



managed by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue

CASE STUDY REPORT

Project Name/Country:

Channel, United Kingdom

Aims/Objectives:

The Channel process aims to provide support to individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism. It has three objectives: to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism; to assess the nature and extent of that risk; to develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned

Target Audience:

The principal target audience for the Channel process is those individuals vulnerable to recruitment to Al Qaeda affiliated, influenced and inspired groups. However, it recognises that the principles that underpin in are equally relevant to those who may be targeted by other violent extremist groups, and as such, the process may be used locally for all vulnerable individuals.

Description/Activities:

The work of Channel is organised by the Channel Coordinator who is often a police officer working at the local level. Their role is to establish and maintain a multi-agency panel to enable risk assessment and decision making, and develop strong relationships with partners locally. It is vital that they understand the communities they serve.

The main work of the Channel process is conducted through the multi-agency panel. It is usually chaired by the local authority and includes statutory and community partners along with the Channel Coordinator. Depending on the nature of the case, the panel may include: police; local authority Prevent lead; schools, colleges, and universities; youth offending services; health services; UK Border Agency; social workers; housing; prisons; probation; and local communities, voluntary organisations and charities. Local areas can decide whether to have a single Channel panel for all cases, a bespoke panel for each case, or to work through an existing panel or group with the right mix of representation.

Channel is not a process for gathering intelligence, but does require the sharing of information about people at risk. Information sharing is governed by UK legislation and is guided by principles of necessity, proportionality, and consent (where possible).

Referrals are first screened by the Channel Coordinator to ensure they are not malicious or misguided, that the person's engagement with the process would not compromise with an ongoing investigation, or that the individual is not vulnerable. In these cases, the individual does not enter the Channel process. As long as this is not the case, the preliminary assessment process begins, where the Channel Coordinator, their line manager and senior statutory partners assess the risk. Then a needs assessment is carried out to determine the kind of support that is needed by the individual.

Key Points/Lessons learned:

- Local areas are encouraged to tailor the process to their local needs;
 - It can deal with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation linked to all forms of threat;
 - Local areas are able to integrate the process into existing frameworks if they choose;
 - It provides a multi-agency response to ensure all relevant support structures are brought to bear.
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