

*Corps Relay is a regular bulletin designed to relay matters of high importance relating to Security, Crime, Terrorism and other related topics.*

## ***The Great British Security Update***

Dear Reader,

Hello, and welcome to the latest edition of Corps Relay. With a lot of action happening around the UK, we thought we'd concentrate on security updates around the United Kingdom this issue. We start with the IED fiasco at Old Trafford before we head just across the way to the simulated terror attack at the Trafford Centre. We give an update on armed police in the UK, and do a round-up of terror related arrests before jumping across the Irish Sea to Ireland, where we discuss the threat of Irish related terror being increased. We finally finish in London with a Corps profile of an up-and-coming Site Manager.

### **Finishing the Season with a Whimper**

For the first time in 24 years a Premier League football match was abandoned on security grounds. The game, held at Old Trafford, was due to kick off at 3pm but shortly before kick off a suspect item was found in the North West quadrant of the stadium.



The evacuation of Old Trafford

The game was abandoned "on police advice" at 3:06pm, and military personnel were called in to carry out a controlled explosion on the mobile phone device that was attached to piping.

However, it was soon revealed that the device was a fake – a training prop used in an exercise to test dog handlers. A private training company had inadvertently left the device behind, and had incorrectly recorded it being found, prior to match day. It was noted that the routine match day sniffer dogs would be unable to detect it as it contained no explosives, and this is how it avoided detection until it was found by a member of the public less than half an hour before kick-off.

Questions soon arose as to how the device could be left behind, especially since everyone is now a lot more alert to potential security threats, and a full inquiry was demanded by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, who is also the Police and Crime Commissioner. The owner of the company has taken full responsibility for the "fiasco" and says he is devastated that a training item could be left behind.

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The game was eventually played 2 days later under a very subdued atmosphere, and has potentially cost Manchester United £3m.

## Mock Terror Attack

800 volunteers spent the early hours of a morning in May faking a terror attack in the Trafford Centre – the second largest shopping centre in the UK. The exercise was the first part of a three day operation taking place across the north west of England known as Exercise Winchester Accord, and was to test the emergency services in case of a genuine attack. Officers from Greater Manchester Police, Merseyside Police, the North West Counter Terrorism and the SAS were all involved in the overnight mission.



The drill started when a man in black shouted at the crowd of “shoppers” before an explosion was heard across the shopping centre. Gunfire was then heard and a masked man was seen firing shots. Many volunteers were bloodied up in an attempt to be more realistic about the injuries that they could sustain during an attack. All volunteers were given a thorough safety brief beforehand and were reassured that no live rounds would be used. They also all had earmuffs and safety glasses to protect them. The media were invited in to see the attack but were asked to move outside shortly after the explosion to witness the arrival of the armed police, 5 minutes after the initial attack.

Two armed police officers then made their way towards the mock terrorist, choosing to ignore the “injured” people. This is a new tactic bought in by Scotland Yard in an attempt to reduce the overall deaths and injuries. By focusing on the terrorist, they hope to minimise any further damage caused. Once the main target is subdued, they will then focus on containing the area and attending to the injured.

The media were then asked to leave even though the attack continued until 6am. It then continued around the North West before ending three days later in Redbank Community Home in Newton-le-Willows.

## Armed Policing in the UK

Following on from previous issues, we have included an update on the armed policing within the UK.

A recent survey by the Police Federation of England and Wales found that even though government has promised a higher number of armed police throughout the UK, constabularies aren’t finding the volunteers willing to carry firearms. Only 1 in 5 of police officers in the UK wants to carry a gun amid fears of being arrested for murder if they shoot a suspect. This follows on from a police marksman being arrested last December for a fatal shooting of an alleged gangster during a jail break attempt.

The Police Federation chairman Steve White has said that the government have to provide a message to the services that the officers will be fully supported if they choose to take up firearms, and that currently the officers would only feel more pressure if they have a firearm. This is despite the fact that 40% of officers were worried about being attacked whilst working.

## A Round up of Terror Arrests

280 people were arrested on terrorism offences in the UK in 2015. This is a lower number than previous years but involved a large increase in the amount of women and children being amongst the detainees.

**February** – The parents of “Jihadi Jack”, suspected of being the first white Briton to join Daesh, were arrested and had been charged with terrorism offences. The couple, in their mid-fifties, were charged with knowingly providing money that could be used for a terrorist purpose.

**14<sup>th</sup> April** – 4 people were arrested in Birmingham as part of the investigation into the Paris and Brussels attacks

**15<sup>th</sup> April** – Another man was arrested at Gatwick airport in relation to the above investigation

**26<sup>th</sup> May** – A 33 year old man was arrested in Birmingham city centre on suspicion of preparing for terrorist acts contrary to Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006. It was a pre-planned arrest based on intelligence gathered and there was no immediate threat to the public.

**27<sup>th</sup> May** – Three men appeared in court. Two men were charged with preparing for acts of terrorism whilst the third was charged for failing to disclose information to the police.

**Early June** – Queen’s guardsman, Danyal Davies, was arrested after a video of him apparently making an improvised explosive device surfaced.

## The Increase of Northern Irish-Related Terror

One major item of news is that the threat from Northern Ireland-related terrorism in the UK has been increased from moderate to substantial. MI5 upped the rating on the 11<sup>th</sup> May and Theresa May says the level “reflects the continuing threat from dissident republican activity”. It has been more than 15 years since the last Northern Ireland-related attack but there is now a fear that the tactics used previously would be used again.



What has changed to prompt the higher threat level is that apparently they now have the capacity and capability to mount attacks outside of Northern Ireland, whereas before they only had intent.

Whilst the change in threat level is primarily about increasing awareness and encouraging vigilance, Democratic Unionist MP Jeffrey Donaldson says “it is evident that dissident republicans are now active in Great Britain and are examining potential targets.

Separately, Theresa May said it was “sensible” for the UK to be vigilant but the threat level shouldn’t affect our day to day lives.

## Corps People – An Insight to our Company

Georgey Russell is the next focus of our segment profiling our staff.

Georgey has risen quickly within Corps Security. Having been recruited as a relief officer in 2012 he now the Site Security Manager for New Zealand House – the High Commission of New Zealand, and has been since last year. Managing 9 officers in such a high profile location is no easy task for Georgey but he loves the challenging aspect of his job and says he's constantly learning new skills. Which he needs if one of your guests is the Prime Minister of New Zealand!

Having an experienced building manager who is very supportive is helpful for Georgey; even though he is a Site Security Manager he is still very early in his career. Another reason why he enjoys working for the Corps is the closeness to the management team, and he feels he can call on them at any point.

As an ambitious 22 year-old, Georgey wants to build his way up through the company. He thoroughly enjoys the training courses that Corps Security offer, and understands how they contribute to his success as a Site Security Manager.

In his spare time, Georgey is an avid football fan and has a season ticket at Tottenham Hotspur.

We wish Georgey all the best as he continues his career with us.



Future issues of *Corps Relay* will continue to provide updates on policing and security here in the UK. In the meantime the terror threat level in the UK remains at severe, meaning an attack is "highly likely".

**The current threat level** from international terrorism for the UK was raised on 29 August 2014 and is now assessed as: **SEVERE**

The threat level for Irish related terrorism is set separately for Northern Ireland and Great Britain

In Northern Ireland it is: **SEVERE** and in Great Britain **SUBSTANTIAL**

**NOTE:**

- **CRITICAL** means that a terrorist attack is imminent
- **SEVERE** means that a terrorist attack is highly likely
- **SUBSTANTIAL** that an attack is a strong possibility
- **MODERATE** that an attack is possible but unlikely

*Everyone should always remain alert to the danger of terrorism and report any suspicious activity to the police on 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.*

**Report it!**

*You may end up saving a life or lives... and there is nothing more rewarding than that...*

For further information, or for back copies of *Corps Relay*, feel free to contact our team direct on 07773 320234 or via e-mail at [mbluestone@corpssecurity.co.uk](mailto:mbluestone@corpssecurity.co.uk) or [ebrooksbank@corpssecurity.co.uk](mailto:ebrooksbank@corpssecurity.co.uk)

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