



Devon & Cornwall Police Authority

NEWS & INFORMATION
No 4 / 2007

Counter Terrorism – It's Everyone's Business

Many people ask the question "How many Counter Terrorism Officers does the Devon and Cornwall constabulary have?" The answer is simple – 1,357,160 – i.e. every resident of the two counties! Our motto is simple:

COUNTER TERRORISM IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Of course, nothing is quite that straightforward, and there is much more to the way we do our business.

Essentially though, the whole thing boils down to the basics of policing. Eyes, ears and good community contacts are the true keys to all policing, and to effectively combat crime – and terrorism is just another form of crime. It may be bigger and nastier, it may have all kinds of individuals trying to make political gains by hiding behind skewed rhetoric – but ultimately it is crime.

One of our most difficult jobs is to strip away the idea that terrorism is a cause; to educate and empower all in our community to resist those who would threaten them. This is where the Police Authority and its' community engagement projects aim to make their mark.

This Force shares the guidance of its Counter Terrorism effort between the Operations and Crime departments, the whole being very much influenced by the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Command and Security Service in London. We maintain a firm local grounding, but the nature of the beast is that it respects no boundaries and so we have regional, national and international responsibilities.

Uniformed officers, headed by the Counter Terrorism Co-ordinating Officer, and operating as the Counter Terrorism Operations Team head up a range of high visibility operations, deploying a wide range of specialist and BCU resources as needed. You will have seen this in action in July at our Air and Sea ports to deter the threat, which followed the London and Glasgow attacks. The unit also deals with raising awareness for all police staff, and increasingly to relevant businesses and groups. Work with the Police Authority on community engagement is a big piece of this work.

Counter Terrorism Security Advisors deal with businesses needing specialist advice, and are currently rolling out Project ARGUS across the Force – a response/resilience package designed to be of assistance to all business. That means shops, stadia, the night-time economy, tourism.....a long list! (If you are in business and want to find out more, follow the contact link below.) The Police always need information and intelligence, and there are many ways of passing it. Special Branch deals with the handling and development of intelligence.

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So, a range of officers and staff from a variety of departments, each bringing expertise to the table and operating as a team, but that team depends on community contact and a flow of information – and in turn **‘That Means You!’**

New government security minister Admiral Sir Alan West recently commented on the need for us all to get used to the idea of doing an un-British thing – reporting suspicions about our neighbours! It is sad but true that those who threaten us all are adept at hiding behind and amongst us – but hindsight tells us that they always make mistakes and leave a trace. The tricky bit is to turn hindsight into foresight! We all have a part to play in that.

The main theme here is that we are talking about KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE. That is deliberately an inclusive phrase; we must learn to view ourselves as a whole, rather than separate parts. Only by understanding and talking do we achieve proper engagement.

To contact the Counter Terrorism Police – Always dial 999 if it is urgent and 08452 777444 if not. (For ARGUS or to seek other briefings or information, use this number and ask for the CTCO’s office).

Email: terrorism@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

The National 24/7 Anti Terrorist Hotline 0800 789321

Remember:

COUNTER TERRORISM – IT’S EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

Mike Kinsey
Counter Terrorism Operations Team