

# Counter Terrorism Protective Security Update



## Introduction

This afternoon Detective Superintendent David Roney from the National Coordinator Protect and Prepare's (NCP) office and Detective Chief Superintendent David Palmer, from Metropolitan Police Service Protective Security Operations provided an update to CSSC Industry Sector Leads (ISLs) following the incident in Brussels, Belgium this morning.

## Summary of Events

At around 0800 hours local time (0700 hours GMT) on 22 March 2016, two explosions and possible gunfire were reported at the check-in area of Zaventam Airport, Brussels. The media states that 13 have been killed and 35 have been injured (including one British national), but precise numbers are conflicting. The type and method of the explosives remain unclear, but further device(s) have allegedly been discovered following the airports clearance.

At around 0930 hours (local) another explosion occurred on the train between Maelbeek and Schuman Metro Stations killing 10 individuals. Schuman Station is around 500m from the European Union Commission Headquarters. At this stage there are no indications which was the primary target.

It is unclear at this stage how many individuals are involved in the attacks or whether the individuals are still alive.

Belgium has raised its domestic threat level to 4 (serious or imminent threat), its highest level, in response to the events.

In response to the ongoing threat, the Belgium Security Services have evacuated the Gare Central (Central Station) and Brussels University. Metro trains and trams are also being closed as a precaution.

This is the second highly sophisticated attack in Western Europe in the course of four months where terrorists have conducted attacks at multiple locations aiming at causing mass casualties and using explosives.

Although it is not yet clear who conducted the attacks in Brussels, the co-ordination, use of explosives and targeting of crowded transport hubs implies that the attacks will have required some level of planning. This means that the perpetrators are likely to have conducted hostile reconnaissance, the information gathering phase that is a vital component of the attack planning process. If you can disrupt hostile reconnaissance you can help reduce your vulnerability to attack.

In open crowded places, it may not be possible to deny access to public areas (although it is worth re-examining your existing security measures for restricted, back of house areas etc.). However, measures can be rapidly put in place or existing capabilities enhanced to help disrupt hostiles by detecting and deterring them.



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## Key Points

Our thoughts are with the people of Brussels following the horrific attacks. As a precaution forces across the UK have increased policing presence at key locations, including transport hubs, to protect the public and provide reassurance. This is not in relation to any specific information or intelligence.

In London specifically, the Metropolitan Police Service has mobilised additional officers, who will carry out highly visible patrols at locations around the capital, including the transport network. The number of officers deployed will be regularly assessed. These additional officers are deployed as part of reassurance measures. As ever our security measures will be constantly reviewed.

We are in close liaison with the Belgium authorities and will continue to monitor the situation.

## Current Threat Levels

The threat to the UK from international terrorism remains unchanged at SEVERE, as it has been since August 2014, meaning an attack is highly likely.

Threat from	Threat Level	Meaning
The current threat for INTERNATIONAL terrorism.	<b>SEVERE</b>	An attack is highly likely.
The current threat level from Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Britain.	<b>MODERATE</b>	An attack is possible, but not likely.

For more information please see: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk>

The UK police and security and intelligence services are working tirelessly and at a pace to confront the terrorist threat and keep the public safe.

We urge the public to be alert but not alarmed and report anything suspicious to the confidential anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321. In an emergency always call 999.

## Metropolitan Police Appeal

Following this morning's attacks in Brussels, police are appealing for any UK nationals or media who were in Brussels and may have images or footage of the incidents to come forward and assist the investigation.

Police in the UK have activated an online platform where images and videos can be uploaded which could provide important information for the investigating authorities. The public and the media can help us by sending any images or footage they may have taken at the scenes to [www.ukpoliceimageappeal.co.uk](http://www.ukpoliceimageappeal.co.uk)



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## Foreign Travel Advice

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is ready to assist British nationals who may have been affected by the explosions in Brussels. For more information please see FCO travel pages:

[www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/belgium](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/belgium)

Concerned British nationals can also call the FCO on 020 7008 0000.

## Protective Security Operations

In addition to pursuing terrorists and preventing others from becoming violent extremists the police service carries out daily activities to help increase the protection and security of our citizens, public institutions, critical national infrastructure, and businesses and places, including those who are potential terrorist targets.

This concerted effort, which includes highly visible, covert, armed and technical methods, is aimed at protecting the public from the threat of terrorism, boosting the security of key sites, reassuring businesses, workers and visitors so they can go about their daily lives, and making the UK a hostile environment for terrorists to operate in.

Our measures and activities are constantly reviewed to reflect where the threats exist and the level of threat the country is facing.

## Our key actions to boost protective security include:

- \* Carrying out high visibility patrols in and around key areas in the country to reassure the public and to disrupt terrorist planning;
- \* Protecting our critical national infrastructure to help ensure the country's communications, energy and transport networks can operate more securely;
- \* Encouraging business and community vigilance through national awareness and information campaigns;
- \* Delivering events to provide key advice to businesses, public sector and other institutions;
- \* Offering specialist security advice to organisers of large scale events.

