

News story: Manchester Project Griffin Event

On Friday 16 June 2017 around 750 people gathered at Manchester's One Central Convention Complex for a Project Griffin briefing. Attendees came from a range of industry sectors, including retail, hospitality, entertainment, and travel, to learn how they can protect against terrorist attacks, and what to do in the event of a major incident unfolding.

These briefings are typically given to groups of between 30 and 50 people, with the previous largest in Manchester consisting of around 140 attendees. With this event being delivered to more than five times that number, it demonstrates the desire of local businesses to keep their employees, and the wider public, safe from harm.

The briefing consisted of a package devised by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) and delivered by [Counter Terrorism Security Advisors \(CTSA\)](#) from the North West Counter Terrorism Unit (NWCTU).

[Project Griffin](#) is a NaCTSO initiative to help protect our workers, businesses and communities from the threat of terrorism. Launched in 2004, Project Griffin builds on existing partnerships between counter terrorism police, emergency services and local companies, helping businesses improve their security and preparedness plans in order to better protect their staff and customers.

Companies have to guard against a variety of potential threats, ranging from crude attacks by lone attackers inspired by terrorist or extremist political ideologies, to sophisticated directed plots requiring significant planning and resources.

Detective Chief Superintendent Scott Wilson, the national police coordinator for Protect and Prepare, said:

Project Griffin has been a vitally important strand of our policing strategy for more than a decade, but recent atrocities in Manchester and London have brought into sharper focus the necessity for police and our partners in industry to work closely together.

I am delighted to see this partnership is flourishing in the North West, and I am sure this is typical of the close relationship police forces around the country share with their local businesses.

While there is no specific intelligence to say an attack is imminent, the threat from terrorism is Severe and that means an

attack is highly likely. But it is important to keep a sense of perspective.

Our aim is to move public thinking from an irrational fear of terrorism to a rational concern, where the nature of the current threat is better understood, and staff members know what to do if they find themselves involved at the scene of a terrorist incident or if they should witness the preparations for a future attack.

This may include recognising and reporting suspicious behaviour, dealing with a suspect package, or how they react to a firearms or weapons attack, even though such events are thankfully rare.

We have recently renewed our crowded places guidance to ensure that both the public and industry have the most up-to-date information on how to mitigate the risk from terrorism, and that guidance can be found on the NaCTSO website.

Vaughan Allen, Chief Exec of CityCo, the city centre management company for Manchester and Salford, said:

Since the tragic night of the bomb, CityCo has been working with businesses to keep the city open and help ensure everyone working, living and visiting here feels safe.

It's a sign of how seriously businesses take the need for their staff to be as well informed as possible that this Project Griffin event will be one of the largest ever counter terrorism awareness events in the UK.

CityCo will continue to work with our partners at NWCTU and Greater Manchester Police in the months to come, rolling out further training and ensuring businesses have up-to-date and accurate advice.

[News story: Finsbury Park terrorist attack](#)

You can [apply](#) to the [Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority \(CICA\)](#), under the [Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012](#), if you were injured or bereaved as a result of this incident. You can also call the CICA helpline on 0300 003 3601.

You do not need a paid representative, such as a solicitor or claims management company, to apply to CICA for compensation.

Our [Guide](#) provides information about free independent advice that may be available from local support services or other charitable organisations.

[News story: DIT DSO assists UK SMEs at Seawork 2017](#)

The annual Seawork exhibition and conference took place at the Mayflower Park, Southampton between Tuesday 13 and Thursday 15 June 2017.

Once again DIT DSO led on UK government help at the exhibition. They were able to offer UK companies a wide range of advice, information and support aimed at increasing overseas defence and security sales.

DIT DSO's principal customers were UK SMEs, who received informal advice or attended pre-booked appointments to meet DIT DSO experts to discuss more specific export opportunities.

HM government zone stand

The stand was manned throughout by the DSO Small Business Unit and the Military Export Support Team. They were joined at the show over the 3 days by a number of DIT DSO colleagues from the regional directorates and high growth team.

The stand also had a senior Royal Naval presence on all 3 days to engage with:

- visiting overseas naval officials
- colleagues from the Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- UK companies

Access to the stand was also extended to Department for International Trade

(DIT) colleagues from the regional international trade and MoD business advisory teams.

Seawork

[Seawork International](#) is the largest and fastest growing commercial marine and workboat event to be held in a working port. This annual conference and exhibition is in its 20th year and is an important fixture on the [DIT DSO exhibition programme](#).

The show itself largely focuses upon civil and commercial maritime sales. This provided DIT DSO with an excellent opportunity to engage with new potential customers and to showcase the possibilities and benefits of diversifying into the overseas military market.

Examples of the range of kit that military colleagues have helped to sell in the past provided an attractive draw to the stand. This helped potential exporters understand just how wide and diverse the overseas defence and security markets can be.

DIT DSO hope to have started a good number of UK companies on a new journey into international trade.

[News story: CMA recommends release of BAES from long-standing undertakings](#)

The undertakings – put in place in 1999 – require BAES as the prime contractor to, where possible, allow other contractors in the defence industry access to its resources for the purposes of a Ministry of Defence (MoD) programme.

A group of independent panel members at the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has now [advised the Secretary of State](#) for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) that changes of circumstances mean they are no longer appropriate. This follows a comprehensive review and consultation on the proposal they be removed.

The review looked at 4 defence sectors (warships, submarines, combat aircraft and munitions) and found that there have been relevant changes of circumstances. For example:

- the MoD has moved away from a competitive procurement process and made better use of long-term exclusive agreements and alliances;
- BAES has sold or closed its businesses in several sectors; and
- the capabilities of other defence contractors have developed such that any potential reliance on BAES has diminished.

This has meant a smaller role for the prime contractor model where competing suppliers might need to use the undertakings to facilitate access to BAES' resources. The group's view is that there is also little prospect of this situation changing in the foreseeable future.

The [CMA began reviewing these undertakings in July 2016](#) after a request by BAES. The undertakings were originally given by British Aerospace plc (now BAES), to the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, following its merger with the Marconi Electronic Systems business of General Electric Company plc, in 1999. Following Office of Fair Trading (OFT) reviews, the Secretary of State released BAES from most of the undertakings by 2007.

The remaining undertakings were designed to allow other actual or potential prime contractors to compete for contracts where they might need to sub-contract BAES' resources. BAES has also been obliged to appoint a compliance officer to ensure this requirement is met. The group has now advised that BAES should be released from these remaining undertakings.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will now consider this advice and is expected to make a decision shortly.

[News story: Universities rated in Teaching Excellence Framework](#)

UK university teaching quality recognised for the first time.

The [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#) has today (22 June 2017) published the first set of ratings for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

It has revealed that the majority of UK universities are offering quality teaching to their students – 59 providers were rated 'gold', 116 rated 'silver' and 56 rated 'bronze'.

The ratings will help students decide which university or college to apply to and encourage teaching and learning excellence across the UK.

Universities Minister Jo Johnson said:

These results, highlighting the extraordinary strengths of our higher education system, will help students choose which university or college to study at.

The Teaching Excellence Framework is refocusing the sector's attention on teaching – putting in place incentives that will raise

standards across the sector and giving teaching the same status as research.

Students, parents, employers and taxpayers all have a shared interest in ensuring higher education equips the next generation of graduates for success.

Universities taking part have been assessed by an expert panel in 3 areas:

- teaching quality
- the learning environment
- the educational and professional outcomes achieved by students

As set out in its white paper, [Success as a knowledge economy](#) (May 2016), the government will shortly begin a lessons learned exercise into this first trial year of the TEF. The findings of the lessons learned exercise will inform the operation of the TEF in 2018 and the intention to move to subject level assessments.