



Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill

Top Lines

- ‘Channel’ is a multi-agency safeguarding programme which operates throughout England and Wales. It provides tailored support to people who have been identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- The support offered can come from any of the partners on the panel, which include the local authority, police, education, and health providers. Support will often involve experts who understand extremist ideology. Engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.
- The purpose of legislating is to improve the quality and consistency of the programme, in particular to ensure participation of relevant statutory partners.

Why are you making Channel a legislative requirement?

- The legislation is intended to enshrine good practice and ensure consistent delivery.

Will making Channel a legislative requirement mean people are forced to attend a Channel Programme?

- No. The legislation will not change the way Channel operates. The changes are designed to make partnerships work consistently and effectively in all areas, so vulnerable people have access to the best support appropriate for them.

What will ‘putting Channel on a statutory footing’ mean in practice?

- It will:
 - require local authorities to ensure a multi-agency panel exists and chair the panel;
 - require the panel to develop a support plan for accepted cases and signpost to other support where cases are not accepted;
 - ensure consent is sought prior to support being provided;
 - place a duty to cooperate on panel partners;
 - require partners to pay due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
 - allow the Secretary of State to indemnify intervention providers that provide ideological/theological support for the Channel programme.

Key facts

- Since its national rollout in April 2012, over 2000 people have been referred to Channel and hundreds have been offered support.
- Between April 2012 and end-March 2014 National Counter Terrorism Policing reported a 58% increase in Channel referrals.

How will this stop people going to Syria and Iraq? What about returnees?

- Channel is aimed at early interventions before people become involved in criminal activity.
- A successful intervention might dissuade someone from travelling to Syria or Iraq.
- All decisions on returnees are taken on a case-by-case basis. Some returnees might be radicalised or be vulnerable to radicalisation. It might be appropriate to prosecute some returnees for terrorism offences. For others, a referral to a programme such as Channel might be more appropriate.

Will the duty extend to Scotland?

- In Scotland, the equivalent programme is known as Prevent Professional Concerns.
- We are currently consulting with the Scottish Government on whether to extend this duty to cover that programme.

Who pays for Channel?

- Where support is provided by a statutory partner the cost of the support is met from within existing budgets.
- Where support is provided by a community partner, a Channel police practitioner liaises with the support provider, who is paid through a Channel grant provided for this purpose.

Will there be extra funding for councils and local areas?

- No. We are not expanding Channel; it is already a national programme, responding to demand.