

Police launch Counter Terrorism Awareness Week



Police Scotland has today launched a targeted week of action to promote counter-terrorism activity across the country.

The Counter Terrorism Awareness Week forms part of the UK Counter Terrorism Policing Networks Initiative and is co-ordinated by the National CT Policing Headquarters.

From Monday 12th until Sunday 18th June, specialist and local officers will be working together along with a number of partners to undertake a range of activities throughout Scotland, aimed at providing the public with useful information to help deter terrorism and keep them safe in the event of a terrorist incident.

In response to the tragic events in Manchester and London and other recent incidents, which have occurred across the world, Counter Terrorism Awareness Week will focus on safety and security in crowded public spaces.

On Tuesday 23rd May, the national threat level was raised to Critical, meaning another attack in Britain is considered imminent. Following review by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) this was reduced to SEVERE on Saturday 27th May, meaning that an attack is still highly likely. However, Police Scotland's message to the public remains the same - "Be alert, not alarmed" and "Be vigilant and report suspicious behaviour".

The public should continue go about their daily business as normal, however we would ask that they be vigilant to suspicious activity and report it to us.

To launch Counter Terrorism Awareness Week, Local Day of Action officers, along with a wide range of partners will be in attendance at Aberdeen's Union Square on Monday 12th June to commence the week's activity.

Attendees will take part in a briefing led by ACC Steve Johnson, the Police Scotland lead on Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism, and specialist Counter Terrorism Security Advisers about Counter Terrorism Awareness Week reminding those present of the useful advice about Run, Hide, Tell from 'Stay Safe.'

Local officers will also provide reassurance to Aberdeen's shoppers, workers and visitors and will be available to answer questions at various crowded places sites in Aberdeen city centre.

Over the course of the week various events, awareness-raising seminars and business security training will be held throughout the Cities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Stirling, Perth, Edinburgh and Glasgow. These have all been specifically planned to demonstrate the range of resources and capabilities at Police Scotland's disposal in relation to counter-terrorism.

In total, over two hundred Police Scotland resources will be utilised between the 12th and 18th June, with staff from a variety of partner agencies assisting in all areas of Scotland.

The key themes being promoted are:

- Action Counters Terrorism (ACT)
- REACT (a form of behavioural detection training)
- Run, Hide, Tell (Police guidance for the public in the event of a firearms and weapons attack).
- International Protect & Prepare (how we can help protect UK citizens and UK interests overseas)
- Citizen Aid (a downloadable app for use by the public to

help save lives in the event of a terrorist attack).

- Festivals and Events Safety (Safety at Festivals/Events)

Those involved in Counter Terrorism Awareness Week will offer reassurance to the public by demonstrating counter-terrorism techniques in support of the UK CONTEST Strategy, while at the same time providing current information to various groups and individuals on safety and security.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Johnson said: “The purpose of this week-long initiative is not to alarm the public, but to provide them with all the necessary information they require to identify suspicious activity and more importantly, to keep themselves safe and secure.

“The tragic events in Manchester and London have undoubtedly left our communities shaken and concerned and our activities taking place throughout Counter Terrorism Awareness Week are aimed at offering reassurance to the public by demonstrating the range of capabilities at our disposal to both deter, and respond to, terrorism-related incidents.

“As was the case during our Counter Terrorism Day of Action in November 2016, there is no specific intelligence suggesting an attack in Scotland, however keeping our communities informed is essential to ensure they can assist counter terrorism.

“I have said before that ‘Communities Defeat Terrorism’ and Scotland’s greatest defence against the terrorist threat is our close knit communities and the relationship police and partners have with the public.

“I would like to thank our colleagues from all partner agencies for their continued support of counter-terrorism policing and for the assistance they are providing throughout Counter Terrorism Awareness Week.

“We are demonstrating that Scotland is a hostile environment for those intent on causing harm and by continuing to work

together we can ensure this remains the case”.

“The events taking place this week are primarily focussed on the country’s cities; however, all of our communities should be mindful of countering terrorism. Further information on this subject can be obtained by visiting our website at www.scotland.police.uk/keepsafe.”

Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Mr Michael Matheson said:

“Understandably, given the horrific events in London on 3 June, the third attack in the UK in the last three months, many people in Scotland have concerns about the threats posed by terrorism.

“We must not allow terrorism to triumph, people should not be afraid to go about their daily business as usual. Police Scotland rightfully reviewed security arrangements of major events following the recent incidents but security is a responsibility we all share and we need to continue to work together, and benefit from our strong community links, in keeping each other safe.

“Initiatives like Counter Terrorism Awareness Week are important, now more than ever. As part of the week, Police Scotland and their partners will be providing practical advice and taking forward a wide range of engagements to inform and reassure the public. These will include more visible police presence in cities across Scotland and awareness raising events. I would encourage us all to engage in these opportunities.”

Superintendent David Marshall said: “Recent events have highlighted the importance of people reporting anything suspicious or out of the ordinary.

“We are rightly proud of the fact that we have a largely open and accessible transport network in this country. However this means the police and public must work together to ensure it

continues to remain as secure and safe as possible.

“It can be easy to become oblivious to your surroundings. During this week people are reminded of the important part they play in keeping themselves and fellow passengers safe.

“If we can utilise the eyes and the ears of the public in surveillance of the transport system, combined with our substantial CCTV coverage, we stand every chance of detecting and stopping potential attacks.

“If you see anything suspicious you can text from your phone to 61016, call us on 0800 40 50 40 or tell a member of rail staff, or one of our officers when you see them on patrol. In an emergency, always call 999.”