

Press release: Stricter laws to tackle terrorism come into force

Measures including longer sentences for several terrorism offences and ending automatic early release for convicted terrorists have commenced two months after the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act received [Royal Assent](#).

The management of convicted terrorist offenders has also been strengthened with stricter notification requirements.

It is now illegal to recklessly express support for, or publish images of flags, emblems or clothing in a way which suggests you are a member or supporter of a [proscribed organisation](#) and certain preparatory terrorism offences, including encouragement of terrorism or the dissemination of terrorist publications, now carry a maximum sentence of 15 years.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

These new laws give the police the powers they need to disrupt terrorist plots earlier and ensure that those who seek to do us harm face just punishment.

As we saw in the deadly attacks in London and Manchester in 2017, the threat from terrorism continues to evolve and so must our response, which is why these vital new measures have been introduced.

A new offence introduced in the Act also gives the Home Secretary the power to designate an area outside of the UK, subject to Parliamentary approval, to restrict UK nationals and residents from entering or remaining in that area, if he is satisfied that it is necessary to protect members of the public from terrorism.

An individual found to have entered or remained in a designated area, unless for a legitimate reason such as being there involuntarily, could face up to 10 years in prison. The offence will not allow the retrospective prosecution of those who have already travelled overseas to fight and returned to the UK, but it will assist in a future conflict to which UK nationals or residents seek to travel.

Furthermore, the Act extends extra-territorial jurisdiction for a number of terrorism offences including inviting support for a proscribed organisation and making or possessing explosives for the purposes of carrying out an act of terrorism.

The provisions that have commenced today:

- create an offence of reckless expressions of support for a proscribed

organisation

- create an offence of publication of images, and a police power to seize items as evidence, related to a proscribed organisation
- create an offence of obtaining or viewing terrorist material over the internet
- create an offence of entering or remaining in a designated area
- amend the offences of encouragement of terrorism and dissemination of terrorist publications
- extend extra-territorial jurisdiction for certain offences including inviting support for a proscribed organisation
- increase maximum sentences for terrorism offences
- make extended sentences available for terrorism offences – ending automatic early release and allowing a longer period on licence
- strengthen notification requirements on convicted terrorists, and introduce greater powers to enter and search their homes
- extend Serious Crime Prevention Orders for terrorism offences
- introduce further traffic regulations
- provide for a statutory review of Prevent

Updated legislation was central to the government's [updated counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST](#), which was published in 2018 following a fundamental review after the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester in 2017.

Further provisions in the Act to crackdown on hostile state activity, will come into force in the coming months. The Home Office is currently [consulting on the codes of practice](#) governing the use of this power.