INTELLECTUAL SOLUTIONS TO A THOROUGHLY WICKED PROBLEM


Author: Haydn Kemp BA (Hons.) Dip. (Cs)

Supervisor: Dr Ben Seyd

Submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements of the MA in Terrorism and Security

August 2017

1 This dissertation was awarded the grade of Distinction and has been revised and expanded in light of the markers comments prior to publication.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence based policy in Government</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Knowledge based policing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The condition of the ‘terrorism studies’ field</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy analysis method</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual challenges</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative analysis process</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining academic research</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of police counter-terrorism knowledge</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical considerations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire design</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Analysis</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Schedule 7 Codes of Practice Selection Criteria</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Boolean Word Stem Iterations</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Word Frequency Table and Policy Themes</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>Online Survey</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E</td>
<td>2015 Channel Process Vulnerability Indicators</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

The relationship between academia and counter terrorism policy and practice is an under researched area. Successive UK governments have claimed that academic research is crucial in developing effective and societally less damaging policies, with the National College of Policing taking a similar stance on what might be termed a hierarchy of knowledge. With such claims that soft or hard ‘science’ based approaches carry a higher level of reliability and efficacy for policy makers and practitioners, it is important to critically assess the extent to which counter-terrorism policy and practice can be termed evidence-based. Despite the counter-terrorism ‘Prevent’ policy entering its second decade of operation and forming a government endorsed description of how and why people turn to terrorism, there appears to have been no holistic and longitudinal assessment of the evidence behind it, or the contextual knowledge of counter-terrorism workers operating under its informative ambit. Sadly, terrorism seems likely to plague the UK for the foreseeable future, meaning that preventative counter-terrorism remains a necessity of the times and will continue to raise criticisms and the potential for unintended counter-productive outcomes owing to its being embedded in what has been termed a ‘Wicked problem' paradigm, where efforts to tackle one problem, can inadvertently cause unforeseen issues elsewhere.

Through a qualitative content analysis, each ‘Prevent’ policy iteration between 2006 and 2015 is analysed against the academic research that was drawn upon directly or indirectly by policy makers and ministers. Efforts are made to identify the condition of the evidence base and how it is utilised in policy, asking if policy goes with the evidence flow, uses it selectively or indeed ignores it. A quantitative analysis of relevant practitioner engagement with academic research is then conducted through the findings of a staff survey in a single anonymised force. The findings are critically discussed, and a summary conclusion provided to discuss the implications revealed in the research, together with several tentative policy recommendations.
Acknowledgements

More than anyone I wish to thank my wife, Rachael, not only for her patience and understanding but her encouragement and inspiration on what has been, and continues to be, a long and arduous but rewarding pathway of learning. Nor can I forget to thank my children for allowing me the time to study and ‘mostly’ facilitating that extra bit of quiet… mostly.

A similar debt of thanks go to my supervisor Dr Ben Seyd for his advice, guidance and valuable feedback, together with all the staff on each module on the Master’s programme for which this dissertation is the final submission. The entire process has built into a hugely enjoyable experience.

My sincere gratitude also goes to the two senior police officers who gave permission for the survey to be conducted. I feel this illustrates the genuine commitment of the Police service to continually improve by allowing critical and constructive analysis. Finally, but certainly far from least, may I extend my sincere thanks and respect, to every one of those unnamed officers and staff who responded to the survey by giving their valuable time during a hugely trying, upsetting and difficult period. March through to June 2017.

*Durate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis*
Chapter 1

Introduction

The United Kingdom has long struggled with the complexity of terrorism and the potential adverse impacts of counter-terrorism efforts. Following several decades of violence, peace in Northern Ireland remains imperfect; whilst in retrospect some policies and practices seem to have inadvertently stimulated violence rather than reduced it (LaFree, 2010). Since the emergence of al-Qaeda and the recent recruitment and terrorist campaigns of Islamic State [IS], UK authorities are again in the invidious position of looking within British society for current and likely terrorists. In 2003 the ‘CONTEST’ strategy was developed as a means of holistically tackling the contemporary terrorist threat through four interconnected work streams:

Pursue – to halt active terrorists.

Prevent – to stop people becoming terrorists and terrorist supporters.

Protect – to strengthen the UK against attack.

Prepare – to mitigate the impact of terrorism.

(HM Government, 2009)

The core element of Prevent and its de-radicalisation program ‘Channel’ is an assertion that terrorists emerge through a ‘radicalisation’ process, during which the state can intervene (HM Government, 2006; HM Government, 2011a; HM Government, 2012; Home Office, 2015a). Within this logic, future terrorists may be identified by expressions of opinion, possession of materials, behaviour, behavioural changes and biographical history (Sabir, 2014; HM Government & ACPO, 2010; HM Government, 2012). Rather than a concept circumscribed by policy boundaries, Prevent has been described as a government philosophy of how terrorists are made and identified (Heath-Kelly, 2012), now reinforced by a statutory duty in which frontline staff should:
‘…understand what radicalisation means and why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism’

(Home Office, 2015a, p. 4).

Again, the logic stands that anyone travelling to join terrorist groups is ‘radicalised’ and similarly identifiable. Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act allows police officers to select people for ‘examination’ guided by codified selection criteria, where that person is present at a port under certain conditions [Appendix A] (Home Office, 2015b). As terrorists intentionally evade detection, this necessitates wider legal latitude than ‘reasonable suspicion’ (Anderson, 2012, pp. 112-113). During ‘examination’ officers are then expected to identify terrorists and terrorist supporters (HM Government, 2000), thus the core element is to differentiate such people from the rest of the population. Although intelligence may be a by-product of Schedule 7 (Anderson, 2012, pp. 112-113), and clearly must not be the raison d’etre for selection for examination, intelligence gathering, and processing is a ubiquitous element of policing (Home Office, n.d.) and both falls out of and informs police decision making. Prevent not only sets out the narrative of ‘terrorism’ and the ‘terrorist’, but deploys an explanatory narrative of how and why people turn to terrorism with a compulsion for professionals to internalise this and act upon it. The philosophy behind Prevent therefore expands far beyond the confines of the Prevent policy and provides some direction as to what terrorists are likely to present as, either in person, inside the UK, at its borders or through their intelligence picture.

However, the Prevent strategy, and by extension its narrative structures and implementation activities, have suffered accusations of framing British Muslims as a ‘suspect community’ (Hickman, et al., 2011; Liberty, 2017; Lynch, 2013), eroding freedom of speech (Lister, et al., 2015), violating human rights (Rights Watch, 2016; United Nations, 2016), indiscriminate invasions of privacy (Sedley, et al., 2016) and rendering ordinary behaviour as suspicious (Liberty, 2010). A common thematic is that Prevent rarely identifies real terrorists but frequently offends, alienates and upsets ordinary people (Singh, 2016; Batty, 2016;
Khaleeli, 2015; Liberty, 2017). This is mirrored in dissatisfaction over Schedule 7 (Choudhary & Fenwick, 2011; StopWatch, 2012; Engage, 2012; Anderson, 2016). Statistical analysis also suggests that frontline preventative counter-terrorism practice has scope for improvement. Between 2006 and 2014 80% of 3934 Channel referrals were rejected (NPCC, 2015), rising to a cautionary 90% out of 7,500 referrals in 2015 alone, with 27% being under review (Smith, 2016). Annually, thousands of people are examined under Schedule 7 (Home Office, 2015), yet hundreds of UK citizens have joined extremist groups in Syria and Iraq (Soufan Group, 2015) and terrorist plots in the UK have increased (Home Office, 2015). Owing to its historical persistence there is scant likelihood that terrorism as a tactic can be entirely eradicated, yet there is a powerful indication here that preventative counter-terrorism policy and practice, although necessary, must be continually tested for its strengths and weaknesses, to improve efficacy and reduce counter-productive outcomes.

Understanding the type of problem one is dealing with is paramount. As Grint (2008) explains, governments and organisations tend to be faced with three broad problem ‘types’: ‘Critical’ problems that have known solutions and therefore require only a command decision to implement the fix, ‘tame’ problems that are complicated but generally solvable through managerial and systematic solutions, and ‘Wicked’ problems that are recalcitrant, have no binary answers and sit inextricably within wider contexts that can be adversely affected by any attempt to fix them. Whilst the ‘Wicked’ problem concept is descriptive, not theoretical, research across the public and private sector recognises its explanatory value (Rittel & Weber, 1973; Hartley & Benington, 2011; Jordan, et al., 2014). There is a consensus that ‘Wicked’ problems are best approached through actions that draw on extensive evidence and data gathering, bi-partisan research, shared knowledge, learning and fluid responses (Australian Government, 2007; Head, 2008; Parkhurst, 2016). Clearly attempting to command or systemise a ‘Wicked’ problem out of existence is generally going to be wholly ineffective. The characteristics of terrorism and counter-terrorism show that both sit firmly within the ‘Wicked’ problem paradigm (Hayden, 2006; Grint, 2008; Fishbacher-Smith, 2016;
English, 2010) therefore effective solutions, or at least methods of making things better rather than worse, will incorporate up-to-date and holistic research. As the UK government itself states, effective policies are based upon evidentially supported understandings of what works, where scientific advice can help to weigh the risks and benefits of a course of action (H.M Government, 2015). The National Police College stipulates that professional judgement, ubiquitous in policing, must include ‘evidence-based’ practice (NPC, 2013), that crucially must be derived from or substantiated by scientific and academic research (NPC, 2014). In this vein, academic research into terrorist groups, participants, methods and tactics, the positive and negative impacts of counter-terrorism and so forth will be considerably more likely to be termed ‘evidence based’ than most other sources. Whilst academia is not without bias, politicisation and many other limitations, there is a clear acceptance that academic research brings considerable practical assistance to policy making and everyday practices. This does not mean that stakeholder, practitioner and expert opinion should be utterly ignored, but that ‘research evidence’ can provide a more robust source of information because it is peer reviewed, available for comparison against other findings, documents its methods, is supposed to strive for impartiality, maintains a consistency of language, references its sources and is built on systems or methodologies that are visible to scrutiny and testing, thus allowing informed judgements to be made of its reliability (Nutley, Powell and Davies, 2013, p.6; De Brun, 2013). The point here is that these factors differentiate ‘research evidence’ from other information sources. If academic research can be identified and isolated from other sources on which policy and practice are built, then policy assertions and practices can be checked against the ‘academic evidence’ to see if policy and practice flow with the evidence, over-simplify it, cherry pick it, or ignore it. At the time of this study the author was not able to find any published research that systematically and longitudinally assesses the evidence-base within Prevent alongside the practices that draw upon its philosophy of terrorism. It therefore seeks to address this knowledge gap. As Schmidt (2011) observes, the link between academia and the counter-terrorism intelligence communities’ needs and knowledge is under-researched. One can
effectively extend this to the entire preventive counter-terrorism paradigm and ask what informs policy and what informs the ensuing practice? As policy frames practice and defines an issue, and practice generates policy outcomes, being able to recognise and understand where policy is evidentially strong, weaker or indeed lacking, practitioners should be able to operate more effectively and generate fewer potentially adverse outcomes.

This paper opens with a literature review of three topic areas: Firstly, to assess and describe the overall processes and condition of government policy making and some of the principal criticisms of the evidential condition of Prevent and Channel. Secondly, an assessment of evidence and knowledge-based policing is conducted, with a close focus on counter-terrorism to describe the current condition of evidence-based practice, its benefits, limitations and the receptivity of police workers to academic research as a practitioner knowledge source. Thirdly, it considers the development of academic research on terrorism. The latter was considered crucially important as it would be unfair to critique the evidence base behind policy and practice without detailed discussion not only of what was available but of the political conditions in which the research field was evolving. Chapter three then discusses and justifies the chosen methodologies of analysis and defines what is meant by academic research in the context of this study. The core of this paper is then broken into two chapters: Chapter four is a systematic analysis of the evolution of Prevent and Channel, using qualitative content analysis to pick out ‘actionable themes’ within policy documents to test against the ‘academic research’ that was drawn upon or clearly accessed by policy makers and government ministers. Chapter five then considers the extent to which practitioners in the preventative counter-terrorism paradigm engage with academia as a source of research, to holistically and reliably inform practice, particularly in relation to the actionable themes identified in the overarching Prevent narrative. A concluding chapter summarises the findings of this study and suggests evidence-based policy and practice recommendations, along with suggesting further pathways for research.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This literature review situates the current study within the context of evidence and knowledge based policy and practice in preventative counter-terrorism. Terrorism contains the recalcitrance, complexity and contextual embeddedness of a Wicked-problem paradigm (Hayden, 2006; English, 2010; Fishbacher-Smith, 2016). Wicked problems require a holistic approach that combines sound knowledge, contextually sensitive policies and empowers knowledgeable professionals to operate effectively in their area of interest (Grint, 2008).

What this review does not set out to do is provide an assessment or list of academic material and recommendations of what policy makers and practitioners should be reading. This review is therefore limited to three interconnected areas: Firstly, the condition of and receptivity to academic research in government policy making, alongside assessments and criticisms of the evidence base in Prevent and Channel. Secondly, the condition of evidence-based policing in the UK and how the contextual knowledge required by practitioners in navigating policing problems can impact individual and policy outcomes. The final section considers the emergence and condition of academic research into terrorism, against which policy evolution must be examined and can provide a starting point for orienting the reader in the background of the subject matter.

Evidence-based Policy in Government

Successive governments have recognised the importance of research in policy making, but the reality is that although research is drawn upon to inform policy, it is more commonly constrained by political preference, selectively applied and utilised post-hoc. Policy making enables political visions to be transferred into actions that influence change (Waller, et al., 2009). Where claims of evidence-based policy are made, the inference is that policy is stronger for being scientifically guided rather than driven by assumption therefore, supposedly ensuring that policy goals will be achieved, and unnecessary harms are at least
reduced (Pankhurst, 2017). Unsurprisingly, successive governments have made commitments to employing evidence-based policy approaches (Wells, 2007; Rutter, 2012; HM Government, 2013). One should therefore expect to find academic research, or at the very least academic advice, is heeded during policy making and that it is not ignored, or cherry picked to fit policy. Unfortunately, as Rutter, Halpern and Breckon (2016) described to the House of Lords Select Committee, in reality governments rarely engage with academic research and often selectively apply it to validate policies that have already been designed. A significant issue, Rutter explains, is that politicians seek rapid, binary answers to generate firm policy, whilst academics are concerned with nuance and cautionary conclusions. Although one might consider these to be rather sweeping generalisations, the three perspectives collectively draw upon several decades of research and experience across a range of government departments, with the added confidence of consensus. In fairness to policy makers, Davis et.al (2000) make the point that research is often not written with policy makers in mind, can be difficult to access and no less difficult to transfer into policy actions. Yet additional studies do tend to substantiate Rutter, Halpern and Breckon’s collective concerns. Experiencing the practices of civil servants in one government department, Stevens (2011) observed that political ideology and even career progression requirements can result in compelling evidence being ignored, problems becoming over-simplified and potentially harmful side-effects and the cautionary caveats of research ignored to provide the kind of compelling narrative policy makers prefer. Departmental habits may of course vary, but Stevens also found that successful policy-adoptions may increase lateral or vertical promotion prospects; so that such practices seem destined to seep into other departments and be potentially rather widespread. Studies also indicate that even where academics conduct in-government research, certain political influences can be brought to bear (LSE GV314 Group, 2014), whilst institutionalised resistance to drawing research into policy making has also been noted (Hallsworth, et al., 2011). It would be going too far to suggest that all policy is designed with scant or problematic connections to academic based research. Yet there is clearly a sound argument to explore policy formation to identify if, and
where, such issues arise, particularly where claims are made that policy is evidence-based and used to prop up and promote its own validity.

Terrorism is repeatedly stated to be a major threat to national security (HM Government, 2010a; Cameron, 2014; CPNI, 2017) with counter-terrorism policy claimed to be science-based and research supported (HM Government, 2015b). However, criticism of Prevent claims that the evidence behind it is sparse, weak and selectively applied (MCB, 2015; Lister, et al., 2015; Mythen, et al., 2017; Coppock & McGovern, 2014). Kundnani (2009) reveals that early Prevent project funding merely tracked Muslim population numbers, through what one leaked government document terms ‘a rough and ready proxy for the risk of radicalisation’. Kundnani clearly does not stretch credibility when he claims that this illustrates the non-evidence based assumption in early Prevent that Islamist terrorism emerged from a lack of integration into British society. One might therefore ask, if there was no research evidence guiding policy application, what research evidence was used in its creation? Where Kundnani rather overstates the evidence of his own study is the assertion that British Muslims were collectively being framed as a ‘suspect community’, as this requires a far wider reaching analysis of the perception of the impact of Prevent, than his small-n study (32 interviews) provides. Nonetheless, later studies strongly suggest that the government fostered, albeit unintentionally, a sense of political unease around Islam and Muslims (O’Toole, et al., 2016) that influenced similar insecurities within wider British society (Carter, 2017). Although from 2011 onwards the Prevent policy turns to at risk and ‘risky’ individuals rather than communities, Qureshi (2016) claims that the indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation used by Prevent and Channel are built on a single, and what he argues to be, a scantly evidenced forensic psychology study [ERG22+]. The essence of his argument is that the ERG22+ tool, that lists what are claimed to be indicators that a person might be at risk of becoming involved in terrorism, and therefore singled out from the background population, has been taken out of the prison environment in which it was designed, and put into the hands of non-experts in education, health services, the police and so forth. By
inviting peer review Qureshi seeks to offset criticism that his study was commissioned by a
group ideologically and implicitly opposed to Prevent, and therefore committed from the
outset to its dismantlement (CAGE, 2016). The trouble here is that rather than assessing
Channel in the round through a holistic study of all of the research evidence that might feed
into its development, and the concepts that underpin Prevent as a whole, the lens is
artificially narrowed on ERG22+ as if it is the single study on which the entire edifice of
vulnerability to radicalisation rests. If the efficacy of the evidence base is to be genuinely
tested, a more holistic approach is needed. Even a cursory glance at Prevent policy
documents reveals a much greater evidence base (HM Government, 2011, p. 61) than
criticism claims. Therefore focusing solely on one piece of research evidence, even if it is
replicated in a policy word for word, clearly does not support the claim that a weakness in
ERG22+ should render the entire Prevent strategy invalid. Nonetheless, many respected
academics and public figures have also called for the ‘evidence’ behind ERG22+ to be
exposed to both peer review and public scrutiny (Lister, et al., 2015), whilst the Royal
College of Psychiatry (2016) states that although the ERG22+ may have some efficacy,
tools that purport to identify future terrorists ‘yield consistently poor results’ with potentially
damaging outcomes for those erroneously referred. It is also crucial to note that the authors
of ERG22+, emphatically state that anyone attempting to employ the tool must have an
excellent knowledge of terrorism and its contexts (Lloyd & Dean, 2015) and this of course
begs the very pertinent quesiton of ‘do they?’ Of course, policy makers can only go so far in
preparing the ground and setting out the frameworks of expected actions. Practitioners are
under their own responsibility to know their area of practice as well as can reasonably be
expected. Analysis must also consider the knowledge base of front-line practitioners. A
further important point is that numerous studies argue that a singular reliance on psychology
to explain terrorism and terrorists is far too narrow, as the subject requires a multi-
disciplinary approach (Sageman, 2004; Borum, 2004; ICSR, 2008). Yet one cannot deny that
any attempt to bring a scientific approach to the study of terrorism is far better than a
reliance on intuition, gut instinct or supposition, meaning that the ERG22+ is at least a step
in the right direction. Clearly there is a need for a more holistic approach to assessing the research evidence behind the Prevent and Channel policies, and one that is preferably not hampered by a pre-existing preference for dismantling them entirely, before the wider evidence base is even considered. It is also important to note that policies also evolved, as does the evidence base they are able to draw upon.

**Evidence and Knowledge Based Policing**

Central government holds responsibility for the overarching UK counter-terrorism strategy, but the police are the primary enforcement agency both inland and at the UK borders (Home Office, 2011; National Police Chiefs' Council, n.d.). The police are under a statutory duty to embed Prevent into everyday policing; to identify those at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess risk, to work closely with and offer support to communities (Home Office, 2015). This coincides with an ongoing drive within the government for evidence based policy and practices that include research evidence (Home Office, 2015) with the same approach and commitment replicated in policing (College of Policing, 2014). Sherman (2013) defines evidence-based policing as a method of deciding what strategies and practices are most effective and cost-efficient in achieving policing aims, rather than acting on assumption and tradition. At the macro or ‘policy’ level there are several well-evidenced examples where the use of research has enabled outcomes testing of routine policing practices to determine their efficacy, impotence or deleterious impact (Sherman, 2015; Bueermann, 2012). An increasing body of research has, to a limited extent, enabled practitioners and policy makers to differentiate effective from ineffective practice and the productive from the counter-productive (CEBP, 2013). But as Bullock and Tilley (2009) describe through a critical review of the available literature, numerous obstacles inhibit the routine incorporation of research knowledge into policing practice; including a perceived threat to experience based judgement, that reading research is not considered to be ‘real work’, and the practicalities of operationalising research that is neither timely nor easily accessible. As a summary of the literature this acts as an informative snapshot of external
and internal obstacles to the incorporation of research knowledge across policing, but the literature they review tends to be more concerned with policy and strategy than the everyday micro-actions of individual officers. As Wood et.al. (2017) argue, the hazard is that fixing evidence-based policing in policy derived from crunching the numbers, risks policing being statistically advised rather than contextually sensitive, and this ignores the complexity and nuance of policing an incredibly diverse and changing society. This does not deny the need for evidence-based policy and strategy, but argues the importance of research based knowledge in day-to-day decision making that retains discretion and can cope with context - or is in other words- fit for dealing with 'Wicked' problem areas. As Brodeur and Dupont (2008) explain, because information informs all police actions and police actions have real-world impacts, the police should not act on information because it seems compelling, but must be concerned with epistemology; its origins and validity. As research routinely illustrates, Wicked problems require informed and deliberated actions that draw on sound research and understandings at the macro and micro levels (Grint, 2008; Australian Government, 2007; NHS, 2014). Given that the application of Schedule 7 and Prevent/Channel, expect practitioners to employ contextual knowledge throughout to reach informed decisions (Home Office, 2015a; Home Office, 2015b; Home Office, 2015c) the quality and credibility of the knowledge drawn upon and utilised in the micro-actions of practitioners influences both the efficacy and the defensibility of actions.

Nonetheless, one can see the potential for evidence-based practice to fall into the trap of prejudicing quantitative research over the qualitative if policy makers fail to recognise that certain problem types demand individual police workers know as much as is reasonable and feasibly possible about the policing area they are working in. No two policing events are the same owing to the vagaries of human action and that people might not be as predictable as statisticians might assume or indeed prefer. Additionally, systemised approaches are inherently flawed in a Wicked-problem paradigm and must be supported by knowledgeable professionals operating at the micro-level and with the freedom to act with regards to the
shifting sands of context (Grint, 2008). Here, Sharples (2013) provides the useful conceptual framework of ‘knowledge-informed policing’ that recognises the value of experience with the benefit of drawing in ‘the best external evidence from research to improve the quality of practice’, that in essence couples contextual policing with an overarching understanding of what tends to work and what tends not to but does not tie the practitioner’s hands. For instance, research that identifies the range of positive and negative experiences of people referred to Prevent, stopped under Schedule 7 and generally at the receiving end of preventative counter-terrorism, can help practitioners to understand how their efforts are perceived and received. Research that discusses the background to terrorist movements can identify an abundance of reliable multi-perspective analyses of the context that can help practitioners to reduce the likelihood of wrongly and unintentionally associating certain political standpoints, protest movements and opposition to some foreign policy decisions with support for terroristic violence. Sound knowledge of practice areas provides practitioners with a wider scope and ability for identifying terrorist related material and recognising material that relates to terrorism, such as scholarly, journalistic, research and other material, but is a vast distance in intention from propaganda materials such as Inspire, Dabiq and Rumiyah. Uncertainties in this area have led to costly, wasteful and credibility damaging outcomes (Sabir, 2014; Silverman, 2013).

Additionally, knowledge based policing can increase public confidence and cooperation. Sorrell (2009) argues that where intrusive counter-terrorism policing focuses on certain communities, the likelihood of offence increases, however cooperation may increase, and counter-productive outcomes decrease, where actions are proportional, non-stereotyping and not based on facile profiling. In a systematic review of 963 studies, Mazerolle et al. (2013) found that cooperation between the police and the public is more likely where dialogic encounters are perceived to be ‘procedurally just’ in that citizens are treated with dignity and respect, powers are applied fairly, and of course unintentional but nonetheless facile profiling does not occur. Two weaknesses in Mazerolle’s methodology
noted by Langley (2014) are a reliance on survey data and the possibility that police tactics rather than 'procedurally just' policing may have impacted on legitimacy perception, yet Langley's own findings in relation to 'Schedule 7' interventions substantiate the argument that procedurally just policing impacts on cooperation and legitimacy perceptions. Conducting telephone interviews of a selection of travellers 'examined' under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act both inbound and outbound at Birmingham International Airport, Langley found that procedurally just treatment during examination left respondents with a more positive overall experience than when they are offered compensatory rewards. Overall findings are then used to suggest that Schedule 7 is far less problematic than some studies suggest. Setting aside the limitations of 'compensatory' offers such as a 'fast-track' pass for the next trip through the airport that would be of scant use to infrequent flyers, or the dubious attraction of an escort to one's flight by a police officer, a further weaknesses to the study is that having identified how dissatisfaction over Schedule 7 tends to originate from Muslim travellers, the survey sample is described as rich 'in terms of its diversity' (Ibid, p.57).

Nevertheless, the otherwise strong methodological and epistemological rigour of Langley's study and broad-brush survey approach strongly indicates that procedurally just policing, even in the fraught and troubled context of preventative counter-terrorism can reduce the likelihood of adverse outcomes and resentment across various identity groups. The most important point to bear in mind here is that practitioners would need to be aware of cultural, religious and other diverse issues to be able to treat people with due sensitivity and the source as well as breadth of knowledge here becomes crucial.

A further problem generated by terrorism is that the strategy is designed to provoke a disproportionate response, particularly in the state, whose remedial actions can drive a wedge between the state and the citizen (Richardson, 2006). Dramatic events such as terrorism tend to cause disproportionate psychological reactions that influence perceptions of threat and level of risk (Goodin, 2006, pp. 123-130; Stern & Berger, 2015, pp. 202-205; Roberts & Horgan, 2008). In a cumulative analysis of press reporting, Allen (2012), 'identifies
an overwhelmingly negative picture, where threat, otherness, fear and danger posed or caused by Muslims and Islam underpins a considerable majority of the media’s coverage.’

Allen contextualises this alongside poll data indicating that most people obtain their knowledge about Islam and Muslims from the media, which cumulatively risks alienating Muslims and generating anxiety and suspicion in non-Muslims. Additional studies indicate that media reporting on terrorism has tended to essentialise Muslims as a dangerous mass (Moore, et al., 2008; Allen, 2010; Croft, 2012). Obviously, if one is immersed in this information paradigm, the potential arises for subconsciously accepting sometimes evidence-bereft, sensationalist and often offensive portrayals of certain identity groups as a form of ‘common sense’ that also impacts on understandings of who is a threat and to what extent. The Counter-Terrorism Hotline in the UK provides an anonymous reporting mechanism by which the public can report suspicious matters to the notice of the authorities. Yet as Hannam (2009) points out, the sometimes dramatic spikes in reporting tend to occur after terrorist attacks and CT advertising campaigns, whilst critics of the system argue that such campaigns can influence people to see otherwise ordinary events as suspicious. There may be a fine line between encouraging people to report matters that are genuinely out of the ordinary, and generating anxiety within an already problematic information paradigm in which some sections of the media wrongly conflate particular identities with the notion of an existential threat. It must also be remembered that the police are no more than ordinary citizens, living in the same situation as everyone else and are not inherently immune to suffering the same anxieties. The risk here is that if CT officers and staff are informed by the same problematic information sources, or have no alternative knowledge with which to challenge such reporting, then the very real potential exists for police actions to be no less anxiety driven.

Tackling terrorism at the pre-attack and even pre-planning stage is essentially a matter of understanding and proportionately dealing with risk. Proportionality and risk are inextricably intertwined (College of Policing, 2013). As Kahneman and Lovallo (1993) put it,
risk is more effectively understood and balanced through an objective and holistically informed approach. In policing, risk assessment expects ‘professional judgement’, that again includes Evidence-Based practice (College of Policing, 2013). In a unique analysis of middle-ranking officer attitudes to research, Palmer (2011) discovered that few officers read policing problem related research, meaning that tactical responses tend to be guided by instinct and experience. Although the study is geographically restricted to Greater Manchester Police and the macro problem-solving paradigm, it strongly indicates a lack of contextual knowledge around policing and societal issues beyond personal and organisational experience, and of course what one soaks up from society and popular information sources. Similarly, as Telep and Lum (2014) found in a US context, frontline officers ‘typically value experience more than research to guide practice’. As Lum (2009) argues, experience ‘is a euphemism for tradition, habit and culture’. In amalgam, if counter-terrorism practitioners are immersed in media reporting and as susceptible to the psychological effects of terrorism as the public, reactions to terrorism may not be as objective and ‘Wicked’ aware as they might. Nor is risk assessment limited to the those in public facing roles. The College of Policing (2014) explains that intelligence provides “…an understanding of issues in order to prioritise them and inform the development of problem-solving responses”, crucially adding that analysts must be aware of cognitive bias, the value of information and the drawing of a premise or inference informed by further material. As a former Director General of MI5 bluntly states, some intelligence saves lives and protects nations, but much is dross and it takes confidence to sift, assess, select and reject it (Manningham-Buller, 2005). But what guides such judgements and how are outcomes tested for efficacy?

Efficacy testing is unfortunately difficult with terrorism prevention, but testing the knowledge base of the practitioner is both possible and desirable. As Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Constabulary and the Audit Commission (2008) found in their assessment of Prevent policy implementation, despite extensive funding and roll-out of counter-extremism
projects, practitioner and manager knowledge of violent extremism was almost non-existent whilst projects were assessed not for reducing terrorism but whether they were on time and budget. A further concern that the study only alludes to, is there was no idea whether participants in schemes had any realistic prospects of ever becoming a terrorist. The main question here is on what basis were referrals and behind the scenes assessments being made? The Prevent duty has repeatedly emphasised that frontline staff must be trained to understand what radicalisation is, why people become involved in terrorism, and the associated vulnerabilities (HM Government, 2008; HM Government, 2009, pp. 82-93; HM Government, 2011, pp. 57-58; Home Office, 2015). This of course relates not only to those generating referrals but to those assessing them. A later ACPO commissioned study (Innes, et al., 2011) also found that police workers generally lacked training in how to identify radicalisation and engage with people about grievances, thus leading to improvisation in how to deal with Prevent issues. As a small-\textit{n} qualitative study this is an indication only, and likewise fails to convincingly show that Prevent actions had not harmed relations with Muslim communities, because participant numbers were minuscule, whilst the notion of a Muslim community rather abstract. Additionally, the British Crime Surveys on which findings partially rely, never asked questions about Prevent (2011, pp. 48-54). Nonetheless, the Innes et.al’s findings are rather well support by a separate study by Frampton et.al (2016) who also found that many Muslim citizens were happy to support efforts to tackle radicalisation.

The Condition of academic research

‘Terrorism studies’ has been conceptualised as a field where government influence has impacted academic neutrality and substantially set the agenda (Jackson, et al., 2007; Blakeley, 2007). In ‘Disciplining Terror’ (2013) Stampnitszky describes how Western governments generated a normative influence over the study of ‘terrorism’, to frame terrorists as irrationally evil, thus rendering efforts to understand terrorist motives as both suspect and pointless (2013, pp. 190-192). Mapping the trajectory of terrorism research over several decades, alongside political rhetoric and framing of terrorism and the threat certainly
provides a convincing narrative, but contemporary studies that are state funded, engaged with causality and are critical of foreign policy decisions were not difficult to find (Jones & Libicki, 2008; Pape, 2006; Pape, 2010). Nonetheless, terrorism was not a well-studied phenomenon prior to 9/11 (Ranstorp, 2009) with most studies being desk-based and few drawing upon or seeking primary evidence (Borum, 2004, pp. 64-68). One should therefore not expect to find copious quantities of non-biased and independent research littering counter-terrorism policy in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

Although 9/11 hugely accelerated academic research (Fridlund & Nelhans, 2011; Schmid, 2011), Miller and Mills (2009) found that ‘terrorist experts’ whose ideological approach mirrored the state narrative that terrorists were irrational beings spurred on by hatred of Western values and religious dogma, tended to dominate a rapidly growing media coverage of terrorism. Systematically identifying 437 ‘terrorism experts’ based on citation frequency in select publications between 1970 and 2007, the biographies of the 100 experts featured most prominently in the press were investigated to reveal that they did not represent the most published and cited academics and that most had prior state, security or intelligence affiliations. Although only 4% were critical of state narratives, 27% variously put forward alternative narratives to that of states, did portray terrorists as rational actors, addressed root causes and warned against state over-reactions. The potential limiting factors here are the subjectivity required in generalising a ‘state narrative’ and determining what constitutes support and criticism, yet findings indicate that a state narrative did dominate and that attempts to explore root causes were up against both government and media barriers over what was an acceptable narrative and research direction. Condemnation of terrorists for repugnant and indefensible actions is thoroughly understandable, but when the aim is to stop terrorism, an important processing in halting it is to know where it comes from and why.

Conversely, Richard Silke (2008) explains that an influx of state funding after 9/11 also facilitated academic specialisation, multi-disciplinary collaborations and an increased
use of statistical analysis that cumulatively adds increasing strength and validity to study findings. The danger is that quantitative number-crunching that might excite policy makers looking for binary answers, might squeeze out qualitative research that can add the nuance crucial in a Wicked problem area. This becomes evident in the Home Office commissioning of a rapid-evidence assessment into the ‘vulnerability’ of individuals to being drawn into al-Qaeda related terrorism. Bouhana and Wikstrom (2011) found out of 16,582 relevant studies, only 15 were primary evidence based and theoretically underpinned. For Lynch (2013) this is a significant blow to the terrorism studies field, but it may also reflect scant academic interest owing to the weakness of the assumption that terrorists have identifiable pre-engagement characteristics. Research repeatedly finds that terrorists are unremarkable, not driven by inherent evil and their mental-health reflects the variations of wider society (Sageman, 2004; Sageman, 2006; Atran, 2015; Atran, 2006; Pape, 2010; Bakker, 2006; Horgan, 2014), so that any form of search for ‘terrorist traits’ may quickly run into an epistemological brick wall, more so that terrorists tend to evade detection certainly until after the event so that the analysis of individual life-stories is almost invariably going to be retrospective, or deal with people who might present as engaging with terrorist ideologies and activism but never likely to step over the line into physical violence. There are clearly difficulties in drawing on psychological studies alone and as numerous respected scholars of terrorism repeatedly argue, a multi-disciplinary understanding of the problem in all its complexity is required (English, 2009; Young & Findley, 2011; Horgan & Boyle, 2008; Lynch, 2013; Wilner & Dubouloz, 2010).

Summary

This literature review has found that although government policy making includes academic research, there is a tendency to do so selectively and post hoc to support existing assumptions most often based on political preference or from non-research based sources. Criticism suggests that that this may have been the case with Prevent and Channel, however the weakness of such assertions is that they lack both a longitudinal and holistic
approach and potentially miss a wealth of additional material that may have influenced policy
evolution. Also, Prevent seems to have grown out of, and during, a period in which the
available academic evidence was substantially influenced by state narratives and a
substantial stymying of analysis of the root causes of terrorism. It is easy to criticise a policy
for lack of evidence, but this is fallacious if the condition of the available evidence is not also
considered. Nevertheless, if Prevent reflects broader policy making then the likelihood is that
it will be underpinned mostly by assumption. This study seeks to analyse this and to put
something into the gap of longitudinal and holistic policy analysis in this area. From the
outset it was argued that Wicked problems are not fixed through policy alone, because
policies cannot feasibly cope with every possible practice context and are by their nature
porous. This means that counter-terrorism policing must be contextually advised, to
recognise the strengths and weaknesses of policies and enable practitioners to be
knowledgeable professionals not constrained by inherently flawed structures. The literature
indicates that even though policing professionals need reliable and up-to-date knowledge,
not only of their policing context but of the broader, complex and multi layered contexts in
which their own actions sit and impact, close engagement with research derived information
is likely to be rare, meaning that analysis of practice is likely to find it guided by personal and
peer informed information, tradition, culture and assumptions that may appear to make
sense, but may prove to be insufficient or false explanatory of terrorism. Information
derived from the media may of course be useful, but as the literature also found, such
sources may be riddled with superficiality, bias and sensationalism so that regular reading of
media materials would certainly not create knowledgeable professionals. To be a police
knowledge worker clearly requires engagement with academic research. It was found that
evidence-based policing is relatively new, but certainly necessary if policy and practice is to
do good and do less harm. This certainly does not mean that academic research produces
perfectly rounded and robust truths that can be relied upon through blind faith, as such
research can also be politically and ideologically influenced. Nonetheless, academic
research, derived through more robust, replicable and checkable methods that lays its own
Evidence base out to enable judgements to be made of the validity of claims, is of a higher standard than other forms of knowledge that in an ideal world it can complement. Several studies were identified as bringing much needed and well-developed methodological and epistemological processes to bear on the question of counter-terrorism policing (Langley, 2014) and Prevent in particular (Innes, et.al, 2011), but the obvious question that Palmer (2011) raises is, do practitioners engage with research, even where it is written with the specific intention of advising practice? Two points of research are therefore needed: To test the evidence-base behind a policy that provides a story of terrorism that is underpinned by a statutory duty to understand and act upon its assertions that stretch far beyond the Prevent and Channel policies themselves and into all preventative counter-terrorism efforts. And to see if policing practice in the same prism draws upon research evidence so that police counter terrorism workers are knowledge workers rather than reliant on questionable and problem laden information sources. In both cases this study also discusses the implications of not incorporating academic research into policy, practice and background knowledge.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The literature review found that academic research and informed opinion is a crucial element of evidence-based policy (HM Government, 2013) and policing practice (College of Policing, 2015d). Yet policymakers may be politically influenced and apply evidence post-hoc. Research indicates this occurred as Prevent and Channel evolved but that more holistic analysis of policy creation and emergence was required. The few studies analysing frontline police worker engagement with academic research, indicate that everyday policing tends to be advised by individual, peer and organisational experience, yet in the problematic area of counter-terrorism, knowledge sources were found to matter significantly, thus generating the need to identify where counter-terrorism police workers obtain their subject specific and contextual knowledge and if this includes engagement with academia.

To explore the relationship between policy, practice and academic research this paper uses a mixed-method approach: The first section consists of a thematic content analysis of the Prevent policy to identify the relationship between policy making and academia between its origins circa 2003, emergence in 2006 and the latest policy iteration in 2015. The second part utilises a quantitative method to consider the extent to which police practitioners engage with academic research pertinent to the preventative counter-terrorism paradigm that is informed by the Prevent logic of how people turn to terrorism.

Policy analysis method

Policy tends to describe what governments propose to be done about a social issue (Waller, et al., 2009) and sets out, or directs, actions aimed at achieving this (Williams, 2012). The core element of any policy is therefore its actionable content, but this of course also includes rhetoric, narratives and framing that set out the rationale, or argument, for action and the beliefs behind its necessity and means of implementation. What is notable
about the Prevent strategy is that it generates an understanding of what terrorism is, and how individuals engage with it. If governments believe that effective policy is based on sound evidence, then policy should reflect the findings of the research ‘evidence’ base. The first part of this paper is therefore concerned with identifying policy assertions that justify, explain or direct actions, to enable an analysis of their relationship with the evidence, or its absence. There are numerous methods of conducting a scholarly engagement with text. Quantitative content analysis systematically and objectively identifies phenomena in large volumes of texts (Riffe, et al., 2014, pp. 28-30). Given the quantity of potential Prevent and Channel policy documents and likely copious quantitative analysis may seem appealing. With reference to Bryman (2008) the quantitative method was found to run the risk of measuring statistically, rather than theoretically, significant phenomena. Essentially there was a good chance of missing important content merely because it is masked by more copious content. As linguistic modality was also considered crucial, the quantitative method also risked missing the broader context in which actionable content is presented. There might be clauses, limitations and caveats appearing elsewhere in the text that could be missed, yet impact on how more quantitatively noticeable content is meant to be perceived and received by the reader. For these reasons, the quantitative methodology was rejected. Although discourse analysis and semiotics offered potential and would likely pick up on the detail of policy rather than what stands out because of its repetition or sheer volume, these were considered too nuanced for large volumes of policy literature and certainly in the research window of only a few months. Qualitative content analysis was therefore chosen as there was sufficient time to read policy in fine detail and the approach offered a balance between data richness and scientific rigour (Moretti, et al., 2011), together with its replicability in coding textual themes and patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). An approach that sought out ‘themes’ in policy enabled actionable and action relevant content to be identified, and contextually understood. It offered a valid and justifiable middle ground between the quantitative approach and a more time consuming but necessary requirement of seeking out and understanding context and nuance. As Wenden (2005) explains, ‘themes’ indicate what
an author considers relevant to understanding a topic and can also indicate ideological bias. A review of policy making in general certainly located some political influence and bias involved in policy making (Stevens, 2011; Rutter, et al., 2016), and as Prevent and Channel span several governments, it was considered important to explore the changing political, or in other words ideological, context in which policy is not only made, but re-evaluated and reformed.

**Contextual challenges**

Policy documents cumulatively amounted to 574 pages. Of benefit was the researcher’s prior familiarity with these policy texts and terrorism research in general. Familiarity enables ‘categories’ or themes to be generated from the outset and refined through close analysis as the investigation progresses (Bryman, 2008). This is stated to be useful where similar research is limited (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Although numerous studies considered the Prevent and Channel policies, there was no identifiable longitudinal and holistic exploration of policy formation from its first inception to the latest policy iteration in 2015. Additionally, one might argue that much evidence behind the Prevent policy is not publicly available. Therefore, a further search was conducted to identify open source counter-terrorism funding streams and public commentary by government, police and other state counter-terrorism agencies to identify any allusion to research behind the scenes that might impact on study findings.

**Quantitative content analysis process**

Through a search of government websites and the literature review, eleven Prevent and Channel iterations were identified between 2006 and 2015. With reference to the methodology described by Anderson (1997) and Bryman (2008, pp. 554-556) documents were downloaded for annotation, with each iteration listed vertically in Microsoft Excel by date order. A ‘theme’ was defined as a concept that facilitated actions through its contextual use [Fig.2]. Although policy documents might provide a glossary of terms and attempt to
explain ‘themes’ these were read for contextual understanding, but not merely replicated as an exploration of these themes over a long period was more objective than merely repeating policy maker assertions. Documents were read several times for familiarity and annotated until themes appeared; with example texts pasted into excel to enable comparison. A Boolean word-stem search of every policy document [Appendix B] allowed another layer of analysis to support ‘theme’ capture, enabling word frequency analysis [Appendix C] that might signify changes in policy emphasis when tested alongside the Qualitative Content analysis methodology. Essentially this introduced an element of quantitative analysis as a cross-check against the subjectivity of the qualitative approach. Themes 9, 10 and 11 reflected broad policy emphases and scored 0 if this thematic assertion was mainly absent, or 1 if it was present in more than a superficial sense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Radicalisation as a process</th>
<th>A process of engagement with terrorism enabling remedial intervention by the state.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Risk to (generic)</td>
<td>Any risk (to society or property) not related to personal radicalisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Risk of radicalisation</td>
<td>A variable individual personal condition or context that may increase or decrease the likelihood of a person engaging in terrorism, generating the justification and necessity for remedial intervention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>A mind-set posited as potentially providing a supportive environment for terrorist expression and the terrorist ideology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Violent-Extremism</td>
<td>Mind-set limited by its clear support for violence, also used interchangeably with ‘terrorism’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Individual vulnerability</td>
<td>A personal and/or contextual condition rendering a subject more likely to be open to the potential for exploitation by terrorist ideologues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Set of potentially ‘terrorist’ beliefs that justify, shape and stimulate the actions of terrorists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>British Values</td>
<td>A values-based test of vulnerability or negative influence on the propensity to support terrorism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Muslim focused</td>
<td>The securitising scope of potential risk is fixed in a single imagined homogenous community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Societal-integration</td>
<td>A test of potential risk and vulnerability requiring state intervention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Individual focused</td>
<td>A scope of potential risk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defining what is meant by ‘academic research’ within this study.

To compare policy assertions against the research evidence base, it is necessary to define what is meant by academic research. With reference to Nutley, Powell and Davies (2013), De Brun, (2013) and Sageman, (2006; 2017) ‘academic research’ was broadly defined in this study as a testimony, paper, process, project, thesis or similar from a recognised scholar, university, academic body or research-based think-tank and where a clearly identifiable scientific process had been intentionally employed. An important assumption employed by this study must be made clear. The testimony of academic scholars is incorporated in evidence-base source analysis even where the research underpinning the evidence offered is not directly referenced (evidence was frequently found to have been provided verbally to select committee hearings and similar) because academic training includes dealing with questions of validity, source analysis, extensive reviewing of a wide range of literature, assessing and employing methodologies and methods of research and understanding of high and middle-range theory. Therefore, evidence is assumed to be presented from a stock of knowledge that is not limited to personal experience or partisan positions, although academics can also hold biases and speak from pre-existing political positions. Evidence-based research must include such academic findings and claims, or cannot be termed evidence-based according to the definitions of the UK government and College of Policing, and more broad assertions of what must be present.

Some degree of subjectivity had to be employed, however the researcher’s prior academic training together with extensive subject relevant knowledge, obviously provides a fairly substantial basis for differentiating academic works from media, stakeholder, practitioner and other opinion. Nonetheless, an exploration of the evidence did occasionally identify stakeholder and practitioner opinion that referenced academic research in support of policy relevant points and judgement had to applied in deciding if these could reliably fit the definition or sat outside of it.
Methodology of identifying subject relevant ‘academic evidence’.

Several methods were employed to identify relevant evidence. As the qualitative analysis of policy developed, in-text citations, referencing and appendices within policy texts provided initial avenues of exploration. An internet search was then conducted to locate Prevent policy relevant government ‘Select Committee’ and similar evidence-gathering processes. Each evidence source was downloaded either as a word or pdf document and embedded into a word document in date order alongside the relevant policy document. Each evidential source document was then analysed to isolate academic research so that the ‘themes’ identified through policy analysis could be assessed for their relationship to the contemporary and cumulative evidence base. The results of this process are discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Analysis of preventative counter-terrorism, police knowledge sources

Having explored the links between policy assertions and sources pertinent to claims of evidence-based policy making, an assessment could be made as to where policy was evidentially supported and where this was weak, problematic or non-existent. As policy sets out the narrative of how terrorism works and how people become involved in terrorism that expands far beyond the policy itself, it was also necessary to explore the context in which counter-terrorism practitioners engage with policy and operate within this over-arching narrative. To identify the extent and frequency of counter-terrorism worker engagement with knowledge sources, several options were available. Whilst in-depth interviews with practitioners would obtain extensive, rich and detailed data, this would have limited the study to a handful of participants, given the available research window. Additionally, relying on only a handful of interviews in a single force, within the hierarchical structure of the police, risked social-desirability bias (Fisher, 1993). As researcher-participant distance is argued to reduce possible bias (Rodriquez, et al., 2014) and anonymity may encourage participation (Andrews, et al., 2003) the use of an online survey was considered the better option [Appendix D]. Ideally, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology was
preferable, combining personal interviews and the quantitative results of the survey, however the advent of a series of terrorist attacks during the same period as the research segment of this study, limited participant and researcher availability and the quantitative methodology of the online survey alone was employed.

**Sampling**

Police forces tend to have departments whose members work wholly or partly on counter-terrorism issues such as intelligence management, ports operations, investigations and prosecutions (Blakey, 2003) and of course ‘Channel’ and ‘Prevent’ relevant work. Force employee numbers can also vary dramatically and the presence of an airport, ferry port, international rail port and international border has an impact on the size of specialist counter-terrorism units and departments. It is therefore extremely difficult to provide an accurate count of the national population of counter-terrorism police workers. Once permission from the chosen force was obtained, 246 potential respondents were found owing to their substantial participation in counter-terrorism practice. Invitations were sent by email. A potential drawback is that only interested respondents self-select for participation therefore an invitation email was sent weekly over the three-week period to encourage wider response. 75 surveys were completed. Given the at-the-time unknowable size of the population and the use of a single force as a convenience sample owing to permission being received that was timely enough for this study, the results can be presented only as a scoping study whose principal value is in setting the stage for a later study whilst having very limited external validity.

**Ethical considerations**

As United Kingdom policing relies heavily on public confidence, a major consideration of any study of policing practices is the impact of findings on this crucial relationship. Ethically it is important to balance any potential impact on public confidence from a close examination of policing practices, with the equally important need for openness,
honesty and a commitment to improvement. As the literature review shows, numerous studies have engaged with police workers, including understanding where they obtain their contextual and practice knowledge (for instance; Palmer, 2011). Additionally, a number of analyses have focused on counter-terrorism (Choudhary & Fenwick, 2011; Sabir, 2014; Innes, et al., 2011; Miller & Banos, 2016). There is therefore no over-arching ethical bar to conducting and making publicly available the findings of such studies. After all, publication of research findings is a College of Policing aim (2015b; 2015c). Given the time limitations of the study, a specific police force was approached, and permission kindly provided by two senior officers. To increase the likelihood of permission for a staff survey to be conducted and the findings to be made available for peer review, together with the ethical need to anonymise respondents, the researcher also offered to anonymise the force. In accordance with the ethical requirements of the University, the ESCR Research Ethics Framework and the APSA Professional Ethics in Political Science were consulted prior to research commencing and closely adhered to throughout. To avoid inadvertent disclosure of sensitive information or opinion, respondents were provided no free-text areas. To maintain data integrity the survey was facilitated through Lime Survey by the force itself, whilst maintaining participant anonymity.

**Questionnaire design:**

The intention of the survey was to gauge the extent and frequency of counter-terrorism worker engagement with open-source academic material. As the literature review progressed it became apparent that although academic research, on which evidence based policy and practice must be substantially built, was not without its limitations, incorporation of such research into routine policing at the policy and practitioner level is intended to overcome less reliable or false assumptions. A common, indeed arguably the main, source of information concerning terrorism and the wider contexts for most of the population is the mainstream media. Yet the review also identified that reliance on media sources is likely to
introduce and sustain unconscious bias. It was important therefore to compare counter-terrorism police worker engagement with academic research and opinion, with media reporting across the most common platforms, such as television, news-print, documentaries and the internet. As previously stated, ethical considerations leaned the study towards using closed questions, but this was also identified as a method of enabling cross-category objective comparison (Bryman, 2008). For overall survey design reference was also made to Andrews, et.al (2003), leading to several design decisions: Firstly, to ensure responder anonymity. Granting and maintaining complete anonymity made it difficult to be certain that multiple submissions were not being made, and trust was placed in the professionalism of respondents not to intentionally do so. Secondly, the use of radio-buttons rather than drop-down menus was employed to avoid selection of the first, rather than most relevant answer. Thirdly the decision was made to use an organisation-based email approach stating clearly that senior management permission had been sought and granted, yet participant anonymity maintained, and fourthly to employ a concise, succinct and brief survey type to encourage engagement. Frequency of engagement with source material was measured using a Likert-scale range that was consistent across source-material types within the context of each question.
Chapter 4

Policy Analysis

This chapter discusses the findings of a content analysis of Prevent and Channel policy documents. As policy and evidence are obviously cumulative, policy iterations are discussed in chronological succession to identify persistent and emerging themes that provide a narrative by which practices are to be implemented and understood. Whilst much wider evidence is brought into policy making, evidence-based policy is predicated on research and research informed understandings, therefore academic evidence, as previously defined, is isolated and discussed in relation to the emerging policy themes. As the literature review found, academia is not a panacea for terrorism, but is likely to be more trustworthy, holistic, independent and theoretically supported than the media, personal and communal assumptions, accumulated personal knowledge and opinions built or adopted ‘on the fly’. For policy to be evidence based and ‘Wicked’ problem aware, policy themes should at least reflect the nuance, complexity and caution of the evidence, rather than oversimplifying or ignoring it, if policy aims be more effective and less damaging (Rutter, et al., 2016). The political context, in which policy is formed, is also discussed as this can routinely influence evidence-gathering and interpretation (LSE GV314 Group, 2014; Stevens, 2011).

Prevent I: The integration assumption.

The Prevent strategy was first published under Labour in 2006 and reviewed under the Conservative-Liberal coalition in 2011, before becoming a statutory duty for specified authorities under the Conservatives in 2015. ‘Radicalisation’ is introduced in the first publication of ‘Prevent’ as:
“...the processes whereby certain experiences and events in a person’s life cause them to become radicalised, to the extent of turning to violence to resolve perceived grievances.” (HM Government, 2006, p. 9).

This theme was present in all but one document and forms the narrative around which further themes are wrapped:

“We judge that radicalisation is driven by an ideology...and by personal vulnerabilities and specific local factors which, for a range of reasons, make that ideology seem both attractive and compelling.” (Home Office, 2015b).

Contextual analysis identified that grievance was framed as a community wide issue becoming subsumed in the theme of ‘ideology’ that is situated as an identifier of a potential terrorist mind-set within the radicalisation process. ‘Radicalisation’ does not appear in ‘Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds’ (Communities and Local Government, 2007) but the over-arching theme in that policy document was of ‘societal-integration’ that is broadly defined and made knowable as a ‘buy-in’ to shared [British] values (2007, p.5). ‘Social-integration’ therefore becomes a marker of risk, enabling identification of the level of its presence or absence as a tool to identify possible future terrorists and their supporters, so that generating a ‘values’ buy-in by communities is presented as a counter-terrorism strategy. Indeed, in the 2006 CONTEST strategy (HM Government) Muslims are posited as at risk to the appeal of a violent-extremist ‘ideology’ (2006, p.2) owing to their [assumed] lack of integration (HM Government, 2006, pp. pp.9-14). The notion that future-terrorists may be identified through their level of societal-integration and that societal-integration is a counter-terrorism measure also leaks into strategies within the education setting (Department for Education and Skills, 2006). As Lynch puts it, policy framed Muslims as dangerous because of their ‘otherness’ (2013). Policy does not of course explicitly claim that those vulnerable to radicalisation, or in the process of being radicalised, are identifiable
because of their lack of ‘Britishness’, but the notion radiates from the rhetoric and framing of the issue.

The notion of ‘Radicalisation’ does not grab academic attention until 2005 (Kundnani, 2012), whilst the idea of a ‘pathway’ into terrorism was rejected by the Security Service in conjunction with psychologist advice, as evidentially weak (Singh, 2016, pp. 22,37), at least during the period in question. Employing such a narrow psycho-analytical approach is flawed anyway as it misses the influence of multiple contexts (ICSR, 2008) however contemporary research into terrorism was not well-developed (Ranstorp, 2006; Silke, 2008; Schmidt, 2014), particularly into root causes (Stampnitzky, 2013; Bouhama & Wikstrom, 2011) so it is unsurprising to find that policy has little here to draw upon when it comes to working out why might become a terrorist and how this process works. Funding streams might indicate a program of policy relevant study but assessment of MI5, SIS and GCHQ expenditure between 2001 and 2005 reveals a focus on technological science (ICS, 2002) with no apparent, dedicated academic research funding identifiable (ICS, 2003; ICS, 2004; ICS, 2005; ICS, 2006). From 2004-2005 54 evidence testimonies were heard by the ‘Terrorism and Community Cohesion’ committee (2005a; 2005b). Only two academic perspectives are clearly identifiable, with Khanum (2005b, pp. Ev.114-117) finding that Islamophobia and media stereotyping was alienating young Muslims and the International Centre for Security Analysis warning that governmental and societal over-reaction to terrorism was generating ‘social suspicion and mistrust’ of specific communities (2004, pp. Ev.51-53). If societal integration was a factor, then policy seems to be rather counter-productive in connecting integration with counter-terrorism. A contemporary internal Government report titled ‘Young Muslims and Extremism’ (UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Home Office, 2004) contextualises ‘radicalisation’ as influenced by foreign policy, alienation and an admission that counter-terrorism is not ‘evidence-based’, but also cleaves to the theme of poor ‘societal integration’ as a causal factor. For supporting evidence, the document uses anecdotes, community member opinion and poll-data uncritically reported. Whether societal integration
was indeed a causal factor is clearly not proven. Prevent was in development from 2003 onwards, yet its foundations appear to be more intuitive than emerging from a broad body of research evidence and there was clearly no good idea of how radicalisation was happening and why, yet academic opinion was arguing that existing ‘societal integration’ was being undermined by a securitising agenda towards Muslims. This renders the societal-integration and radicalisation themes as rather weak, yet actions emerging from policy may well have been generating the kind of outcomes it was seeking to halt. A major issue that seems to elude policy makers is that identified Islamist terrorists were rather well integrated into society (House of Commons, 2006; Thomas, 2012, pp. 26-27), so it is questionable here whether policy, poorly evidenced as it was and based on assumption, was having any beneficial counter-terrorism impact at all.

Between 2006-2010, policy emphasis on the theme of ‘societal-integration’ persists. Following the 7/7 atrocity, the government commissioned what is essentially a qualitative study by seven working groups to understand why some British Muslims had turned to terrorism (Islam, et al., 2005). Opinions during the study support the ‘societal-cohesion’ theme as a preventative measure against the al-Qaeda ‘ideology’ (HM Government, 2006, pp. 1-2) but there the study lacks objectivity, suffers from validity shortcomings and the entire study fails to offer a convincing argument that a lack of societal integration was a causal factor in the 2005 attacks and therefore offer support to what causes or influences the ‘radicalisation process’. A second contemporary government commissioned study by Demos reports that entire qualitative process here took only six weeks, that participants appeared to be selected for proximity to government and some perceived it as rubber stamping existing policy (Briggs, et al., 2006). Its ‘evidential’ value is rather limited.

In tracing the origins of the ‘societal integration’ assumption as a driver of ‘radicalisation’ it is important to consider the wider political context. The 1999 and 2001 Labour Manifesto’s discuss tackling social division, deprivation and inequality, whilst encouraging mutual respect and tolerance (1997; 2001) but this narrative is not replicated in
Conservative Manifesto’s (1997; 2001) suggesting that government was primed to see counter-terrorism through a social-cohesion prism. This may have been reinforced by the Cantle (2001) inquiry that argued that poor social-integration influenced the so-called race riots. Notably, the social-cohesion theme is abandoned in the first Conservative government review of Prevent (HM Government, 2011). Furthermore, the Demos study also warns against eyeing the entire Muslim population with suspicion (2006, pp. 41-42). Whilst this is sensibly reiterated in policy (HM Government, 2006, p.10) the assumption that the terrorist ‘ideology’ becomes adopted owing to generally poor Muslim ‘societal-integration’ is not substantially shaken and the theme remains strong in Prevent.

From 2008 the theme of ‘individual vulnerability’ to radicalisation increases in policy rhetoric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>‘social-integration’ iteration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008a</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008b</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 [CONTEST document]</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Strategy Guide for Local Partners in England, the premise that certain factors ‘can leave a person more susceptible to exploitation by violent extremists’ is claimed to be research supported (2008a, p. 71). The theme of ‘vulnerability’ insinuates that personal and societal crises over identity, asylum and migration, and even divorce and adolescence increase the risk of radicalisation. No research-sources are cited in the text however a reading list of academic research is provided but with the peculiar caveat that it does not necessarily reflect government opinion (2008a, p.63) so it is not clear if this is supposed to support policy assertions. Given the prominence of the actionable themes of radicalisation...
as a process by which vulnerable people within vulnerable communities are susceptible to a violent extremist ideology [Appendix C], detaching academic research on the same subject from policy assertions might seem bizarre, but there is a sense that the reader is being guided to reading material to obtain a contextual understanding even if it does not fully fit with policy assertions. This strongly suggests that policy is designed to be a guide rather than hard and fast rules based document, but of course this is a selected reading list chosen by policy makers. It nonetheless clearly asserts that one is meant to read around the subject. One of the academic sources from the ‘reading list’ was found to be cited in the contemporary policy summary document ‘Preventing Violent Extremism’ (Maer, 2008, p.5) where it supports an assertion that individuals suffering an identity crisis can be vulnerable to radicalisation and that a British Muslim identity forms an ideological counter to the extremist narrative. The study in question, by Tuyfhal Choudhary (2007), is only academic source employed throughout the entire policy summary, but both Maer’s study and the 2008 Policy document in which the study appears in the suggested reading list, fail to replicate the point made by Choudhary that identity is a hugely complex issue, issues of identity can be an entirely normal part of life experience and can crucially also be influenced by one’s treatment by the state, including indiscriminate suspicion (2007, pp. 10-21). By presenting vague risk factors yet fixing on Muslims, whilst failing to present a broad picture of the complexity of such issues and the counter-productive outcomes of employing a fallacious and over-simplistic approach, policy may be being somewhat disingenuous with the evidence. Conversely, it is unrealistic to expect policy to reflect every nuance of research and cautionary caveats do exist, so that much responsibility resides in those who approach policy as the be all and end all for subject knowledge, but overall the policy themes of ‘societal integration’, ‘vulnerability’ and how ‘radicalisation’ occurs in the context they are employed are oversimplified, rather over-stated and under-evidenced.
A limited but increasing evidence-base

The 2009 CONTEST document is a paradigm shift in its extensive in-text referencing that provides readers direct access to assertion relevant evidence. Out of 193 in-text references, 37 fit the profile of academic-based or academic-derived employed by this study. Most substantiate the historical context of terrorism, situating the theme of a historically contextualised ideology as crucial in understanding radicalisation. Whilst only 8 substantiate the radicalisation and vulnerability themes as policy presents them, these offer considerably more support than previously, lending weight to the claim that:

‘[Prevent] is based on a better understanding of the causes of radicalisation (the process by which people become terrorists or lend support to violent extremism)’ (HM Government, 2009a, p. 14).

Additionally, modal verbs qualify thematic assertions:

‘Radicalisation seems to be related directly to a crisis in identity and, specifically, to a feeling of not being accepted or not belonging. This is itself the result of a range of factors, which may include the experience of discrimination and inequalities, racism...’ [My emphasis] (HM Government, 2009a, p. 44).

Retrospective analyses by several academics argue that the persistence of the ‘societal-integration’ theme wrongly approaches terrorism from a values-based angle that problematised religious identity and alienates communities (Spalek, 2011; Bonino, 2013; Lynch, 2013) and this is indeed apparent in the evidence provided to government and policy makers and appears to be acknowledged in policy but policy still seems to be feeling its way forward and not quite able to bring itself to abandon the ‘societal integration’ assumption. In the Prevent Guide for Local Partners, claims are made that an active social science research program is occurring across government to substantiate Prevent policy, mentioning an unreferenced study by RUSI (HM Government, 2009b). Yet a contemporary RUSI authored document warns that policy is based on a poor understanding of radicalisation, presents
Muslims as a threat-based group and risks generating facile profiling efforts, with limited realistic possibility of identifying ‘pre-terrorists’ (Hindle, 2009). Whilst policy frequently voices the caveat that there is no single profile of someone vulnerable to radicalisation and cautionary modals again appear (HM Government, 2009b, pp. 9,15,17), actionable themes are also couched in a contradictory sense of certainty: ‘…workstreams that ‘challenge the ideology behind violent extremism’, ‘disrupt those who promote extremism’, ‘support individuals vulnerable to recruitment’, ‘increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism’ and ‘address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting’ (HM Government, 2009b). As the literature review shows, research was still emerging from a period of limited engagement with the causes of terrorism and the drivers of terrorists, so policy seems to both hedge its bets with caveats, yet go on to make claims that are not evidentially substantiated. Challenging ideology as a counter-terrorism instrument seems a robust enough claim in that the theme of a terrorist ideology emerging from historical grievances that ideologues exploit is well supported, but connecting this to notions of vulnerability and resilient communities made resilient through a value laden integration into British society is more assumption than confidence built on evidential foundations.

Policy framing of ‘societal integration’ as problematic, that Muslim communities are vulnerable to ideologues and the ‘terrorist ideology’ per se, coincides with a media tendency to frame Muslims as inherently suspect (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017; Allen, 2008; Oborne & Jones, 2008), suggesting that either policy narratives were leaking into public narratives, or being influenced by them. The implication here is that anyone engaging with policy whilst simultaneously immersed in media reporting is unlikely to find in this web of variously evidenced themes the kind of nuanced and objective knowledge that can lead to actions befitting a wicked-problem paradigm. The potential for acting on policy assertions that inadvertently lead to counter-productive outcomes or indeed no beneficial outcome at all, is high and this appears to be recognised in the 2011 reformation of Prevent.
Conservative-Liberal Prevent reform.

In the 2011 iteration of Prevent, the poorly evidenced ‘societal-integration’ theme is abandoned:

“The Prevent programme we inherited from the last Government was flawed. It confused the delivery of Government policy to promote integration with Government policy to prevent terrorism.” (HM Government, 2011a).

This certainly reflects prior research warnings and policy credibility is claimed through a foundation in academic research, indeed the document contains an impressive 105 footnotes and whilst most are government and media sources or poll data superficially interpreted in the document itself, 33 academic references suggest a continued emphasis on an evidence-based approach.

> ‘Since the last Prevent strategy, academic, intelligence and other Government work has illuminated the drivers of radicalisation, the characteristics of people who have been radicalised and who have joined terrorist groups, and the specific pathways to support for, and participation in, terrorist acts.’ (HM Government, 2011a, p. 17)

From 2010-2011 the new government conducted a public consultation on Prevent (HM Government, 2011b). Academic, practitioner and stakeholder arguments are condensed into generalised findings, but one argument is for policy to cease focusing on Islamist terrorism alone. The 2011 policy also cites the “Preventing Violent Extremism, Sixth Report of Session 2009–10” [PVE09-10](House of Commons, 2010). Of more than 60 testimonies, 7 fitted the ‘academic’ criteria with consensus supporting the shift from a pure Islamist focus (Husain, Ev.2; ICoCo, Ev.1-5,Ev.116-120; Mir, Ev.27-32; Thomas, Ev.107-109). Although non-Islamist terrorism is briefly discussed in the 2011 policy itself (HM Government, p.53) clearly, broad-brush societal-integration is abandoned.
Where policy becomes less well evidenced is its exchanging the theme of violent-extremism for the wider theme of extremism. A Boolean stemming search identified a clear theme of ‘violent extremism’ prior to 2011, with the removal of the ‘violent’ prefix circa 2011 onwards [Figure.1] until ‘violent extremism’ is completely replaced by the notion of ‘extremism’ that may include violence or may not.

‘Prevent is to be seen as focused on extremism; for it is clear that for many who have committed terrorist acts extremism is the foundation, the driver for terrorism.’ (2011a, p. 17)

The 2011 Prevent consultation that included academic voices as well as practitioners, struggled to differentiate ‘extremism’ and ‘violent extremism’ and called for more clear definitions of the two (HM Government, 2011b, pp. 8-9). During the PVE9-10 session the Quilliam Foundation argued that non-violent ideology, definable by its opposition to British Values was an important factor in the turn to terrorism (pp. Ev.120-124). This perspective was echoed by the Institute of Policy Research (Ev.124-127). Yet Kundnani warned that a ‘values’ based approach alongside a vague definition of ‘extremist’, risked demonising people for their opinions, religion, foreign policy stance and even criticism of Prevent (Ev.56-60, Ev.101-104), a concern broadly echoed by Yaser Mir of the University of
Lancashire (Ev.27-32) and the Institute of Community Cohesion [ICoCo](Ev.116-120). A study by Policy Exchange (Maher & Frampton, 2009) clearly reached the eye of the incumbent government (Williams, 2010; Education.gov.uk, 2011), and supports the Quilliam stance so that whilst there is support for incorporating non-violent extremism into Prevent, this is clearly an area into which policy should tread carefully. It would be easy to dismiss one or the other view as invalid dependent upon which side of the fence any observer already sits, but this conflict of opinions, supported by conflicting evidence, indicates that there is some weight behind the argument that some non-violent ideas can, and do, become used by terrorists, yet can also be held by people who have no intention whatsoever of using violence or supporting it, but may merely be expressing political dissatisfaction or alternative political stances. The call for more clarity appears to be an attempt to put some meat on the bones of policy claims here. What emerges is a policy that leans towards a preferred perspective rather than reflecting the complexity of identifying exactly what ‘extremism’ is and tries to simplify an extremely difficult area in order to provide something with which practitioners can work. One should also note that the concept of particular ideas and mindsets that are not violent, but nonetheless so dangerous that governments cannot leave them unchallenged, was already present in the minds of some members of the incumbent government, as is copiously evidenced in a 2006 book on terrorism by Michael Gove (Gove, 2006). Yet one can also argue that the copious referencing present throughout policy from 2009 to 2011, albeit missing entirely in the 2015 iteration, allows readers to come to their own, informed decisions and were certainly not being hidden. Again, the danger is that it is easy to blame policy for driving certain actions, without turning criticism on the practitioner for taking it solely and wholly at face value when nuance is only a few internet clicks away. It is also clear that the theme of ‘extremism’ is connected to ‘British values’ as a litmus test for whether ideas are extreme, meaning that British values also need to be clarified and evidenced as causal or influential in this regard and contains the hint that the ‘societal integration’ assumption lingers on in another form as a signifier of risk and vulnerability.
2011 The Prevent reformation.

From 2011 individual ‘vulnerability’ is a major theme of Prevent and the sub-policy, Channel but increasingly travels far from the evidence-base. The 2010 iteration of Channel incorporates vulnerability into a descriptive narrative that sensibly includes tangible evidence of engagement with and support for terrorist groups (HM Government & ACPO, 2010, pp. 9-10). Nonetheless, vaguer biographical indicators remain alongside a fixation on Muslim identity. By 2012 Channel becomes more descriptive but maintains the caveat that ‘vulnerabilities’ must be tangibly linked to involvement with ‘extremist’ groups. Whilst proscribed groups are rather obvious candidates for concern, particularly with membership being a criminal offence, other groups may be more considerably more difficult to identify.

Channel becomes problematic where the ERG22+ [Appendix E] categories of ‘vulnerability’ and engagement with terrorism are replicated verbatim with scant descriptive context (HM Government, 2012b; Home Office, 2015b). ERG22+ emerged from a small-n psychological study and by the admission of the tools authors has major practical limitations and certainly requires expertise, training and excellent knowledge to utilise (Lloyd & Dean, 2015). A solipsistic reliance on psychology is ontologically and epistemologically flawed (ICSR, 2008; Ranstorp, 2006), principally because terrorism is as much to do with the wider societal, political context as it is to do with the individual. There are serious limitations to tools that claim to be able to identify future terrorists and differentiate them from a background population (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2016), particularly the ERG22+ that has not been exposed to peer review and scrutiny of its development and evidence base (Lister, et al., 2015; Qureshi, 2016). As Singh (2016) points out from analysis of attempts to operationalise it, the vagueness of ERG22+ factors have resulted in erroneous referrals, framing mental-health as a national security threat and feed a context in which lawful activity becomes threatening because the subject is Muslim. The point here is that the authors of the ERG22+ are understandably cautious about the means by which it is employed and whilst it is certainly an attempt to bring a much-needed scientific approach into trying to wrangle with
the slippery concept of predicting who might become a terrorist given the right contexts and influences, it was not intended to be handed out as a tick list for the scarcely trained and certainly knowledge-lacking front-line practitioner to use to differentiate terrorists and would-be terrorists from everyone else around them. Not least is the transference of the ERG22+ from its prison origins to everywhere from a nursery to a mental health ward and clearly policy takes the evidence far beyond its intended context and stated capability. The earliest iteration of Channel lacks direct reference to any evidential underpinnings, instead pointing the reader to previous Prevent and CONTEST documents that have already been discussed here, but frames prior assertions around identity, belonging, exposure to an ideology that emerge in prior policy documents, to some rather clearly concerning activities such as attending terrorist training camps. By 2012 the ERG22+ framework is clearly replicated in the Channel Policy (2012, pp.11-13) and becomes a list of factors against which individuals can be measured as a test of their engagement of disengagement with terrorism:

“Association with organisations that are not proscribed and that espouse extremist ideology as defined in the Prevent strategy is not, on its own, reason enough to justify a referral to the Channel process. If professionals at a local level determine that someone attracted to the ideology of such groups also exhibits additional behavioural indicators that suggest they are moving towards terrorism, then it would be appropriate to make a referral to Channel. It would be the presence of additional behavioural indicators that would determine the suitability of the Channel process and not the simple fact they are associating with or attracted to a group that manifests extremist ideologies.” (Channel, 2012, p.13)

Two evidential shortcomings are present here. Firstly, the lack of evidential underpinning of what is meant by extremism, so this is in effect a floating and subjective concept. Secondly the limited evidence behind the vulnerability factors also leaves much to the practitioner, burdened with their own subjectivities, to attempt to navigate. The question is: is a policy with some evidence, better than no policy at all. It appears that the decision has been taken to opt for the former than the latter so that again there is an onus on the
practitioner, especially when pointed in the direction of research in prior policy documents, to shoulder some of the responsibility to find out more about the issue. It is equally important to note that the ‘vulnerability’ and ‘radicalisation’ themes that underpin the Channel do not rely solely on ERG22+ although this is posited rather superficially and out of context as a framework fit for broader use than the prison context for which it was mainly designed.

The Centre for Social Cohesion is cited as finding that most al-Qaeda linked terrorists were male, Muslim and young, with some being University educated and some unemployed, whilst Bakker is deployed to argue that prior criminality was sometimes present in terrorist biographies (HM Government, 2011, pp.72-3). The implication is that these might be identifiable ‘vulnerability’ factors. What the 2011 Prevent document omits is that Bakker also found ‘Jihadist’ terrorists demographically and contextually indistinguishable from wider migrant communities, and warned against using demographic and other characteristics as a basis for policies as “…such policies may even make things worse, for instance, by stereotyping immigrant and Muslim communities as possible jihadi terrorists and contribute to polarization between Muslims and non-Muslims” (2006, pp. 50-54).

The issue of vulnerability factors and profiling was also raised at the PVE9-10 session (2010) with ISCRI partially supporting the ‘vulnerability’ thematic by adding religious ignorance (Ev.110-116), however others also warned that ‘vulnerability’ is so indistinct as to render anyone under state gaze a potential terrorist (IPRD, Ev.124-127; Kundnani, Ev.56-60) meaning that amateur profiling was likely to be counter-productive (ICoCo, Ev.116-120). The 2011 Prevent review does warn that disproportionate actions and false-identification, risk Prevent appearing to be an attack on freedom of expression (HM Government, 2011a, p. 56) and again uses frequent cautionary modals. Nonetheless it also makes claims that are astonishingly bullish and contradictory, declaring that ‘frontline practitioners’ are being provided with the ‘tools to identify vulnerability’ and that 74% of 94 local authorities had processes ‘to identify, assess and refer vulnerable people’ (HM Government, 2011a, p. 58).

Three bespoke studies were commissioned by the Home Office to bring additional scientific
scrutiny of themes underlying Prevent, but these are cited as forthcoming and were unavailable for public scrutiny at the time of the 2011 policy publication (2011, p.32) leaving only supposition as to where and how any of the ongoing findings from each study were being used to support policy assertions. Whilst research indicates the difficulty of identifying potential future-terrorists, policy swings from sensible caution that reflects evidential nuance, to statements that engender a sense of unrealistic optimism and practitioner capability that run wildly against it. Vulnerability at this stage remains very weakly evidenced and the potential to misdiagnose innocent people as possible future terrorists is understandably high, as is reflected in 80% of 3934 Channel referrals between 2006 and 2014 rejected as not terrorist relevant (NPCC, 2015) and no improvement and potentially worse performance by 2015 (Smith, 2016). It is unfortunately a hard fact that the poor evidential underpinnings of Channel and Prevent make for an extremely difficult space in which practitioners must operate with the very real potential to have no impact, or indeed generate counter-productive outcomes. Again, in fairness to policy makers, doing nothing at all is probably not a viable option either, but policy would have more accurately reflected the evidence if it had stated clearly that supposed tools had grave limitations and should be used with considerable caution and understanding of the potential negative impacts. There seems more than ever a need for practitioners to become knowledge workers and to know their subject as well as they feasibly can.

**An all-risks strategy**

By the 2015 iteration of Prevent, the theme of ‘risk’ becomes intertwined with the statutory duty for practitioners to:

> ‘...understand what radicalisation means and why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism... aware of what we mean by extremism and the relationship between extremism and terrorism’ (Home Office, 2015a, p. 4).
Policy is clearly putting the onus on the practitioner to internalise policy claims and act on them and the importance of understanding where any new evidence for such claims comes from remains of significant importance. From 2010-2012 the Home Affairs Committee captured witness testimony to attempt to identify ‘The Roots of Violent Radicalisation’ (2012a; 2012b). Of 27 witnesses 6 fit the ‘academic’ criteria of this study. Whereas the commissioner of the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism asserted that “we have a fairly good idea about what is driving radicalisation” the Committee found that research contradicted this (2012a, pp. 10-11), suggesting a disjunct between reality and what high-ranking practitioners imagined to be possible. The OSCT position was nonetheless partially supported by Neumann who argued that understanding of radicalisation was improving (Ev.66-67), with Rashid Ali offering some support for identifying vulnerabilities but with the caveat of good practitioner training (Ev.10-19). Conversely, notions of a ‘terrorist profile’ were problematised as only anecdotally supported (Bartlett, Ev.66). The 2015 duty suitably includes cautionary modals:

‘...why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism...people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences...includes non-violent extremism which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit’

[My emphasis] (Home Office, 2015a).

The theme of non-violent extremism as an influence on radicalisation is partially evidentially supported (Home Affairs Committee, 2012a: Neumann, Ev.66; Nawaz, Ev.10-1) and includes right-wing ideologies (Goodwin, Ev.36-41), but as the Joint Committee on Human Rights (2017) found, academics, legal-experts and stakeholders varied over interpretations of ‘non-violent extremism’ and British values, with even the government unable to provide a satisfactorily detailed description of these. What emerges here is the importance of nuance and that understanding terrorism and certainly attempts to operationalise policy, demands a rather thorough knowledge that includes an awareness of
policy limitations. The inability of subject matter experts to work out what significant themes actually mean should act as red light to policy makers and that understanding ‘what radicalisation means and why people may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism’ and to be “aware of what we mean by extremism and the relationship between extremism and terrorism’ (Home Office, 2015a, p. 4) should be recognised from the outset as being an impossible task given that the evidence in these areas is conflicting and that government and experts were unable to define these in any meaningful way. Yet the emphasis of risk puts this onus on the practitioner for whom training is nonetheless extremely meagre (Singh, 2012). Longitudinal analysis of Prevent and Channel documents showed that the themes of ‘risk’ can be divided into two types based on their context: Risk to the individual of becoming involved in or committing terrorism, and the generic risk that terrorism poses to others and to infrastructure. The trend line [Figure.2] shows an increase in the former, that by 2015 becomes a statutory duty to report concerns through ‘due regard’, whilst generic risk is posited as omnipresent:

‘This risk will vary greatly and can change rapidly; but no area, institution or body is risk free’ (HM Government, 2015a, p. 3)
In contrast, Home Office commissioned research mentioned briefly in the 2011 policy review but only fleetingly referenced, still found research on ‘radicalisation’ to be empirically lacking, with only limited evidence to support the ‘vulnerability’ thematic of differentiating future terrorists from the wider population (Bouhana & Wikstrom, 2011; Munton, et al., 2011). This finding is also shared by a separate government funded systematic review (Christmann, 2012). The theme of risk clearly situates responsibility with the practitioner, however as analysis shows, policy does not contain the nuance and detail for risk to be evaluated because policy is so superficial in this regard and the background evidence around the risk of what, to whom and from whom, is rather conflicting. In such a Wicked-problem paradigm, a deeper understanding of the evidence, its complexity, limitations and the potential counter-productive outcomes is required so that at least practitioners seeking to act on policy do so with an awareness not only of the strength and weaknesses of its claims, but of the very real potential that doing so for the wrong reasons may cause unintended harms.

**Conclusion:**

Clearly there is more evidence behind Prevent and Channel than some criticisms of the evidence base suggest. Yet it is clear that the early Prevent strategy did not engage with academic research, and generated little of its own, rendering its development intuitive and fixed in prior assumptions that a lack of social-cohesion results in risky communities and risky individuals. This must be sited alongside the sparsity of primary source research into terrorism that tended to rely more on anecdotal evidence and desktop studies coupled with a general, but not complete, lack of scientific rigour. Governments themselves had much to do with creating and maintaining an atmosphere in which understanding terrorism and the motivations behind it were stymied and researchers who attempted to delve into causality were likely to find themselves lambasted or *persona non-grata*. It is not surprising that when the UK government was suddenly under pressure to take its Prevent strategy from roughed out concept to operationalisation, policy makers sought explanations elsewhere. Because the incumbent government were clearly interested in societal-integration and assumed many
issues within society, including violent outbursts, were a result of poor integration by certain communities, the woes and cures of terrorism were also presumed to reside in the same issues and the answer to terrorism supposedly originating in ‘problem communities’ was seen to be addressed by getting the supposed ‘problem community’ to find its own fix and to explain why terrorism was happening. Unsurprisingly, no such answers were forthcoming because the premise was substantially faulty and treating communities as suspect more likely to alienate people further than halt terrorism. It is perhaps unfair to treat this as ignorance or prejudice as the condition of terrorism research at the time meant that it lacked the scope, the insights and the primary sources to provide something substantial for policy makers to work with. Where the evidence base increases, policy does draw upon it, but this appears to be as a bolt-on for existing assumptions, but its presence, although rather selective, does increase confidence that policy was onto something, particularly the importance of the ‘terrorist ideology’ as a set of ideas that guide action and both validate and encourage violent actions. Nonetheless other themes such as ‘radicalisation’ and ‘vulnerability’ are superficially supported because so little was known, despite policy often making claims that these were well proven. No wonder high ranking practitioners appear convinced of the substance of the evidence base behind policy, that rubs up against the uncomfortable reality from select committee members that they certainly are not. What emerges, but is very scantily addressed in policy, are repeated warnings that a community-wide approach is more likely to cause alienation than pick out or deter genuine terrorists, and although this is eventually heeded in 2011, this is at least in some part a result of rejecting one political ideology in favour of another. Nonetheless it flows with the evidence rather than against it. What is notable is that from 2009 research is increasingly utilised. Claims that the entire edifice of Channel is built solely on ERG22+ miss a whole range of additional evidence that lends greater support, but there is good reason to argue that policy repeatedly attempts to transform complexity into a simpler, actionable narrative, with the danger that identified themes might be actioned on blind faith by less than diligent practitioners. More research is required to identify if practitioners utilised the ‘suggested
reading’ list or followed the references to get a rounded understanding of the evidence-base, and what policy missed. Although increasing evidence supports the notion of a terrorist ideology, policy assertions that future terrorists emerge from a pool of extremists, rests on an incredibly shaky evidence-base that has some support, but is far too complex and nuanced to generate non-problematic and wholly beneficial actions. It is also important to point out that cautionary and modal caveats and references to wider literature are present throughout some of the policy documents so that policy makers are not providing Prevent and Channel documents as some kind of polished instruction book in how to identify terrorists and quite rightly expect practitioners to take responsibility for self-learning. Responsibility for counter-productive outcomes is therefore shared by practitioners and whilst negative outcomes are inevitable in Wicked problem paradigms, this can be off-set by practitioners being ‘knowledge workers’. As the themes of ‘risk’ change over time, it is abundantly clear that the 2011 sea-change in the Prevent policy pushes risk and therefore responsibility onto practitioners – yet Prevent training is rather lacking. Having identified that policy suffers varying degrees of engagement with the evidence base, ranging from strong in some areas to rather weak and lacking in others, it is important to understand where practitioners obtain their wider contextual understandings of terrorism and associated issues, so that training and learning provision can then be assessed to fill the gaps.
Chapter 5

Practice analysis

This chapter describes and discusses the findings of a quantitative survey of counter-terrorism police worker engagement with open-source academic material to advise preventative counter-terrorism practice. The previous chapter described the evolution of a Prevent philosophy that sets an understanding of how terrorism occurs and how radicalised people and those vulnerable to radicalisation might be identified. It was found that the evidence base varies across its actionable themes. From poorly evidenced beginnings, Prevent has increasingly drawn upon research evidence to substantiate its demands for action and whilst some areas are rather weakly evidenced, others are much stronger. However, it was frequently found that a superficial engagement with the Prevent narrative is likely to misdiagnose indicators of risk and supposed ‘radicalisation’, lead to an over-estimation of the certainty of decisions, miss or underestimate potentially negative outcomes, and conflate erroneous biographical and contextual factors with a supposed future potential for threat. Much weakness could be effectively addressed by a greater knowledge of the subject through reading the research behind Prevent and therefore having a greater respect for nuance. For this reason, the actionable themes identified through qualitative content analysis were incorporated into the online survey on which the following section is based. As previously described, Prevent is a government endorsed philosophy of terrorism that is now a statutory duty for public service practitioners to understand and to act upon. It seeks to describe what terrorism is, what a terrorist does and the kind of factors to look for in identifying one. Schedule 7 is the primary power used by counter-terrorism workers at UK borders, but this is a legal mechanism assisted by codes of practice and these do not provide any description of how or why people become involved in terrorism any more than Section 44 search powers explain what a terrorist looks like and how a terrorist mind-set might translate into visible traits. As Prevent is a statutory duty, counter-terrorism
workers were assumed to be conversant with it and the expectations placed upon them in their various roles. Further research could identify if and to what extent such workers engage with policy documents, for instance have they read them in any detail and have they engaged with the footnotes, references and reading lists.

The first section discusses the incorporation of academic research into formal training. The second section considers how respondents independently engage with publicly available academic research materials. The literature review identified concerns over some media sources suffering from superficiality and stereotyping, therefore engagement with academic research was contrasted with engagement with media-sources as a location of learning. A discussion of this is also included.

**Response and inference**

Of 246 survey invitations, 75 were returned, resulting in a 31% response rate that broadly correlates to the average for organisation based research (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). Unfortunately, the research window coincided with the aftermath of several terrorist attacks that may have understandably impacted the response rate. Inference from non-completion is speculative; yet disinterest in a subject can influence non-participation (Toshkov, 2016, p. 134). For a study concerned with engagement with scholarly research, non-response might guardedly suggest a negative indicator. Responses to the role type question were omitted to maintain anonymity of one small department. The role of participants has limited explanatory use as inter-departmental working is fluid. Respondent numbers across hierarchy and roles reflected the localised subpopulation, suggesting a representative sample [Figure.3]
Formal training provision:

This section considered the formal and informal content of counter-terrorism training across all roles. The question was framed as a reflection of cumulative experience as specific training may differ according to hierarchical position and role. A high proportion of respondents were ports officers for whom Schedule 7 training and accreditation is mandatory (Home Office, 2015b). Familiarity with the Prevent and Channel duty is a statutory requirement (Home Office, 2015a). When asked what proportion of formal training includes terrorism related law and codes of practice, most respondents indicated these to be a significant aspect [Figure.4]. A similar trend was also reported in relation to formal training that addresses counter terrorism procedures and technical skills [Figure.5].
Law, policy and codification can be described as structural elements of policing that set the expectations, boundaries and methodology of activities. As some terrorists may have no intelligence footprint (House of Commons, 2006; Europol, 2016; Joint Committee On Human Rights, 2014; Gilligan, 2017) or even criminal record (Bakker, 2006), Schedule 7, by necessity, allows for wider latitude than ‘reasonable suspicion’. Yet the Codes of Practice for Examining Officers expects selection for examination on an objective understanding of how, why and where terrorism occurs, combined with a cognisance of habitual or emerging terrorist group trends, individual practices and global contexts [Appendix A] (Home Office, 2015b). Thereafter, examination is wholly designed to determine if someone is or has been concerned in terrorism and/or supportive activities (HM Government, 2000). Setting aside any open admission of terrorism or (in most cases) possession of items for use in terrorism, by a person under examination with no reasonable excuse to offer, officers need to be able to hold a meaningful conversation to make any informed determination. As the previous chapter describes, ‘Prevent’ sets a government philosophy of terrorist engagement, or as Heath-Kelly usefully terms it: ‘performs a story about terrorism, and enables the performance of security around it’ (2012, p. 398). As responses indicate, and in accordance with legal requirements, policy awareness is understandably being ‘trained in’. Further research may expand considerably on the detail of the depth, breadth and type of policy that is being trained.
When asked about training that dealt with culture, religion, identity and politics in a counter-terrorism context [Figure.6] approximately half of respondents reported this as a minor or occasional training aspect, with a third reporting no such content in formal training. Diversity awareness is an intrinsic part of police training and every-day policing experience, so this certainly does not reflect a lack of generic knowledge, but suggests that counter-terrorism specific knowledge is not substantially part of formal training provision.

Studies have shown that ‘procedurally just’ policing, that treats people with dignity and respect, employs fair and impartial treatment and avoids stereotyping, is more likely to generate trust and the cooperation of the public (Mazerolle, et al., 2013). This is particularly pertinent in counter-terrorism where the focus can fall on particular communities and policing can be intrusive (Sorrell, 2009). Of course, one has to have a fairly good knowledge of what might offend or annoy, including issues specific to the application of particular policies and powers, to have any hope of avoiding or mitigating it. Analysis of Prevent has shown that ‘societal integration’ was not a reliable factor in determining if a person is involved in terrorism, or is vulnerable to the terrorist ideology. If the actions and rhetoric of the police, during any form of direct interaction with the public, are unconsciously influenced by an assumption that religious, ethnic and cultural identity either raises the intrinsic risk of someone becoming a terrorist or their vulnerability to doing so, there is a fair chance that the approach is more likely to offend than pick someone out as genuinely vulnerable to a terrorist ideology, or indeed holding one. Langley’s (2014) research tended to illustrate the
importance of procedurally just policing within the Schedule 7 paradigm revealing that examinees are more likely to respond positively and to cooperate where they perceive their treatment to be fair and respectful. Although Prevent has certainly overtaken Schedule 7 as the main source of antagonism in the effort to halt terrorism before it reaches the point where tangible preparatory activity is occurring, Schedule 7 remains a focal point of dissatisfaction and has the propensity to ignite interest and concern. One can of course continue to refine and adjust policy, law and codes of practice, but ultimately these lead to face-to-face contact and interactions between humans so that how these are applied is crucial. The College of Policing clearly ranks academic research more highly than many other sources, and complementary to policing experience, so it is both sensible and necessary to expose counter-terrorism workers to an understanding of terrorism and its wider political, cultural, religious and other contexts through higher quality of source materials. Encouragingly, some participants or trainers seem to be bringing this into training, albeit informally, suggesting that such topics are perceived to be of value to practitioners and that their inclusion into training is unlikely to be roundly resisted.

When asked if research was used to illustrate the potential negative impacts of counter-terrorism practice, it was clear that formal training does not tackle this issue [Figure.7]. Criticisms of Prevent tend to be of conflating religious and ethnic identity with risk and threat, so that ordinary activities become perceived as suspect (Open Justice Society, 2016; Batty, 2016; Bonino, 2013). Similarly, Schedule 7 suffers claims of racial or religious profiling, conflating religious identity and religious practice with threat and risk, particularly during examination (Choudhary & Fenwick, 2011; StopWatch, 2012; Engage, 2012; Anderson, 2016; Khaleeli, 2016). Thematic analysis of Prevent and Channel shows that policy familiarity does not equate to a rounded understanding of the actual and potential negative impact of its implementation, because cautionary modalities are easy to miss, caveats within the background research are ignored, evidence is superficially described, and contrary evidence often omitted. As a ‘Wicked’ problem paradigm counter-terrorism requires
practitioners to operate with contextual knowledge in-between inherently weak policies and processes to avoid the generation of unforeseen negative consequences. The most obvious method is to have an appreciation that policy has limited space to discuss detail and recognise the need to probe the research behind policy and particularly seeking out research that does discuss counter-productive outcomes. This need not be in any huge breadth and depth, but provide an awareness.

Survey questions then focused on policy thematic areas of Prevent as these provide an over-arching government philosophy of terrorism. Respondents were asked if formal training incorporates scientific research and discussion regarding radicalisation and extremism, for instance psychological, social and political science. Responses reveal that training rarely does so, with most respondents reporting no formal input [Figure.8]. Again, responses encouragingly illustrate a willingness to incorporate this into the formal training setting. The police and education sector are the highest referrers to Prevent (NPCC, 2016). The potential for misinformed, or indeed malicious, referrals is recognised in the Channel system (Home Office, 2015b). Although an 80% rejection rate suggests rigorous assessment, it also indicates a rather weak basis for selection. Since 2015, of 7,500 referrals only 10% were assessed to have a ‘counter-terrorism’ vulnerability with 28% of cases ongoing (Smith, 2016). As previously explained, friction occurs at the selection and referral
point, so that better contextual knowledge may significantly reduce the likelihood of this occurring. As the previous chapter described, policy provides citations and suggested reading material, whilst going beyond the superficiality of policy themes is certainly required. An example of assumption falling foul of lack of knowledge is the high number of mental-health referrals to Prevent that have become framed as an indication of the prevalence of mental-health issues in potential terrorists (Dodd, 2016). Quantitative and qualitative research repeatedly shows that terrorists reflect the background population (Atran, 2011; Atran, 2006; Bakker, 2006; Sageman, 2004) therefore referrals based on mental-health concerns may indicate that practitioners are falling foul of the ‘fundamental attribution error’ rather than referring people who will ever genuinely become terrorists. Owing to the distorting effect of the dramatic impact of terrorist actions, there is a natural tendency to posit such acts in a psychological pathology (Horgan, 2014). The counter-productive outcome is that mental-health sufferers are posited as a threat (Gore, 2016; Coppock & McGovern, 2014), whereas the issue is not one of radicalisation but of a need to treat the condition and support the sufferer. There is scope here for research to understand if the ‘attribution error’ is indeed guiding actions, but equally academic research can bring a much needed ‘science based’ understanding of the issue itself, if counter-terrorism workers are aware of its existence. Going beyond policy rhetoric will certainly provide a considerably more holistic understanding that is likely to generate more accurate understandings and avoid completely unintended but practically fallacious assumptions.
Terrorist ideology formed a substantial and relatively well-evidenced theme within Prevent as a method of triggering engagement and generating recruitment. Respondents reported that training rarely incorporates the theme of ideology, however a sizeable minority of participants or trainers again bring their own knowledge into training [Figure.9]. As Winter (2015) explains, the sensationalist and violent material that reaches the media appears to be designed to generate fear and anxiety rather than aimed at recruitment. Conversely, Sabir (2014) records how limiting understanding in this area led to an inability to sift terrorist from non-terrorist material leading to a false arrest, wasted staff hours, embarrassment and financial cost for one force and harm to the individuals concerned. Although the theme of a terrorist ‘ideology’ was strongly evidenced as a motivation factor for ‘radicalisation’, identifying it was argued to be hugely problematic (HM Government, 2011b). The important thing here is that the more one knows about the subject, the more one is likely to be able to differentiate political opinion from terrorist support.
When asked if research into the history of terrorism formed part of training, most respondents reported no coverage of the topic. As previously there was some indication that this was occasionally introduced on an informal basis [Figure.10]. A similar trend marked training that discussed non-European cultures [Figure.11]. The 2011 Prevent review contains a basic overview of the history of terrorist groups, but as terrorists fix their grievances in genuine political and social issues, practitioners should have sufficient knowledge to engage in meaningful dialogue and not securitise ordinary behaviour and opinion based on a lack of awareness. As Sageman notes, approaching every concern from the ‘worst-case scenario’ angle misses the huge statistical improbability that a person is, or will become a terrorist, and introduces the risk of overreaction that is more likely to cause the moral outrage that can influence the turn to violence by clamping down heavily on non-violent protest (Sageman, 2017). Again, background knowledge from more reliable sources (across a range of opinions) can hardly fail to be beneficial in exposing practitioners to cultural perspectives outside of their own experience leading to more empathetic encounters, particularly given that most CT encounters are with innocent citizens on whom the police rely for cooperation and assistance.
In conclusion, formal training, set at the national level (Home Office, 2015b; Home Office, 2016) appears mainly to focus on the structure of preventative counter-terrorism interventions, but does not often address or incorporate contextual knowledge. As one respondent to Choudhary and Fenwick (2011) honestly points out in relation to Schedule 7:

*I always worry about the level of training you need to give an officer; at the end of the day I could probably engage with you about world affairs, about politics, about Egypt just now. I could have a chat about all aspects of the Muslim religion...Its huge training; it’s asking police officers to read papers, to understand about cultural issues. It’s asking a lot.’ (Senior police officer)’
Throughout the application of Prevent, Channel and Schedule 7 contextual knowledge forms the internal substance around which the legal, policy and codification set the actions, expectations and bounds. Without contextual knowledge practice is rendered considerably more problematic. However, there is evidence to indicate that many practitioners bring research into the formal training setting, showing their receptivity to evidence-based and knowledge informed practice and its pertinence to counter-terrorism.

**Informal evidence-based knowledge accrual.**

‘Risk’ was identified as a consistent theme throughout Prevent (HM Government, 2011a; Home Office, 2015a) and intrinsically linked to assessing the probability that a person will become a terrorist or terrorist supporter. The College of Policing notes that risk is ubiquitous in policing where decisions are made in conditions of uncertainty and require professional judgement, but this intrinsically includes evidence-based research (CoP, 2013), so that decision-makers ‘have available and can professionally apply, the most appropriate and up to date and accurate knowledge’ (CoP, 2015). Prevent and Channel ‘risk’ and ‘vulnerability’ indicators were identified as not well-evidenced, thus demanding far more holistic knowledge derived from well-researched sources to add a wealth of knowledge to assist in applying policy demands. Internal government agencies provide reports on terrorist trends, networks and capabilities from intelligence reporting (MI5, 2017) that appears to occasionally draw on academic specialists (AHRC & ESRC, 2010). Additionally, efforts to analyse and combat terrorist group narratives uses scientific research and expertise (House of Commons, 2010, p. Ev.203; ISD, 2013; Cobain, et al., 2016). This evidences the importance of academia, but also explains that limitations of internally produced research and materials and why Prevent policymakers indeed turned to external research sources to assist in building policy. Prevent training is also widely available but is generally delivered online, with a narrow focus and of short duration, although some external agencies do provide additional training (Home Office, 2016). In amalgam, government produced training and material seems unlikely to be able to provide a broad and holistic understanding of
terrorism, hence the need for counter-terrorism workers, where possible, to seek out and engage with wider research. As assessment of risk involves placing an issue in context and critically engaging with information rather than accepting it at face-value, and leaves a gap in learning and knowledge for individuals to address.

**Individual learning:**

The following section identifies and assesses the information sources to which counter-terrorism workers personally turn for policy and practice relevant knowledge.

Respondents were asked:

> ‘When you undertake your own learning about terrorism and related issues, such as politics, religion, culture and society, either at home or during your working day, which materials do you use and how often do you use them?’

When asked the frequency with which respondents engage with academic sources including books, research papers, lectures and audio-visual materials [Figure.12], few reported regular use of such materials, with the majority only rarely doing so. A similar trend marks engagement with think-tank derived studies [Figure.13].
Respondents who did engage with academic research were asked to self-categorise as regular, frequent or occasional readers with a rough approximation given in brackets. Answers broadly correspond to the previous two questions [Figure.14]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 14</th>
<th>Regularly (1-5 per month)</th>
<th>Frequently (up to 2 per month or several per year)</th>
<th>Occasional (less than 5 per year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent respondent</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several advantages arise from engagement with academic literature. Whilst ‘terrorism studies’ loosely defined as the multi-disciplinary topic area is still developing and is certainly not without its limitations and issues, using a broad range of research based findings alongside experience is more likely to lend confidence in deciding a course of action and in refining, questioning and fact-checking one’s own assumptions. In relation to S.7, as Anderson bluntly puts it, a ‘coppers nose’ and ‘risk factors’ as criteria for selection generally fail to yield results (2012, p. 111). The ‘hunch’ driven use of Terrorism Act Section 44 searches was the principal point of concern for the European Court of Human Rights (2013, pp. 109-110) and in the British courts (2015, pp. 28-29). As Lord Carlile explained, unskilled use of Section 44 resulted in thousands of searches and no terrorist arrests, whilst many
searches were of people vastly removed from any likelihood of ever being a terrorist (Case of Gillan and Quinton v The United Kingdom, 2010). Unsurprisingly, the power was severely curtailed in line with ECHR findings (May, 2010). Officers were thus fully aware of the legal aspects of application, but this did not protect its use or seem to provide any guide in where and why it was applied. In contrast, as Anderson notes, Schedule 7 numbers declined during the same period that Section 44 hugely increased, with the continued existence of Schedule 7 at least in part owing to the good-humour, restraint and good judgement of its users (Anderson, 2016). Nonetheless Schedule 7 and Prevent are under constant scrutiny (2016, p. 90) meaning there is both an organisational and societal need for practitioners across the spectrum of preventative counter-terrorism policing to be holistically informed, by reliable sources that have been produced using theoretically supported and tested methodology to ensure actions continue to be as defensible and well-informed as possible. Given the superficiality of training particularly in relation to Prevent (Open Justice Society, 2016) and the findings of the previous thematic analysis of policy generation, probing beyond the actionable themes of the government philosophy of terrorism enables a far more nuanced understanding of policy claims, more productive interactions with the public, less likelihood of misinterpreting religious and political expression as the potential for engagement with terrorism and securitising ordinary events in a person’s life.

Engagement with Media Sources

Owing to the identified problems with the media as a source of learning, respondents were asked to indicate frequency of engagement with non-academic sources. Most respondents engaged with television and newspaper sources either daily or during most days of the week, with few doing so irregularly and no respondents never doing so [Figure.15]. Engagement with internet media sites follows a similar trend [Figure.16].
Understandably documentaries were viewed occasionally, although some respondents reported using such material on all or most days of the week [Figure.17]. This may indicate repeat viewing, or the frequent use of brief in-depth pieces, possibly on the internet. This would not be surprising given the advent of Youtube and similar platforms that allow low-cost, high frequency non-journalistic material to be widely shared. This would be an interesting and potentially fruitful area of future research. The advent of internet media sources has indeed enabled access to a broad range of perspectives and sources, however as Riordan explains, competition and time-constraints often push fact-checking down to the viewer (Riordan, 2014). Respondents were therefore asked if formal training includes critical thinking and critical analysis skills [Figure.18]. Few respondents reported any form of training in this area.
Considerably more respondents use the media to obtain their knowledge of terrorism and its associated contexts than academic sources. Use of the internet suggests purposeful searching for information rather than the kind of passive listening offered for instance by having one news channel on in the background and picking up on particular reports when they happen to be aired, so that overall there is a strong indication that respondents are well-informed about current affairs. Further research would identify if this includes a breadth of sources. As Chapter 2 described, there is cross-over between the media and academia, but problems exist in the media paradigm and this requires discussion of where this overlaps with Prevent themes that impact on practices. As the literature review indicates, media reporting has historically tended to project an image of risk and threat emanating from Muslims (Allen, 2012). Media reporting is often criticised for routinely discussing Islam and Muslims through the prism of a cultural and terrorist threat (Moore, et al., 2008; Allen, 2010; Croft, 2012), and although this has declined over the past decade (Baker & McEnery, 2015).
it remains a media trope [Figure.19]. One of the propaganda aims of IS for instance is to generate a societal backlash to generate recruitment, particularly by generating sensationalist media reporting (Williams, 2016).

![% of times 'Muslim(s)' preceded/followed by negative label](image)

[Figure.19 (Baker and McEnery, 2015)]

Societal-integration as a marker of risk was identified as poorly evidenced and substantially problematic in Prevent yet dominated early policy that pursued a direction that could easily suggest to the poorly informed reader that being Muslim rendered a person a member of a suspect community, or at least a community under the securitising spotlight. Good intentions do not correlate to good outcomes unless the actor is of course well aware of the consequences of pursuing them and there was certainly too little available data for good intentions to be calibrated against outcomes, particularly in the early Prevent years. Conversely, external issues such as mistrust, racism, suspicion and alienation were frequently evidenced as likely influential factors in terrorism (Choudhary, 2007; Bakker, 2006; House of Commons, 2010) as these set the context within which behaviour may develop. Clearly if practices and information processing are unconsciously influenced by media assumptions, there is the potential for counter-productive impact to subconsciously seep into practice. Additionally, as media reporting and entertainment frequently have thematic overlaps, perception of danger can be heightened by a false sense of its omnipresence (Altheide, 1997; Altheide, 2006). In calculating risk and locating the source of
risk, media immersion may help general awareness but seems highly unlikely to provide the holistic, reliable and evidentially supported knowledge to facilitate effective working in a Wicked problem arena.

In the intelligence paradigm, Manningham Buller (2005). explains:

“...When it [intelligence] is gold it shines and illuminates, saves lives, protects nations and informs policy. When identified as dross it needs to be rejected: that may take some confidence. At the end of the day it requires people of integrity not only to collect it but also to prioritise, sift, judge and use it.”

As the College of Policing (2013) states:

“The term professional judgement refers to a finding, determination or decision that is consistent with the facts of the situation the professional goal, evidence-based practice...”

A concern with an immersion in media reporting is that perception of risk, around which a range of decisions rotate, can be influenced by the drama of terrorism rather than its statistical probability. As terrorism is designed to heighten anxiety, perception of risk is falsely inflated (Goodin, 2006, pp. 123-130) that risks generating an emotional calculation of risk rather than objective one (Stern & Berger, 2015). Analysis of the theme of risk in Prevent identified that generic notions of risk (from terrorism) remain fairly constant, which is common sense given that the threat from terrorism generates the constant risk of it happening. Concern with the risk of radicalisation was seen to increase steadily, coupled with a statutory duty to refer, and as has been shown, Prevent referrals have also increased significantly. Similarly, terrorist hotline reporting, although providing useful intelligence, trends according to perception of increased risk. Reporting increased sporadically from 2003 onwards (invasion of Iraq), spiked mid-2004, after the Madrid bombing, fell prior to the 2005 attacks but spiked dramatically after the London bombings, falling gradually only to spike in late 2008 after a national CT reporting campaign (Hannam, 2009) [Figure.20].
In 2016 calls reached circa 11,000 and 22,000 in 2017 (BBC, 2017), whilst spikes in Islamophobic incidents relate to the aftermath of terrorist attacks (TellMamaUK, 2017), suggesting a correlation between Islamophobic expression, or at least heightened anxiety around Islam and Muslims when terrorism occurs. This means a vast increase in information to be sifted and judged. If counter-terrorism workers are also immersed in perceptions influenced by media reporting, that is not counter-balanced, contextually informed or indeed rubbisheded where it deserves to be, by recourse to more credible information sources, then decision making may be prone to risk miscalculation. As Brodeur and Dupont (2008) point out, police actions have consequences so information cannot be assumed to be credible because it feels compelling, but the police must be concerned with epistemology to judge it. Intelligence provides an understanding of issues to generate problem-solving responses (College of Policing, 2014) so that contextual understanding here is extremely important. Yet respondents showed that critical analysis skills are not formally taught, begging the question of how media tropes and basic understandings of weak policy are contextualised to prevent unconscious bias and over-reaction that may generate unintended counter-productive results. More so, when those unintended counter-productive consequences are also rarely, if ever, discussed, as research findings indicate.

Conclusion
Preventative counter-terrorism practice is a hugely difficult area for the police to negotiate and although there have been both fair and unfair criticisms, there is much to commend there is good reason to believe that constructive criticism is welcomed. The mere existence of this study and similar studies, shows a willingness to understand issues and to improve. Survey findings indicate that although formal training is focused on structure and procedure, practitioners incorporate academic research, albeit haltingly and based on some research of their own, into the formal training setting but much more could and should be done. The crucial element of tackling ‘Wicked’ problems is to facilitate well-informed professionals to operate in the spaces between policy and procedures (Grint, 2008).

Knowledge is crucial for selecting, referring and engaging meaningfully with the right people, for the right reasons and in generating reliable outcomes. However, much knowledge seems to derive from the media that on its own is problematic and not a reliable learning and knowledge source. One major aspect here is that the media is easily accessible and can be accessed through the touch of a button from any smartphone. Further research is needed to identify if accessibility to academic research is an issue or if other ‘blocking’ factors are present. Prevent provides a philosophy of terrorism that spans counter-terrorism practices, but a considerably greater knowledge is required to understand its strengths, weaknesses and assumptions. This study has found that training regularly focuses on counter-terrorism relevant policy, law and codes of practice engagement, suggesting a good level of familiarity with these, but that there is rarely any penetration beyond this. Nonetheless findings repeatedly show that a small number of respondents are engaging with academic research and bringing this into the formal environment, and although this appears to be infrequent and occasional, and would certainly rub up against a much more copious knowledge derived from the media, with little ability to cross-check against a stock of more reliable and varied knowledge, it certainly indicates a willingness and may bode well for the future of evidence-based policy and practice and counter-terrorism becoming more research informed.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

This paper considered preventative counter-terrorism policy and practice to identify its relationship with academic research and findings, that are argued to be critical in identifying ‘what works’ and what harms (HM Government, 2013; Sherman, 2015; Pankhurst, 2017). As the Prevent policy describes the government philosophy of engagement with terrorism, it was important to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence base and the implications for wider counter-terrorism practice. As policy has long focused on Islamist terrorism and much criticism resides in this area, analysis also focused on this area. Of interest was frontline day-to-day decision making as this is informed by the Prevent philosophy and is again the arena out of which stakeholder and some public dissatisfaction arises.

As terrorism and counter-terrorism merge into a ‘Wicked’ problem paradigm, it was argued that effective counter-terrorism will engage with academia, reflect the condition of the evidence base and its limitations, whilst being sensitive to the potential for counter-productive impacts. Unsurprisingly, given the increase in false-positive referrals and long-standing criticisms of preventative counter-terrorism activities, this was generally found not to be the case. Nonetheless some evidence-supported recommendations can be made.

Through a qualitative content analysis of Prevent and Channel policy from 2006 to 2015 several themes emerged that describe the government’s philosophy of how and why people turn to terrorism and how to identify those in, or vulnerable to the ‘radicalisation’ process. Considering the assertions of these themes, against identifiable academic research and research informed opinion, with awareness of the wider political context, it was found that policy originated from very little objective research, in a political atmosphere that was primed to see terrorism as a societal-integration issue. Already convinced that terrorism arose from a supposed lack of integration into British society by Muslims, policy makers sought answers within such communities and despite evidence to the contrary, clung to this
supposition, embedding into Prevent an assumption that British values might be used as a yardstick for identifying terrorists and potential terrorists. From 2008 onwards, academic evidence becomes increasingly used to support the actionable themes within policy, albeit sometimes rather narrow and post-hoc. It is not until 2011 that policy rejects the notion that social integration at the community level is both a factor of risk and an inherent mark of vulnerability, reflecting the weight of evidence, and additionally begins to incorporate non-Islamist terrorism, again flowing with the evidential tide. Whilst a close focus on social, contextual and personal condition of individuals rather than ‘suspect communities’ also reflects the evidence-base, policy claims that ‘vulnerability’ can be reliably identified and that Prevent training effectively empowers practitioners to identify those vulnerable to radicalisation, lacks evidential support. Similarly, whilst some evidence finds that non-violent extremism may influence the decision to turn to terrorism, sufficient contrary evidence renders this a hugely problematic area for practitioners to attempt to negotiate. An increased emphasis on risk in policy rhetoric that shifts responsibility to identify potential terrorists from government to the practitioner with the roll-out of rather superficial training, together with assertions that do not reflect the nuance and caution of research findings, risks positing non-conformist beliefs and personal traits that have little or nothing to do with terrorism, as potentially suspect. But it is also fair to point out that policy evolved against a backdrop of a terrorism studies field that was also evolving from troubled and weak beginnings. In this vein policy has attempted to turn an incredibly complex issue into a problem-solving doctrine that in all fairness is ultimately aiming to protect citizens from a persistent threat. Much responsibility therefore rests with the practitioner, particularly where there is copious evidence of policy makers directing them to source material that if engaged with reveals the strengths and weaknesses of policy. Indeed, there was a consistent need for practitioners to read beyond policy to unearth the complexity and nuance required to assess risk and generate more effective and less damaging actions. If policy is only as strong as the evidence base, then Prevent is, in places, far stronger than some might claim, but in others rather weak. Any policy working within a Wicked paradigm is never going to emerge fully
working, unproblematic and totally efficient ‘out of the box’ and it seems more sensible to refine an evolving policy than to abandon it entirely as if something perfect is merely waiting to be found. Part of the answer is in tailoring the policy to the problem paradigm that for ‘Wicked’ problems demands that practitioners are knowledgeable enough to operate as effectively as possible and cause as little inadvertent damage as possible in their area of responsibility.

Nonetheless, analysis of practitioner engagement with academic research, through formal training and independent study, found that few did so to any appreciable depth or frequency. Formal training has limited coverage of cultural issues and does not generate an awareness of the deleterious outcomes possible in counter-terrorism practices. Practitioners would be well advised to access studies that provide at least a working knowledge of the culture, religion, beliefs, issues, concerns and problems of any community or section of the public with whom they come into frequent contact to understand how counter-terrorism efforts impact upon such groups. Few respondents regularly engaged with academic research whilst the majority could be described as immersed in media reporting. This may be due to a premium placed on training law, policy, codified processes and technical skills. These form the framework in which preventative counter-terrorism operates, but not the necessary context that policy requires. Essentially training provides strong scaffolding but not the house. It would be insightful to explore trainer skill-sets, previous roles, prior experiences of training and the information sources utilised, to identify if training is a self-replicating loop that contains the content with which practitioners are already familiar and where might academic evidence be drawn into training provision to fill what is clearly an important gap.

Significance and limitations

This paper has addressed a lacuna in the research on the connection between academia and counter-terrorism policy and practice with focus on the preventative counter-terrorism paradigm. It has contributed to a new body of research into evidence-based
policing and a more holistic understanding of how the Prevent and Channel policies have evolved. In researching policy formation, interviews with policy-makers and advisors would have added more value and certainty. A level of informed subjectivity was required to determine what qualifies as academic research and research informed opinion. The qualitative content analysis approach also required subjectivity in identifying prominent themes and how these are evidentially supported, problematised or undermined. Given a wider timescale of study further evidence may be unearthed, that may refine the findings of the current study. A more in-depth study might also critically assess the evidence behind the evidence, to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the research itself. The limitations of the police survey are of course a population of a single force at a single moment in time and the quantitative methodology of a brief survey. A multi-force survey and interviews would provide greater validity of findings.

**Recommendations and future research**

There is a clear need for preventative counter-terrorism. Terrorism harms victims, families and communities and impacts on citizen trust in the state. It is also intentionally designed to generate harmful public reactions and to knock assessments of risk and threat totally out of kilter and proportion, in the hope that over-reaction benefits the terrorist cause. Policy and practice should halt this and never magnify or unwittingly contribute to its deleterious effects. Several recommendations are therefore made: Prior to this research, at a policy level, no independent and holistic analysis of Prevent has systematically explored the varied evidence-base in its assumptions, its efficacy, impact across sectors and communities and feasibility. The findings of this study indicate that the current policy is not substantiated by sound evidence across all of its actionable themes. There should be a full review of the policy through a bi-partisan, non-politicised process that retains the aims of Prevent, retains only well-evidence themes and commissions further research in critical areas. This can considerably increase societal trust and confidence in its implementation. Policy should also be emphatically clear about the limitations and condition of the evidence
behind its assertions and provide more discussion of the potential deleterious outcomes of taking policy at face-value. As the main criticism of Prevent and Channel is at the referral stage that can be damaging and painful for individuals wrongly identified as potential terrorists, not to mention the damage that can be done to societal relations. Prevent referrers could initially seek advice through more substantially trained and well-advised professionals who have a deeper understanding through engagement with up to date research to enable genuine referrals to progress where there is a genuine terrorism related concern. The findings also indicate that national counter-terrorism training across Prevent, Channel, Border Policing and Intelligence management should incorporate the development of critical analysis, familiarity with research and of course access to the most up to date research available. Counter-terrorism workers should be encouraged, indeed expected, to become knowledge workers, who complement their understandings of terrorism with research that provides an up-to-date awareness of local and global issues. Training should incorporate an understanding of cognitive biases, the experiences of those subjected to counter-terrorism efforts and to expose practitioners to research that discusses what works, what is effective, what is ineffective and what has the potential to be deleterious. Wicked problems may be impossible to fix entirely and may emerge time and again to trouble societies, but understanding how to tackle them piece by piece, context by context, and enabling and encouraging practitioners to engage with knowledge sources, with the policy space in which to operate, may make terrorism and counter-terrorism slightly less Wicked in the future.

Bibliography


Bakker, E., 2006. Jihadi terrorists in Europe: their characteristics and the circumstances in which they joined he jihad: an exploratory study,. Clingdael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations.


Case of Gillan and Quinton v The United Kingdom (2010) ECHR.


Fisbacher-Smith, D., 2016. Framing the UK’s counter-terrorism policy within the context of a wicked problem. Public Money and Management, pp. 399-408.


Gore, W., 2016. Mental illness has become a convenient scapegoat for terrorism – but the causes of terror are rarely so simple. The Independent, 25 July.


Khaleeli, H., 2015. ‘You worry they could take your kids’: is the Prevent strategy demonising Muslim schoolchildren?. The Guardian, 23 September.

Khaleeli, H., 2016. The perils of 'flying while Muslim'. The Guardian, 8 August.


Liberty, 2017. prevent duty must be scrapped: LEA admits discrimination after teachers call police over seven year old boy’s toy gun, London: Liberty.

Lister, R. et al., 2015. PREVENT will have a chilling effect on open debate, free speech and political dissent. s.l.:s.n.


MCB, 2015. We Need Tough, Evidence Based Counter Terrorism Strategies, London: Muslim Council of Britain.


Pape, R., 2010. It's the occupation stupid!. Foreign Policy, 18 October.


Schmid, A., 2011. 50 un and Under-researched topics in the field of (Counter-) terrorism studies.. Perspectives on terrorism, 5(1).


TellMamaUK, 2017. Seven Infographics reflecting on 7/7, London: Tell Mama UK.


Appendix A
Examining Officers and Review Officers under Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000
Code of Practice
March 2015

Selection Criteria

19. Although the selection of a person for examination is not conditional upon the examining officer having grounds to suspect that person of being concerned in terrorism, the decision to select a person for examination must not be arbitrary. An examining officer’s decision to select a person for examination must be informed by the threat from terrorism to the United Kingdom and its interests posed by the various terrorist groups, networks and individuals active in, and outside the United Kingdom. A person’s ethnic background or religion must not be used alone or in combination with each other as the sole reason for selecting the person for examination. When deciding whether to select a person for examination, examining officers must take into account considerations that relate to the threat of terrorism, including factors such as, but not exclusively:

- Known and suspected sources of terrorism;
- Individuals or groups whose current or past involvement in acts or threats of terrorism is known or suspected, and supporters or sponsors of such activity who are known or suspected;
- Any information on the origins and/or location of terrorist groups;
- Possible current, emerging and future terrorist activity; • The means of travel (and documentation) that a group or individuals involved in terrorist activity could use; • Emerging local trends or patterns of travel through specific ports or in the wider vicinity that may be linked to terrorist activity; and/or
- Observation of an individual’s behaviour.

Identifying persons for examination Screening questions

20. In order to inform a decision on whether to select a person for examination under Schedule 7, an officer (who need not be the officer who might later conduct any examination) may find it helpful to approach a person and ask some basic screening questions. It will not always be possible for an officer working at a port to know the identity, provenance or destination of a passenger until they have stopped and questioned them. Screening questions are not asked under powers in Schedule 7. Officers may approach persons and ask screening questions of them in the ordinary course of their duties. There is no compulsion on any person to answer screening questions and the person will not commit an offence by not answering screening questions or otherwise engaging with the police in this process. Screening questioning may not be needed for every examination, but initial screening questions and the inspection of travel documents may be useful to enable the officer to determine whether or not to select a person for examination under Schedule 7. Initial screening questions may include, but are not limited to, those that seek to establish the identity, destination and provenance of the subject, details of their method of travel and the purpose of their travel. There is no requirement for officers to make a record of a screening encounter unless the person is
subsequently selected for 12 Schedule 7 examination. The screening process will, in most cases, last only a few minutes but if this period is significantly longer, the examining officer should record the time screening began and the reason for the extended screening period. If screening is conducted by an immigration or customs officer who is not a designated and accredited examining officer, or a police officer who is not an accredited examining officer, and they consider that an examination under Schedule 7 is appropriate, they must notify an examining officer of this at the earliest opportunity.

(Home Office, 2015b)
Appendix B

Systematic methodology of themes by Boolean word-stem identification.

- Radicali, radicaliser, radicalisation, radicalising.
- Extremi, extremist, extremism,
- Violent exremi, violent extremist, violent extremism.
- Ideolo, ideolog, ideology, ideologue
- Vulnerab, vulnerable, vulnerability, vulnerabilities
- Risk, risks.
- Value, Values, British values
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Author's perspective</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Extremism</th>
<th>Extremism (motivation)</th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-32</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Vehicular</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>Extremism (motivation)</td>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-72</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Vehicular</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>Extremism (motivation)</td>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-112</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Vehicular</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>Extremism (motivation)</td>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113-152</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Vehicular</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>Extremism (motivation)</td>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153-192</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Vehicular</td>
<td>Extremism</td>
<td>Extremism (motivation)</td>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C

Comparative and Frequent Themes
Appendix D
Internet Questionnaire

*Which task describes the bulk of your day to day work?*

Choose one of the following answers:
- Policy and borders counter terrorism related work
- Inland counter-terrorism related work
- Payments/financial referrals and assessment

*Which task describes your current position?*

Choose one of the following answers:
- Practitioner
- Supervisor/department
- Manager/sector and above

*When you undertake your own learning about terrorism and related issues, such as politics, religion, culture and society, either at home or during your working day, which materials do you use and how often do you use them?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Most days of the week</th>
<th>Once or twice per month</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials written by academics including books, lectures, and university materials, academic research papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic materials obtained from digital sources such as Guardian, Henry Jackson Society, The Royal United Services Institute and similar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media media from newsprint and television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet news media sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentaries both on television and online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If you use open source academic research, how often do you read, listen to or watch these?*

Choose one of the following answers:
- Regularly (1-3 papers/books per month)
- Frequently (up to 2 papers/books per month or several per year)
- Occasionally (less than five per year)
- Not at all

*Have you ever undertaken a university course that contains a terrorism related element, including understanding politics, religion, culture and other related topics?*

Choose one of the following answers:
- Non-credit bearing course such as a short online course such as: St Andrews, Coursera, Educause, OpenLearn and similar
- Credit bearing undergraduate certificate or diploma through a University provider
- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science
- Postgraduate PGDip, PGson MA, MPhil, MLitt, or MSc
- PhD
- No

*Thinking about your formal training, to what extent do you feel the following topics have been covered? (This does not include self-generated, peer-to-peer and team based self-learning but the topics covered in formal and structured training only)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major aspect of formal training</th>
<th>Minor aspect of formal training</th>
<th>Occasionally discussed in formal training but not part of the curriculum</th>
<th>This topic is not covered at all in formal training</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism law and related codes of practice</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy, procedures and technical skills</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific research and discussion regarding radicalisation and extremism; for instance psychological, social and political science</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic analysis of terrorism and political violence throughout history</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic, science based appreciation of the causes of terrorism, policy and practice on individuals and communities</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and analysis of political, culture, religion in non-European societies</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical engagement with research and resources: How to read and assess open source academic, news and other information reporting on terrorism related issues</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General understanding of culture, religion, identity and politics in relation to terrorism and associated issues</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic research on terrorist group propaganda and recruitment</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E

### Channel Vulnerability Factors

### Channel Policy: 2015 Annex C

This annex provides a description of the vulnerability assessment framework used by Channel to guide decisions about whether an individual needs support to address their vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of radicalisation and the kind of support that they need. It should not be assumed that the characteristics set out below necessarily indicate that a person is either committed to terrorism or may become a terrorist. The assessment framework involves three dimensions: engagement, intent and capability, which are considered separately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Intent to cause harm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately. Intent factors describe the mindset that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Over-identification with a group or ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Them and Us’ thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dehumanisation of the enemy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attitudes that justify offending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Harmful means to an end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Harmful objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Capability to cause harm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public. Factors can include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individual knowledge, skills and competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Access to networks, funding or equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Criminal Capability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of grievance and injustice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling under threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A need for identity, meaning and belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A desire for status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A desire for excitement and adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A need to dominate and control others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susceptibility to indoctrination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A desire for political or moral change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunistic involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or friends involvement in extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being at a transitional time of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being influenced or controlled by a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant mental health issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>