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Introduction from Detective Superintendent Maria Fox

Welcome to the autumn edition of the CTP West Midlands CTU Prevent newsletter. The challenges presented over the last nine months have been unprecedented for both general policing and Counter Terrorism Policing. Despite these challenges we have sought to continue our work to keep communities safe and protected from harm, while also continuing to reach out, identify, manage risk and safeguard vulnerable individuals. We have adapted and adjusted our working styles to embrace a 'new normal' undoubtedly developing some efficiencies, new ways of working and agility to enable us to continue delivering Prevent during the pandemic.



Detective Superintendent Maria Fox

While there has been a slight return to what could be described as 'normal' activity, we continue to work in a way that ensures the wellbeing of officers, staff and all stakeholders. We need to sustain a resilient approach to reducing the threat and risk of terrorism by timely, effective and tailored interventions with those vulnerable to radicalisation.

Two of the most significant challenges during the pandemic and lockdown have been:

1. **The Increasing and changing threats**

Terrorists and extremists increasingly use online radicalisation tactics, using narratives that exploit fear, anxiety, hate, grievances, conspiracy theories and gaps in support. Increased time spent online exposes people to a pick 'n' mix of online risks. Social isolation continues to increase the risk of online exploitation for the most vulnerable.

2. **Reduced referrals and ability to support vulnerable people**

Reduced engagement as traditional routes remain unavailable, compounded by a reduction in community cohesion, youth and engagement work. Reduction in protective factors as a result of partner resources being diverted or unable to deliver services in the normal way, reduced access to employment, inconsistent delivery of education and local services, and the risk of Prevent partnerships becoming disjointed

Our response nationally and regionally to address these risks has continued to be a robust delivery process with partners under the three key Prevent priorities:

1. Identify
2. Manage Risk
3. Safeguarding

The development of resources, materials and communications specifically focused on these two challenges have been shared widely on multiple platforms by police and partner agencies endeavouring to reach vulnerable and particularly young people, parents and those responsible for education at home whilst schools were closed down. Whilst referrals have remained relatively low during this time, we anticipate that there will be an increase as children return to school and vulnerability which might have been 'hidden' during lockdown will become exposed.

CTP West Midlands CTU Prevent has also been very engaged in expanding the Prevent focus across the region. While Project Amplify governs the structural implementation of a more cohesive regional delivery framework, the CTP West Midlands CTU Prevent team are now working across all local authorities in the West Midlands region through Staffordshire, the West Midlands, Warwickshire and West Mercia police force areas. Alongside partnership delivery, the Prevent Ambassadors initiative, having launched in February within West Midlands Police is being developed with newly appointed force Prevent Strategic Leads in Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia. Despite the limitations that CoVID-19 presented in relation to face to face interactions, over 200 WMP officers and staff signed up as ambassadors and have taken part in inductions and training so that they can fulfil their roles effectively, supporting on the frontline to identify risk and vulnerability at an early stage. Sergeant Maria Perrin who has spearheaded this initiative has been encouraged and amazed at the tenacity of all of the volunteers in this ongoing work alongside their normal duties and responsibilities. Although technology has presented some barriers to implementation in the other three force areas, there are plans to launch the initiative in the other forces over the next six months.

News

FKD proscription

In July, Neo-Nazi organisation Feuerkrieg Division (FKD) was proscribed by the UK Government. It is now an offence to be a member or support FKD, with those found guilty facing up to 10 years in prison and an unlimited fine.

FKD is a small, international neo-Nazi organization that follows a white supremacist ideology and also advocates 'accelerationism' – which is the use of violence and acts of terrorism to bring about a 'race war' and the fall of existing social and political systems.

They promote their ideology online through the sharing of violent white supremacist propaganda, commonly using social media platforms to target young people aged between 13 and 25. In a recent publication by the Extremism Analyst Unit they have reported that young people who engage with right wing extremism are highly likely to do so online. They add that groups often use mainstream social media platform to post non-

extreme information regarding popular or relatable topics with the intention of attracting younger audiences and then encouraging followers to migrate to less moderated platforms.

CTP West Midlands CTU Prevent lead, Superintendent Maria Fox said: "We welcome the proscription of Feuerkrieg Division. Right Wing Terrorism (RWT) is the fastest growing terror threat in the UK, and proscription of FKD is a positive step in the fight against this insidious and hateful ideology."

Deputy Senior National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism Policing, Assistant Chief Constable Tim Jacques, added: "Our world class Counter Terrorism Network has become adept at identifying and disrupting these groups, but like the recently proscribed Sonnenkrieg Division, and National Action before that, we should expect FKD to splinter and rebrand under a different name.

"We will continue to use every power at our disposal to arrest and charge those who support this group and those like it, but we can only hope to beat this insidious ideology by stopping young and vulnerable people from following the path towards extremism in the first place."

What is proscription?

When a group is proscribed it means that the group/organisation:

- Commits or participates in acts of terrorism
- Prepares for terrorism
- Promotes or encourages terrorism (including the unlawful glorification of terrorism)
- Or is otherwise concerned in terrorism

When an organisation/group is proscribed, it makes it a criminal offence to:

- Belong to or invite support for a proscribed organisation
- Arrange a meeting in support of a proscribed organisation
- Wear clothing or carry articles in public which arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of the proscribed organisation

Teen member of FKD guilty of right-wing terrorism offences

On Friday 4 October, a 17-year-old boy from Rugby with extreme right views who offered to build weapons for individuals online was found guilty of terrorism offences.

The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons due to his age, previously admitted nine counts of collecting terrorism information under section 58 of the Terrorism Act and a jury at Birmingham Crown Court found the teen guilty of the commission, preparation and instigation of terrorism under section 5 of the Terrorism Act.

An initial trial began earlier this year but following a decision on March 24, the jury was discharged due to the Coronavirus restrictions and the retrial began on 1 September at Birmingham Crown Court.

The jury heard how the ex-Royal Air Cadet had become a member of the online extreme right wing group Feuerkrieg Division (FKD) in July 2019 and started several virtual conversations where he expressed his extreme views and indicated he was planning or had already converted a blank firing weapon into a viable firearm.

When detectives from CTP West Midlands CTU seized his phone they found over 90 documents on firearms, explosives and military tactics, online material with an extreme right wing rhetoric as well as the online chat conversations.

Eleven clips of the New Zealand attacks in Christchurch mosques on 15 March 2019 were also found on his phone together with the shooting in El Paso, Texas on 3 August 2019 and the attacks at the Dayton and Garlic festival and the Anders Breivik attack in Norway.

A search of the teen's bedroom – who declared his heroes as Adolf Hitler and James Mason – revealed several knives, air rifles, face coverings, camouflage face paint, shotgun cartridges and bullet casings, numerous tools and camping equipment as well as two makeshift cardboard targets.

A notebook was also seized containing swastikas, details of lone wolf attacks as well as a mocked up logo representing an extreme right group he wanted to form.

Following the verdict, the boy was remanded in custody until 6 November for sentencing at Birmingham Crown Court.

Head of CTP West Midlands CTU Detective Chief Superintendent Kenny Bell, said: "This boy had an unhealthy interest in other attacks across the world and he knew exactly what online platforms to join to share his extreme views.

"He believed he had the skills to convert a blank firing weapon into a viable firearm and was willing to help others with his abilities."

DCS Bell highlighted the commitment by counter terrorism policing to tackle all forms of extremist ideology.

"We have seen many convictions over the last few years in connection with extreme right wing terrorism and this work continues apace. These extreme groups have the potential to threaten public safety and security.

"We work tirelessly to counter terrorism. Our absolute priority is to ensure the safety and security of the people who live, work and visit the West Midlands area."

Prevent Ambassador scheme launches in Staffordshire Police

Earlier this year CTP West Midlands CTU launched the Prevent Ambassador scheme to officers and staff working for West Midlands Police. The scheme has been so successful and well received by non-CT officers that it is now being rolled out for Staffordshire Police.

A Prevent Ambassador is a police officer or staff member from any department. Ambassadors act as Prevent/CT SPOCs for the team or department they work in. The Prevent Ambassador scheme will hopefully embed prevent in all areas of policing, with a network of people who have enhanced knowledge and understanding of Prevent and other areas of CT.

Anyone within the force can sign up as a Prevent Ambassador. This is a voluntary process and can be completed at any time.

Counter Terrorism Policing West Midlands, together with Staffordshire local CT Prevent officers, will provide Prevent Ambassadors with support, targeted information and CPD opportunities.

Staffordshire Prevent Sergeant Calum Forsyth said: "We are delighted that we can follow WMP and launch the Prevent Ambassadors scheme to our officers, especially due to the current CoVID crisis. With all attention on the pandemic it can be easy to forget about terrorism. The fact is lockdown and other measures aren't stopping people being drawn into terrorism and extremism, especially in the online space, so the more we can equip non-CT officers and staff with knowledge to identify concerns, the better. Being a Prevent Ambassador will help officers further their understanding of the world of extremism, terrorism and Prevent."

New Safeguarding website

CT Policing will be launching a new CT safeguarding website **ACT Early**, in October 2020.

The new website will be aimed at family and friends concerned that a loved one is vulnerable to radicalisation. It will share information and advice and encourage them to share their concerns with the police to get help. It has been designed based on extensive focus groups, research and input from partners.

The new ACT Early website will raise awareness of the police's role in safeguarding, where the public can go for support, the signs to spot and the Prevent referral process. It will also signpost to partner agencies and other organisations.

Prevent lead films new video blog for officers

Staffordshire Prevent lead, Superintendent Tom Chisholm has filmed a video blog aimed at non-CT Staffordshire Police officers highlighting the vital role they have to play when it comes to Prevent. Watch Supt. Chisholm's blog [here](#).

Successful TIF bids

Prevent have allocated funding to a number of projects across the region, using their Innovation Fund (TIF) budget. Details of successful projects and where they are being rolled out are below.

North Hub (Staffordshire)

- **Prevent School Engagement Project** - Staffordshire Prevent Board aim to commission Loudmouth Theatre Company to deliver interactive sessions with Prevent themes across the county, in schools that sit within identified hotspot areas. The target age groups are pupils in years 8 and 9.

Referrals

If you have any concerns around an individual, please call the team on 01785 232054 or by email prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Useful links

- [Staffordshire Police](#)
- [Let's Talk About It](#)
- [ACT](#)



**COUNTER
TERRORISM
POLICING**
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WEST MIDLANDS CTU

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