cloned. Unknown to him, someone had been using copies of his car's registration plates and had driven in London's ultra-low emission zone (Ulez) 12 times, resulting in him being sent a series of penalty fines.

Despite Moussaid repeatedly telling Transport for London (TfL) that it was not him at the wheel, agents working for TfL seized his car in January.

Car cloning could be one of the UK's fastest-growing crimes but it is barely acknowledged or recorded. If it happens to you, it can be a nightmare to resolve – one that will consume your life, as a host of unpaid speeding, parking and other fines start landing on your doorstep.

Unscrupulous drivers facing £2,000-a-year car insurance costs and £12.50 a day to drive in London's Ulez – or those using stolen cars – are choosing to clone another owner's number plates. Usually they pick a vehicle that is the same model and colour.

Once the plates are attached to their vehicle, they are able to drive around as an apparently legitimate driver.

<https://amp-theguardian-com>

UK reaches agreement with EU's border agency to halt small boat crossings in the Channel

The UK is set to sign a new arrangement with the EU's border agency as part of its efforts to stop small boats crossing the Channel.

The deal agreed with the EU's Frontex agency will see the UK Border Force cooperate more closely with its European counterparts, exchanging intelligence and collaborating on training, new technology and operations.

Home Secretary James Cleverly will welcome European home affairs commissioner Ylva Johansson to London on Friday to witness the signing of the arrangement by officials from Frontex and Border Force.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>



Figure 21: UK reaches agreement with EU's border agency to halt small boat crossings in the Channel.

Demand for temporary CCTV towers rises after surge in professional gangs targeting construction sites

Drastically worsening thefts from professional gangs on UK construction sites has garnered national outrage and prompted many firms across the country to install temporary CCTV towers to deter 'stealing to order', say Kingdom Systems. The company, who protect hundreds of construction sites from theft each year, warn about the rise of 'stealing to order' - where criminals are given a list of sought-after machinery and equipment to then steal and sell on.

Temporary CCTV towers can massively help to prevent 'stealing to order' crimes and protect businesses that are at risk of losing £800 million every year, according to insurer Allianz Cornhill.

Businesses are also desperately waiting for the Government to address this surge, says Kingdom Systems. Last year, the Government brought in the Equipment Theft (Prevention) Act to counteract the problem in the agricultural sector, but it fails to address the issue suffered by construction sites nationwide.

And with research by the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) revealing that a staggering 92% of construction workers are affected by theft, with 21% saying they suffer from it every single week, it's an epidemic that largely lies in the hands of individual project managers to prevent until wider governmental changes are made.

<https://theprofessionalsecurityofficer.com>

6 in 10 adults say they have trust in private security professionals



Figure 22: 6 in 10 adults say they have trust in private security professional.

New research from the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has revealed that 6 in 10 people agree that they trust security professionals.

The research on public trust and confidence in the private security industry was carried out by BMG Research and is the first of its kind commissioned by the UK's private security industry regulator.

The research was carried out in two waves across two years from 2022 to 2023 to see whether public perceptions changed.

The survey of 2,600 UK adults in 2022 and 2023 also revealed that around 6 in 10 people were confident that security professionals do their duties competently and effectively, and act with integrity.

7 in 10 respondents believed that security professionals are necessary to maintain order and improve public safety and most felt safer due to a private security presence in various settings such as music concerts, sporting events, banks, hospitals, nighttime economy venues and retail premises.

Michelle Russell, Chief Executive of the Security Industry Authority, said: "Public protection through effective regulation is the golden thread at the heart of what the SIA does. That's why it is important for us to understand public views about individual licence holders, the wider industry and us as a regulator. We are encouraged that the overall survey results demonstrate that most people have trust and confidence in private security operatives and agree they do important work.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

SIA launches consultation on business approval scheme

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) has launched a public consultation on its new business approval scheme.

The changes outlined in the consultation mark a shift in how the SIA approves businesses under the scheme. They will also change how standards are defined security businesses.

The business approval scheme is the main way the SIA can influence improvements to business standards. The SIA uses it to promote good practice and improvements in industry standards and it is voluntary.

Currently, the SIA approves around 750 security businesses.

The SIA has been engaging with stakeholders and industry and roadshows and roundtables. The consultation has been launched to gather views on the principles that will underpin this change. The SIA is seeking feedback from the private security industry, its customers, representative and other standard-setting bodies, agencies, members of the public and individuals with an interest in public safety.

The consultation will fund for six weeks, closing on 4 April.

Steve McCormick, SIA director of licensing and service delivery, said: "Since the SIA established its approvals scheme in 2006, there have been many changes in terms of customer requirements, an increased demand for private security, and new emerging threats to public safety.

"The growing recognition of the critical role private security plays in public safety means there is a clear need for a new scheme which is grounded in public protection. This is an opportunity to shape how the SIA sets standards for private security businesses to ensure they contribute to public protection and raise industry standards in the years ahead."

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Met launches Stop and Search charter survey

The Metropolitan police has launched a survey to seek the views of Londoners on stop and search.

The survey will ask questions about what people think about stop and search practices. The responses will be used to inform a charter between local communities and the Met.

Through the New Met for London plan, the force is aiming to reset its relationship with London's communities.

The Met claims that when done right, stop and search can be an effective tool, which enables officers to take 4,000 dangerous weapons off the streets every year.

However, when done poorly, the Met says that it can have a detrimental impact on the relationship between the police and local communities.

The online survey focuses on the public's perception of stop and search, personal experiences of the tactic, training for officers, and what could be done better.



Figure 23: Met launches Stop and Search charter survey.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade Adelekan, who leads the project, said: “A key part of our plan to reform the Met is to work closely with our communities, ensuring we police with their consent.

“Stop and search has always been a contentious issue. When used well it saves lives and is important in keeping Londoners safe, helping us identify criminality and take dangerous weapons like knives and firearms off our streets.

“I know some Londoners have a poor experience of stop and search and that has damaged the trust, confidence and co-operation of some communities. That distrust is higher in communities where stop and search powers are used most often, generally where violent crime, driven by a small minority, is highest.

“This is why we are taking the first steps to reset our approach. We want to hear from Londoners and create an agreement between the Met and the public on how we conduct stop and searches in the future.”

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Mayor of London announces additional funding for Met Police



Figure 24: Sadiq Khan said keeping Londoners safe was his “number-one priority”.

The Mayor of London has announced an additional £151 million for policing and crime prevention as part of his final draft budget for 2024-25.

An additional £48.9 million has been earmarked in addition to £88.4 million, which was announced last month plus £7.2m following the end of COVID-19 funding repayments, to support the Met police in 2024-25.

There is also an additional £6.5m to support the Mayor’s Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) across the next two years.

According to the Mayor of London, analysis shows that compared to 2010-11, Government funding for the Met has only increased by 2 per cent in cash term, which in real terms, is a funding cut of over £1 billion, or a 32.4 per cent real terms reduction using December 2023 inflation figures.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: “Bearing down on crime and keeping Londoners safe is my top priority as Mayor. That’s why I’m proud to be announcing that we’ll be investing a record £1.148bn in policing this year from City Hall. This means we will be providing more than double the amount of funding for the police and crime prevention compared to when I first became Mayor.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Government considers tightening crossbow laws

The government has launched a call for evidence to consider whether crossbow laws should be strengthened.

Currently, it is illegal for anyone under 18 purchase or possess a crossbow. Anyone who carries a crossbow in public without a reasonable excuse could face a four-year prison sentence.

A call for evidence has been launched to ask whether these laws are enough. If the law were to be strengthened, measures could include a licensing scheme to protect public safety police checks for anyone looking to purchase a crossbow. This would mean that crossbows are policed under regulations similar to that of firearms.

Crossbow incidents are rare, with the statistics showing that there were fewer than 10 homicides by crossbow between 2011 and 2021. The plans are part of government aims to reduce violence.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

Standards and Compliance Unit launched to oversee Prevent

A Standards and Compliance Unit (StaCU) has been launched to oversee the Prevent programme, the Commission for Countering Extremism has announced today.

The unit, part of the Commission for Countering Extremism, will investigate complaints about how the Prevent duty has been applied.

Prevent is a government-led programme aiming to stop vulnerable people being drawn into extremism.

StaCU, the creation of which was recommended by Sir William Shawcross in the Independent Review of Prevent, is meant to ensure that Prevent is being delivered properly within the direction set by ministers.

Robin Simcox, commissioner for countering extremism, said StaCU will help to "retain public trust and confidence."

He added: "Prevent has a vital role to play in keeping our country safe from the evils of terrorism and extremism."

StaCU will review any complaints and update the complainant of the outcome.

Where complaints require investigation, StaCU will work closely with statutory bodies and in conjunction with existing organisational complaints processes.

The Commission for Countering Extremism will also publish annual reports sharing details on numbers and types of complaints received by StaCU.

<https://counterterrorbusiness.com>

“Cyber criminals intensify attacks on user identities in UK” reports IBM

IBM HAS released the 2024 X-Force Threat Intelligence Index highlighting an “emerging global crisis” as cyber criminals double down on exploiting user identities in a bid to compromise today’s enterprises. According to IBM X-Force, which is IBM Consulting’s security services arm, cyber criminals generated more opportunities to ‘login’ to corporate networks last year through valid accounts instead of hacking into them, rendering this tactic a preferred ‘weapon of choice’ for threat actors.



Figure 25: Vulnerable UK energy system among top targets for cybercriminals as businesses face growing extortion threat.

The X-Force Threat Intelligence Index is based on insights and observations amassed from monitoring over 150 billion security events per day in more than 130 countries. In addition, data is gathered and analysed from multiple sources within IBM, including IBM X-Force Threat Intelligence, Incident Response, X-Force Red, IBM Managed Security Services and data provided from Red Hat Insights and Intezer, which has contributed towards the 2024 report. A copy of the 2024 X-Force Threat Intelligence Index

<https://securitymattersmagazine.com/cyber-criminals-intensify-attacks-on-user-identities-in-uk-reports-ibm>

Major campaign to fight fraud launched by Government

The Government has launched a significant campaign that’s designed to transform the fight against fraudsters. ‘Stop! Think Fraud’ is backed by leading counter-fraud experts who are uniting under one voice to provide consistent, clear and robust anti-fraud advice and messaging to the public.

Fraud accounts for circa 40% of all crime in England and Wales, with an estimated 3.2 million offences perpetrated each year. The latest data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows that episodes of fraud have actually reduced by 13% over the past year. However, the estimated cost of fraud to society is a massive £6.8 billion in England and Wales.

Fraud has also more than doubled in scope in Scotland over the past nine years, while reports of fraud episodes spiked in Northern Ireland during the pandemic, with a decline now being observed.

The evidence-led ‘Stop! Think Fraud’ campaign draws on the expertise of leading counter-fraud experts and includes an online fraud hub, which will provide concise and simple-to-follow advice. It will also signpost victims to relevant organisations for further advice and support.

<https://securitymattersmagazine.com>

Cost of theft soars to £1.8 billion in BRC's latest Retail Crime Survey



Figure 26: The number of shoplifting offences has risen above 400,000 for the first time since current records began.

The British Retail Consortium's Retail Crime Survey 2022-2023 highlights that the cost of retail theft doubled to £1.8 billion, with upwards of 45,000 incidents occurring each day. Violence and abuse against retail workers has soared by 50%. The number of incidents rose to 1,300 per day during the survey period from almost 870 per day the year before. According to the BRC, this is now "a crisis that demands action".

These worrying figures emerge despite retailers having invested heavily in crime prevention, spending no less than £1.2 billion on measures such as CCTV, increased numbers of security personnel and the introduction of body-worn cameras. Overall spend on security measures is

up from £722 million when compared to the previous review period.

Further, the aforementioned total cost of theft to retailers escalating to £1.8 billion from £953 million the previous year effectively means that the total cost of crime to retailers now stands at £3.3 billion. That's double the previous year's figure.

The BRC's annual Retail Crime Survey highlights the scale of violence and abuse faced by individuals working in the sector. Incidents including racial abuse, sexual harassment, physical assault and threats with weapons are now on a par with the levels witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, retail staff often bore the brunt of frustrations with COVID-related safety measures put in place by the Government.

While the total number of incidents climbed, dissatisfaction with the police service has increased, with 60% of respondents describing the police response to incidents as either 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Retailers are calling on the Government to introduce a standalone offence of assaulting, threatening or abusing a retail worker. This would send a clear message that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated, in turn making retail workers feel safer in the workplace.

<https://securitymattersmagazine.com>

NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY CENTRE (NCSC)

The NCSC supports the most critical organisations in the UK, the wider public sector, industry, SMEs as well as the general public. When incidents do occur, they provide effective incident response to minimise harm to the UK, help with recovery, and learn lessons for the future. Please see the links to this month's NCSC weekly threat reports.

Threat actors using built-in tools to hide on CNI cyber networks



Figure 27: A man performing Hacking.

The UK and its allies have issued a fresh warning to Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) operators concerning the threat posed by cyber attackers using sophisticated techniques to camouflage their activity on victims' networks. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and agencies in the US, Australia, Canada and New Zealand have detailed how threat actors have been exploiting native tools and processes built into computer systems to gain persistent access and avoid detection.

This kind of tradecraft, known as 'living off the land', allows attackers to operate discreetly. Malicious activity blends in with legitimate system and network behaviour, in turn making it difficult to differentiate, even for those organisations with more mature security postures.

The NCSC assesses it's likely this type of activity poses a threat to UK CNI. That being so, all providers are urged to follow the recommended actions in order to help detect compromises and mitigate vulnerabilities.

<https://securitymattersmagazine.com>

NCSC statement on law enforcement's disruption of LockBit ransomware operation

The National Crime Agency (NCA) has announced that it is conducting a months-long campaign with international partners to disrupt the threat posed by the LockBit ransomware operation.

Law enforcement has taken control of technical infrastructure which underpins the LockBit operation, including its primary platform and leak site where data stolen from victims in ransomware attacks have previously been hosted.

The seizure of the criminal infrastructure aims to reduce the threat to the UK, while data obtained through the campaign will help law enforcement progress their investigations.

Ransomware remains the most significant cyber threat facing UK organisations and they are strongly encouraged to take action to help protect themselves online.

The NCSC has published a range of advice and guidance to help organisations understand, mitigate and respond to ransomware attacks.

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/ransomware/home>

UK and allies expose evolving tactics of Russian cyber actors

New advisory reveals evolving tactics used by Russian state-linked cyber actors as more organisations move to cloud-based infrastructure.

Malicious cyber actors linked to Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) are adapting their techniques in response to the increasing shift to cloud-based infrastructure, UK and international security officials have revealed.



Figure 28: UK and allies expose evolving tactics of Russian cyber actors.

In a new joint advisory, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), which is a part of GCHQ, and agencies in the United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have detailed how the threat group, which is known as APT29, has adapted its techniques for intelligence gain to target organisations that have moved to cloud-hosted environments.

Many of the sectors targeted by the SVR, including think tanks, healthcare, and education, have moved to cloud-based infrastructure, which means that traditional means of access - such as through the exploitation of software vulnerabilities - are more limited.

Instead, SVR actors have over the past 12 months been observed stealing system-issued access tokens to compromise victim accounts, enrolling new devices to the victim's cloud environment via credential reuse from personal accounts, and targeted system accounts with password spraying and brute forcing, which is successfully enabled by weak passwords and the absence of 2-step verification (2SV).

Once initial access has been gained, the actor is then capable of deploying highly sophisticated capabilities.

Along with updated threat information, the advisory also provides mitigation advice on how to counter the evolving tactics of APT29. The NCSC assesses that APT29, also known as Midnight Blizzard, the Dukes, or Cozy Bear, is a cyber espionage group which almost certainly operates as part of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service.

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/svr-cyber-actors-adapt-tactics-for-initial-cloud-access>



Demonstrations / Protests

Hundreds of protesters descend on Biggin Hill for 'Funeral for Ulez' march



Figure 29: Hundreds of protesters descend on Biggin Hill for 'Funeral for Ulez' march.

A “funeral for Ulez” has been held in south-east London to protest against Sadiq Khan’s clean air zone. Around 500 protesters, some dressed as skeletons and t-rexes declared “Ulez is dead” as they marched through Biggin Hill. Flowers were thrown in front of a hearse while buskers and DJs performed at the Day of the Dead-themed event.

Biggin Hill resident Claire Dyer, who helped organise the event, has claimed there has not been a Ulez camera in the area since October as protesters keep blocking contractors when they arrive to put the enforcement cameras up. The claim has not been verified yet.

She told the Standard: “We have just had a full carnival, Mexican style - Day of the Dead.

“We have just done a funeral procession and brought the main road to a standstill... All to celebrate that we have no cameras and we have no signs.

She continued: “We stand there on the pavement when they want to put the box in and they can’t do the work. It’s all legal.”

The protest comes a week after protesters claimed to block “every camera” in Sutton by placing signs in front of the CCTV cameras to temporarily obstruct their view.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Twelve arrested as more than 200,000 pro-Palestine marchers walk through London to Israel embassy

Twelve people have been arrested at a pro-Palestine demonstration in central London.

The arrests were for a string of alleged offences, including inciting racial hatred, suspicion of support for a proscribed organisation in relation to a placard, and assaulting emergency workers.

But the Metropolitan Police said the "overwhelming majority" of people who took part were peaceful and acted lawfully. Between 200,000 and 250,000 people were expected at the demonstration, according to a spokesman for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Protesters met at the south of Park Lane, holding banners calling for a "ceasefire now" and chanting "free, free Palestine", before leaving for designated place near the Israeli embassy where speeches would be made.

Among the speakers was former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and Palestinian ambassador to the UK Husam Zomlot, who both called for "justice" for the Palestinian people.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Protestors halt council meeting for second time in three weeks

A council meeting was brought to a halt by pro-Palestinian protestors for the second time in three weeks. Sandwell councillors briefly abandoned Tuesday's key budget meeting after it was interrupted by protestors demanding the authority discusses supporting an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.



Figure 30: Protestors halt council meeting.

The meeting at the council's headquarters in Oldbury was suspended for five minutes as council security and a police officer tried to escort the protestors away from the public gallery. The council appeared to be on high alert after protests inside and outside the council chamber on January 28 led to a delay in proceedings at that evening's meeting.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

Fury as police bow down to anti-Israel mob at Parliament with protestors projecting inflammatory slogan

Police have been slammed for bowing down to an anti-Israel mob at Parliament. Protesters projected an inflammatory slogan on to the building during a heated debate on a Gaza war ceasefire.

Officers were accused of standing by as the controversial phrase "from the river to the sea" lit up the Commons. The pro-Palestine demo came as MPs inside the chamber rowed after Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle let protestors' threats dictate votes.

Jewish Tory Andrew Percy accused cops of all but ignoring the surge in anti-Semitic abuse since Hamas terrorists attacked Israel in October.

He told MPs: "A genocidal call of 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free' was projected on to this building.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk>

Just Stop Oil activist guilty of causing nuisance after climbing M25 gantry near Heathrow



Figure 31: The jury found her guilty by a majority of 10 to two.

A Just Stop Oil protester has been convicted of causing a nuisance by climbing onto a gantry over the M25. Cambridge University music student Cressida Gethin, 22, scaled the gantry to protest the UK reaching its hottest temperature on record, 40C. Isleworth Crown Court a jury found Gethin guilty of causing a public nuisance contrary to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The jury found her guilty by a majority of 10 to two. During her trial the court heard the protest on July 20 2022 delayed 3,923 British

Airways passengers' journeys.

BBC broadcaster Chris Packham told the jury he was stuck in four to five hours of traffic.

Gethin did not dispute scaling the gantry but argued that the consequence did not amount to the charge.

<https://www.standard.co.uk>

Protesters face jail for wearing face masks or carrying flares under new crackdown

Police will be given new powers to arrest protesters who wear face coverings under new laws cracking down on disorder, ministers have announced.

Demonstrators flouting an order to remove their mask could be jailed for a month and fined up to £1,000.

Anyone joining a protest will also be banned from carrying pyrotechnics, including fireworks, flares and smoke, and those using them could be arrested.

<https://www.independent.co.uk>

Huge crowds outside BBC at Media City to protest war in Gaza

Huge crowds gathered outside the BBC headquarters in Salford calling for an end to the war in Gaza. Organisers say 'thousands' of people attended the protest led by children who left toys, clothes and shoes at Media City.

Children were encouraged to attend the demonstration to highlight the 'horrific' numbers of young lives lost in Gaza. Palestinians from Gaza displayed photos of their family members who were killed by Israel's bombings, including in previous conflicts in 2014 and 2009.

Manchester Palestine Action, which organised the protest, also wanted to highlight media coverage of the conflict which they claim has 'underplayed' the extent of suffering in Gaza. It comes more than four months after the fighting between Israel and Hamas began.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk>

London's Tower Bridge closed due to pro-Palestine demonstration

Police were forced to close Tower Bridge to vehicles and pedestrians following a protest by pro-Palestine demonstrators.

Some activists were seen lighting flares and waving Palestinian flags and calling for a ceasefire to the ongoing violence in Gaza, according to footage on social media. The landmark was closed by City of London police before being reopened approximately an hour later.



Figure 32: London's Tower Bridge closed due to pro-Palestine demonstration.

<https://www.theguardian.com>

Four arrests made as Bradford takeaway damaged during protest

Four men have been arrested on suspicion of assault and criminal damage at a takeaway in Bradford. According to West Yorkshire Police, this took place at Salah's takeaway on Leeds Road in Bradford. There were reports of people assaulted and damage to a window.

The police say this incident "appeared to arise" from a Pro-Palestine protest involving a group outside the takeaway. As a result, four men aged 30, 34, 46 and 50 have been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage, assault, affray and possession of an offensive weapon.

<https://www.examinerlive.co.uk>

Mass protests in London put other police priorities at risk, MPs warn

Frequent and disruptive mass protests in central London are a drain on police resources and are putting other policing priorities at risk, an influential committee of MPs has claimed.

In comments that have concerned defenders of civil liberties, the home affairs select committee said the size and frequency of protests over the conflict in Gaza have placed significant pressures on police resources as the Metropolitan police attempt to implement a "culture change" and train thousands of new officers.

The committee proposed that the government should consider expanding the requirements for protest organisers, such as increasing the minimum notice period of six days, to enable the police to better prepare.

The suggestion, which comes after a new law was introduced making it easier for the police to put conditions on peaceful protests, has drawn staunch defences of the right to demonstrate.

<https://www.theguardian.com>

Palestine Action protestors lock themselves to UAV Engines factory entrance

Activists have locked themselves to the entrance gates of a factory in Staffordshire in a protest over the conflict in Palestine. The group want to shut down the factory which makes drone engines.

It is the latest in a long list of protests at the UAV Engines site in Shenstone, near Lichfield. Activists have been staging protests in the area for more than three years - but they have gained even more traction since violence broke out in Gaza last year. The factory is owned by Israeli-based defence contractor Elbit Systems. It makes repurposed Norton motorbike engines used in surveillance drones around the world.

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk>

