Newsletter – CT Border Engagement Team

November 2026

Welcome to Our Latest Newsletter!

We hope you enjoy this edition and find the updates and information useful and interesting.

A Warm Welcome from Isobelle!

Many of you will already have had the opportunity to meet the newest member of our team, **Isobelle**, who has been out and about visiting various maritime locations and getting to know many of you.

Isobelle will also be joining us at some of our upcoming presentations, so you will have the opportunity to meet her in person if you haven't already.

We have a variety of presentations available to suit different audiences and would be delighted to arrange a session for your team or organisation.

If this is of interest to you, please get in touch and we will be happy to arrange a date that suits you.

We have our own projector, so all we need is a screen or blank wall!

Staying Vigilant Over the Festive Period

With Christmas fast approaching, shopping centres, Christmas markets and other large public events will soon become much busier.

As activity increases, it is important that we all remain alert and vigilant.

Please continue to be aware of your surroundings and report anything unusual or suspicious.

A little extra awareness can make a big difference in helping to keep our communities safe.

We're Always Happy to Catch Up!

Whether you have a question, would like some advice or simply fancy a chat, please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of the team.

We are always happy to arrange a visit and catch up with you.

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable festive season!

Best wishes,

Rachel, Ash & Isobelle

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We have all recently seen the extensive investigations into the suspicious events at RAF Fairford that took place on Sunday 27th September. This ultimately led to two men being charged, on Tuesday 27 October, under the National Security Act. One was charged with assisting a foreign intelligence service. Full details are on the CT Policing website.



Don't ignore it, share it



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Migrant Vessels – Dover

We had seen a pause in migrant vessels crossing the channel to us. This was entirely weather-related and we remain prepared for an end of year rush of crossings before the winter sets in, given that October and November are traditionally the busiest months of the year for crossing attempts. We have also been working with colleagues in the South of the country now that some migrant vessels have been brought ashore in the Portsmouth area - mainly due to their departure points being much further down the French coast towards Dieppe.



Protest activity has also featured heavily in the media, with several main protests taking place in both Dover and Portsmouth with a number of smaller protests elsewhere in the county. Our colleagues within Kent Police Tactical Operations take the lead on mitigating and managing the implications of this activity with appropriate involvement from our Borders teams.

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Recent Small Boat Landings on the Kent Coast

Recent media reporting has highlighted recent incidents where small boats reached the Kent coastline and individuals disembarked **before** being intercepted by authorities. Whilst overall numbers fluctuate, these incidents demonstrate the continued efforts of organised criminal groups to exploit coastal routes and areas of reduced visibility.

For those working in coastal, maritime or public-facing environments, vigilance remains key. Suspicious activity may include groups arriving unexpectedly from beaches, abandoned equipment, individuals changing clothing, or unusual movements towards transport hubs and populated areas.

Criminal groups continue to seek opportunities to exploit the coastline. Prompt reporting of suspicious or unusual activity can help support an effective multi-agency response.





Partner Action

- Ensure staff remain vigilant to suspicious or unusual activity.
- Review internal reporting procedures and escalation routes.
- Promote a "See Something, Say Something" culture amongst employees.
- Consider refresher training such as ACT Awareness and Run, Hide, Tell.

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Firearms Investigation at the Port of Dover

A man has been charged with firearms offences following an investigation involving Counter Terrorism Policing after weapons were seized at the Port of Dover. Whilst the incident remains a matter for the courts, it serves as a reminder of the importance of protective security measures and staff vigilance within critical national infrastructure environments.

The Port of Dover handles significant volumes of passenger and freight traffic every day. Strong reporting cultures and awareness among staff remain an important part of identifying suspicious activity and supporting public safety.

Staff working within transport, logistics and public-facing sectors are often best placed to identify behaviour that appears unusual or inconsistent with normal activity.

Alert staff, effective reporting procedures and a strong security culture remain vital in protecting critical infrastructure and helping to identify potential threats at the earliest opportunity



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Summary of annual threat update by Director General of MI5 Ken McCallum October 2026. The full speech can be read on the MI5 website.

In its 2026 annual threat update, Ken McCallum warned that the UK has entered a **new era of national security**, with threats increasingly affecting not just government but ordinary people, businesses and communities. These include terrorism, hostile state activity, cyber-attacks, sabotage, coercion, misinformation and the emerging risks associated with artificial intelligence.

MI5's work now focuses on three core areas: **counter-terrorism, countering state threats and "Protect", a strengthened mission aimed at improving the UK's resilience**. This includes protecting critical infrastructure, such as energy, water, transport, financial systems and supply chains, from cyber-attacks, sabotage, hostile reconnaissance and drone-related threats.

State threats have increased significantly, with MI5's caseload quadrupling over the last decade and more resources now devoted to this area than during the Cold War. Russia remains described as the UK's principal state aggressor, using cyber-attacks, sabotage and criminal proxies as part of hybrid activity. Iran also continues to present a threat, with **more than 50 arrests linked to MI5's Iran-related operations in the UK over the previous 12 months**. Chinese state activity remains a concern in relation to espionage, coercion and attempts to obtain sensitive research and technology.

Terrorism also remains a major concern. The speech states that the UK terrorism threat level has returned to **SEVERE, meaning an attack is highly likely**. MI5 continues to deal with threats from Islamist and Extreme Right-Wing terrorism, alongside other forms of terrorism. Particular concern was raised about the radicalisation of young people online, including recent investigations involving teenagers.

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Artificial intelligence is creating both opportunities and new security risks. AI is already being used to enhance cyber activity, create tailored propaganda and radicalising material, and potentially assist terrorists with reconnaissance and attack planning. In response, MI5 has established the **AI Threat Assessment Centre (AITAC)**, bringing together expertise from across government and security organisations to assess emerging AI-related threats.

A central theme of the speech is **national resilience**. MI5 stresses that protecting the UK is not solely the responsibility of the security services and police. Businesses, communities and individuals all have a role to play. Organisations should strengthen their security against cyber-attacks, sabotage, hostile reconnaissance and drones, while members of the public should remain alert to suspicious activity and be cautious about misinformation and potentially manipulative online content.

The overall message is one of **preparedness rather than alarm**. The UK faces a more complex and contested security environment, but greater awareness, stronger security and cooperation between government, businesses and communities can make the country more resilient. As the speech concludes, **everyone has a stake in national resilience and a role to play in keeping communities safe.**

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National Threat Level

The National Threat level remains at **SEVERE** meaning an attack is highly likely. We will always tell our maritime and aviation communities to remain vigilant and to report anything suspicious or that appears out of the ordinary.





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