

ACT for Local Authorities



Emergency Planning



ACT | ACTION
COUNTERS
TERRORISM
LOCAL AUTHORITIES



NATIONAL
COUNTER TERRORISM
SECURITY OFFICE

Introduction

Terrorism is a significant risk to the UK and accounts for 11 risks on the 2025 UK National Risk Register. Terrorist attacks in a venue or public space, either by explosives or marauding attack, are considered some of the most likely malicious risks facing the UK¹.

The roles and responsibilities of responding organisations during emergencies are well established under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). As Category 1 responders, local emergency planning is a core function of both policing and local authorities.

Category 1 responders are required to:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
- Put in place emergency plans
- Put in place business continuity management arrangements
- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only)

Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) Protect & Prepare staff within your region can support emergency planning functions by raising awareness of the risks and potential impacts of terrorism, providing relevant threat information, and signposting to appropriate guidance.

¹ [The National Risk Register 2025](#)



Effective emergency planning relies on strong collaboration between key partners, who bring different but complementary responsibilities, expertise, and resources to the emergency planning process. ACT for Local Authorities seeks to enhance engagement and collaboration between CTP Protect & Prepare and local authority emergency planning processes.

The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is a nationally recognised function and is considered the appropriate mechanism through which local authority emergency planning and CTP Protect & Prepare can develop closer working relationships. LRFs are critical in ensuring coordinated, place-based risk planning, emergency response, and recovery². These forums bring together key agencies to build resilience in partnership.

Local authorities should have an established process for risk management across key functional areas and follow risk management standards, and are encouraged to extend this activity to capture Counter Terrorism Protect & Prepare considerations. Guidance is available from the NPSA and ProtectUK websites to support the embedding of protective security and preparedness considerations across functions and existing risk

² [The UK Government Resilience Action Plan 2025](#)

registers. Additional counter terrorism advice may include signposting to specific guidance to inform local emergency planning, considering protective security measures or counter terrorism preparedness, promotion of awareness and training such as the ACT and SCan product suites, and greater awareness of national advice and guidance.

Improved engagement between LRFs and CTP Protect & Prepare could also have additional benefits, such as greater collaboration in testing and exercising, improved interoperability, and identification and sharing of organisational learning.



ACT for Local Authorities: Emergency Planning Outcomes

Through engaging with ACT For Local Authorities within the context of Local Resilience Forums (or equivalent), Emergency Planning teams will:

- Develop a clearer understanding of terrorism risks, their potential impacts, and the arrangements in place to respond to terrorist-related incidents
- Receive up-to-date information on the terrorist threat to the UK
- Access authoritative counter-terrorism protective security and preparedness guidance
- Enhance interoperability and benefit from shared learning through counter-terrorism testing and exercising
- Receive support in strengthening relationships with partner organisations—including public, private, and voluntary bodies—involved in planning for, responding to, and recovering from terrorist-related incidents

Emergency Planning Tools

Legislation

- [The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

Further Reading & Reference

- [The National Risk Register \(NRR\)](#)
- The National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA)
 - While the NRR remains publicly available, the NSRA includes more risks and richer detail, making it the stronger basis for planning.
- Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre Terrorism Threat Level
 - [Threat Levels | MI5 - The Security Service](#)
- JESIP Principles
 - [Home - JESIP Website](#)

Guidance & Resources

- [Cabinet Office Emergency preparedness \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- [UK Resilience Academy](#)
- [Local Government Association Must know guide: Risk management](#)

NPSA

The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) are the National Technical Authority for physical and personnel security. As part of the Security Service MI5, they are a key partner to Counter Terrorism Policing and provide detailed technical guidance which is available as open source. Below are some of their key guidance documents relevant to emergency planning.

- [Emergency & Incident Management | NPSA](#)

JESIP

- [Exercise Assurance Framework - JESIP Website](#)
- [Joint Organisational Learning - JESIP Website](#)

ProtectUK Resources

- [NaCTSO Risk Management Process | ProtectUK](#)
 - It is not recommended that local authorities adopt the ProtectUK Risk Management 'out of the box'. The process has been built for first-time users and small-medium businesses, not to support the management of risk across wide geographical areas. However, local authorities are encouraged to use the ProtectUK supporting resources, such as the ProtectUK Controls List and Menu of Tactical Options (CTMoTO), to help them identify vulnerabilities and verify existing controls as part of their risk management approach.
- [National Stakeholder Menu of Tactical Options | ProtectUK](#)
- [NaCTSO - Managing risk and business continuity | ProtectUK](#)
- [NaCTSO Crisis management for terrorist related events | ProtectUK](#)
- [NaCTSO VaPS Guidance \(includes RHT, Bomb Threats, CBRN, CT First Aid and Evac guidance\)](#)
- [ProtectUK: Working with CTSAs](#)
- [ACT Suite of free training and awareness packages](#)
- [NaCTSO Public Access Trauma \(PAcT\) Guidance | ProtectUK](#)