

CORPS RELAY

Prepared by: Mike Bluestone CSyP & Neil Shanks CSyP
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CORPS
SECURITY

COVID-19 – Record Numbers of Infections

The reduction/removal of COVID-19 restrictions and the end of free testing may give the impression that COVID-19 has gone. The evidence, however, suggests that infection rates in the UK hit their highest ever in March 2022, with [estimations of just under 5 million people believed to have been infected](#). This is thought to be a result of the BA.2 variant, a more transmissible version of the original Omicron variant that resulted in a large increase in COVID-19 infections earlier this year. Figures suggest that the infection rate [rose in 185 of the UK's 380 local authorities](#) at the end of March, representing a 48% increase overall.

Scotland saw large increases in some areas, with 9 of the top 10 highest week-on-week infection rates

across the UK. Conversely, Scotland saw an overall decrease in infection rates as a whole. The areas where the infection rate is lowest appear to be in the West of UK, with all 10 of the top 10 lowest infection rates being in Wales. England is seeing a sharp increase in infection rates, with all but 6 of the top 100 increases in the UK being in England.

The impact of COVID-19 is still being felt by businesses and customers, with a high number of flight cancellations resulting from staff sicknesses. [British Airways and easyJet have been forced to cancel over 300 flights collectively](#) due to staff shortages.

The Conflict between Ukraine and Russia – One Month On

The conflict in the Ukraine is continuing although there are signs that the Russians have slowed their attacks in several areas. There have been several attempts at peace talks but none have been successful so far. The economic impact of the conflict continues to be felt around the world, with particular impact in Russia and within areas that rely on Russian exports, such as the energy sector.

In response to the economic sanctions on Russia, President Putin has threatened to cut off the supply of gas to countries that have imposed economic sanctions on Russia. This would have a huge impact on European countries including Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands.

For more information on previous guidance around the potential impact please see the [February 2022 Edition of Corps Relay](#), the [Corps Security Special Bulletin – Ukraine/Russia Conflict](#) – Cyber Security Briefing, and the [Corps Security Special Bulletin – Ukraine/Russia Conflict Summarised Update](#).

Corps Consult will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates, as appropriate, through further special bulletins.

US Enhance Cyber Security Defences

The US have raised the priority of their cybersecurity in their 2023 budget in a move they have stated is a strategic shift in the defence of federal infrastructure and service delivery.

The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) have also released a bulletin relating to the increase in network scanning they have identified with Russian IP addresses as the source. To date it is believed the Russian activity has not extended beyond probing and scanning computer networks for vulnerabilities and potential opportunities for intrusion. The FBI identified a significant number of overlapping IP addresses from U.S. energy companies, financial services, defence industrial base, and information technology sectors. They believe that there is an increased risk of cyber threats against the U.S., potentially in retaliation for the economic sanctions against Russia. The UK are also engaged in economic sanctions against Russia meaning the FBI's warnings can be extended to the UK as well.

U.S. cyber experts have speculated that Russia have been using Ukraine to test the efficiency and effectiveness of their cyberattack capabilities. These "tests" may represent Russia's preparation for using their offensive cyber capabilities as weapons against other countries. The December 2015 "Sandworm" attack on the power stations around Kiev demonstrates that these attacks have been occurring for some time. More recently, since 15 February 2022, there have been over 3,000 distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks on various Ukrainian government websites.

Child Victims of Modern Slavery Report

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published the [Child victims of modern slavery in the UK: March 2022](#) on the 29th March, 2022. The data suggests a 9% increase in the number potential child victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM, the body that provides the most accurate figures related to child exploitation in the UK) from the previous year. The data also suggests that approximately 49% of the boys were criminally exploited, whilst 42% of the girls were sexually exploited. The figures show an increase of 27% in the number of modern slavery offences involving children being recorded compared to the previous year (up to March 2021), and a 43% decrease in the number of potential child victims reported to the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline in the year ending December 2021.



Terror Attacks in Israel

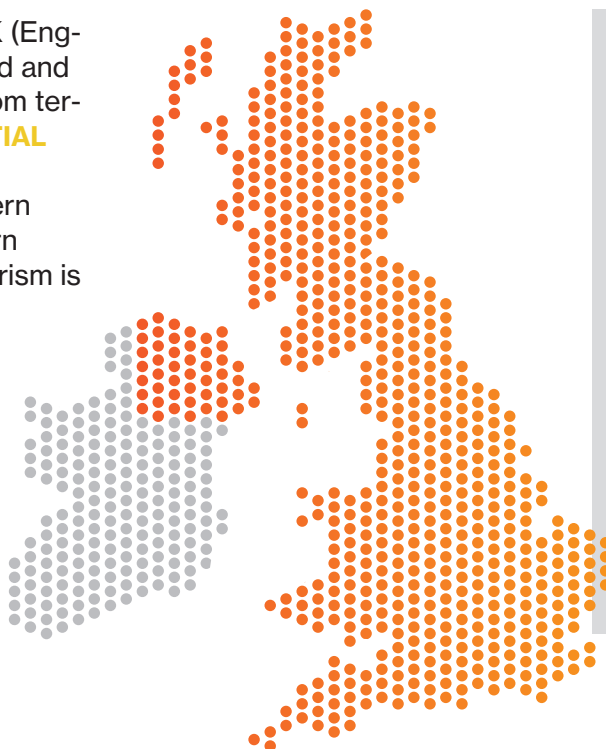
There has been a recent wave of terror attacks in Israel, with 7 Israeli citizens killed since March 31st, and 13 killed during this wave in total. The most recent attacks include an attack by a Palestinian [terrorist in Bnei Brak](#), a city near Tel Aviv, on 31st March 2022 killing 5 people, and an [attack in central Tel Aviv](#) on 7th April 2022 by a Palestinian

terrorist that killed 2 people and injured at least 9 (this is a recent attack and some of the injured remain in a critical condition at the time of this publication). These attacks not only represent a human tragedy in Israel, but may also be an influential factor that affects stability in the Middle East region.

Current National Threat Level

The threat to the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) from terrorism is **SUBSTANTIAL**

The threat to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism is **SUBSTANTIAL**



NOTE:

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack

LOW means an attack is highly unlikely

MODERATE means an attack is possible, but not likely

SUBSTANTIAL means an attack is likely

SEVERE means an attack is highly likely

CRITICAL means an attack is highly likely in the near future

Northern Ireland

For the first time in 12 years the terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland was lowered from “severe” to “substantial”. The change followed an assessment by M15 and a period the government described demonstrating significant continuous progress with peace.

Brandon Lewis, the Northern Ireland secretary, said “*This is the first time the threat level in Northern Ireland has changed since 2010 and shows the significant progress that Northern Ireland has made, and continues to make, towards a more peaceful, more prosperous and safer society. It is a testament to the ongoing commitment to protecting the peace process and tackling Northern Ireland-related terrorism, and the tremendous efforts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and MI5 for their hard-won gains over the past decade,*”

UK Terror Arrest Updates – 19-Year Old from North London

A 19-year-old male was arrested in north London on the morning of Thursday 3rd March 2022. The man was arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000. The Metropolitan Police have said there is not believed to be any imminent threat to the public in relation to the arrest.

On 31 March 2022, Adeyinka Shoyemi, from west London was sentenced to four-and-a-half years' imprisonment for inciting racial hatred by posting messages on social media encouraging violence in Nigeria. This followed an investigation by the Met's

Counter Terrorism Command after posts from accounts under the name "Adeyinka Grandson" were reported to the police via the online reporting tool in March 2019. The posts contained comments aimed at particular ethnic groups based in Nigeria.

Commander Richard Smith, head of the Met's Counter Terrorism Command, said: "Our Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit – the first of its kind to be established anywhere in the world – was instrumental in identifying Shoyemi and his activity."

Notable Dates/Events

Key Religious Events, National Celebrations, and Anniversaries

There are significant days for several religions and nations throughout April. It is not only important to be mindful of these dates to celebrate our diverse society, but also because several terrorist groups have been known to select these days to carry out their actions.

Please make a specific note of the convergence of events for three major religions from the 15th April, namely: Ramadan (which begins on 2nd April), celebrated by Muslims as it signifies the time at which the Prophet received the first verses of the Qur'an; Easter (with events from 10th April and Easter weekend is 15th-18th April), a Christian celebration of the death and rebirth of Christ; Passover (15th-23rd April), also known as Pesach, a Jewish celebration that marks the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt; and the UK bank holiday weekend (15th-18th April inclusive).

Notable dates in April include:

- 1st April – 166th Anniversary of the End of the Crimean War – an international anniversary
- 1st April – Beginning of Sexual Assault Awareness Month – an international event
- 2nd April-1st May – Ramadan – an Islamic Celebration
- 9th April – National Prisoner of War Recognition

Day – an American event

- 10th April – Palm Sunday – a Christian celebration
- 15th April – Good Friday – a Christian celebration and UK Bank Holiday
- 15th-23rd April – Pesach/Passover – a Jewish celebration
- 16th April – end of Holy Week – a Christian celebration
- 16th-17th April – Hanuman Jayanti – a Hindu celebration
- 17th April – Easter Sunday – a Christian celebration
- 18th April – Easter Monday – a Christian celebration and UK Bank Holiday
- 21st April – HM The Queen's Birthday – a national celebration
- 23rd April – St George's Day – a Christian celebration and English patron saint's day
- 24th April – Easter Day – an Orthodox Christian celebration
- 25th April – Anzac Day – an international anniversary
- 27th-28th April – Yom HaShoah/Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day – an international event
- 29th April – Anniversary of Far-Right Attack in West Midlands – a key event anniversary
- 30th April – Tour de Yorkshire – a UK sporting event

9th Anniversary of Pavlo Lapshyn's First Attack

29th April 2022 marks the 9th anniversary of the first of four attacks by Pavlo Lapshyn's in 2013. Lapshyn is a Ukrainian white supremacist terrorist who is currently serving a minimum of 40 years in prison for the murder of his neighbour, Mohammed Saleem, in Small Heath (Birmingham), followed by the attempted bombing of three Mosques in the West Midlands (Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Tipton). Mr Saleem was murdered on 29th April 2013 but Lapshyn was not apprehended until after the attempted bombings of the Mosques in June and July the same year.



Demonstrations

- 2nd April – “Cost of Living Crisis” National Day of Action by the “People’s Assembly Against Austerity” – UK wide
- 2nd-3rd April – “Rave on the M25” is linked to an Insulate Britain event that was planned for 19th February but was cancelled. The event aims to highlight the rising prices of energy in the UK. The event information alludes to four “main stage” locations around the M25, including the Dartford Crossing and Watford Junction.
- 9th April (10:00) – Extinction Rebellion hold their 2022 Rebellion – Hyde Park, London
- 20th-26th April – World Week for Animals in Laboratories in which it is likely that multiple protests may be held targeting animal research facilities (including laboratories and universities)
- 24th April – World Day for Animals in Laboratories – international event

Extinction Rebellion (XR)

XR have a very active month planned, as can be seen in the [XR Special Bulletin – April Activity – “End the Fossil Fuel Economy”](#) published on 31st March 2022. In addition to the information included in the previous briefing, XR are advertising additional accommodation options in the London area, and advising their “Rebels” to bring “burner phones” or mobiles that can be secured, backed up, and deleted remotely. They are trying to limit the

digital footprints/records of “Rebels” by advising they only use physical money, rather than bank cards/contactless payments, for all transactions to/from/during their campaign. They are also advising “Rebels” to turn off the GPS (Global Positioning System) functionality on their devices and not carry identification or valuables with them.



Home Office and Security Industry Authority (SIA) Security Industry Survey

Corps Focus: Security Issue of the Month

The Home Office and Security Industry Authority (SIA) have commissioned a research survey to support their considerations of the recommendations made by the Manchester Arena Inquiry. They wrote an [open letter](#) that goes into more detail, but essentially they are aiming to better understand and explore business and Security Operatives' views and experiences, in particular towards the recommendation that the licencing of in-house security operatives should be considered and/or the recommendation that consideration should be given to introducing business licensing for private security contractors.

This research applies equally for smaller businesses as it does larger businesses, across all industries, whether they have limited security arrangements (such as only CCTV) through to wider ranging security provision including security operatives employed on site.

They ask that participants of the 15-minute survey be:

- Responsible for security decisions in their organisation (whether in-house or outsourced)

OR

- Be an inhouse security operative, which can include monitoring CCTV (even if only as a minor part of their role, or post-incident monitoring)

They/their organisation will not be named in the report and any information they provide will be treated confidentially. The deadline for the 15-minute survey is 30th April 2022 and it is available [here](#).



Market House
85 Cowcross St
London
EC1M 6PF



07890 590352
Neil Shanks



intel@corpssecurity.co.uk
www.corpssecurity.co.uk