

Gyms



Terrorism threat to Gyms

- It is highly unlikely that terrorist actors would have the intent to conduct attacks against gyms in the UK. Previous terrorist attacks in the UK have demonstrated the intent of terrorist actors to conduct mass-casualty, high-profile attacks in proximity to major sites. Gyms are unlikely to be attractive targets for terrorist actors in the UK.
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a gym in the UK would be conducted by an individual or small cell using a low sophistication methodology. E.g., Bladed or Blunt Force Weapons, Vehicle as a Weapon, or Fire as a Weapon.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the capability to conduct a high-sophistication attack at gyms in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED), or Firearms attack. The complicated nature of plotting a high-sophistication terrorist attack makes it highly likely that there would be greater opportunity for UK police and security services to disrupt potential attacks.
- There is a realistic possibility that the terrorist threat to gyms could be heightened by surrounding facilities within or in proximity to the site. E.g., Multi-facility sites (E.g., those with cafés, swimming facilities, sports halls, etc.) could provide attractive targets for terrorist actors in the UK seeking to conduct mass-casualty, indiscriminate attacks.
- The assessments in this report were made using the PHIA Probability Yardstick, for further information please see the Assessment Methodology [section below](#).

Location based threats to gyms in the UK

- It is likely that there is an increased terrorism threat to gyms in major cities and those in proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that gyms located in proximity to iconic sites and/or busy public spaces could be impacted by a Marauding Terrorist Attack in proximity to their site.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could seek to conduct an attack against gyms that are located in smaller towns and cities in the UK due to the lack of other suitable targets in the nearby area compared to more urban environments.

Previous terrorist incidents related to gyms in the UK and overseas

- At this time, there have been no previous terrorist attacks conducted against gyms in the UK.
- Individuals have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against gyms globally, including:
 - **2023 Germany;** An Islamist terrorist was sentenced to life imprisonment for conducting a Bladed Weapons attack at a gym in the western German city of Duisburg. The individual was reportedly a supporter of Islamic State and had been radicalised online. Four individuals were seriously wounded in the attack.¹

Other potential threats to gyms in the UK

- There is a realistic possibility that the threat posed to gyms in the UK could be heightened by the presence of high-profile individuals, politicians, celebrities etc. E.g., an Extreme Right-Wing terrorist could conduct an attack against a controversial pro-immigration politician at their local gym having carried out online hostile reconnaissance against the individual.
- There is a realistic possibility that individuals planning to conduct a terrorist attack could use gyms to engage in attack planning. Gyms have previously been used by individuals associated with terrorism-related activity, including:
 - **2022 Australia;** Reporting suggests an investigation uncovered alleged links between Legacy Boxing Gym and individuals associated with an Extreme Right-Wing ideology. Photos released as part of the investigation showed members of the gym performing a Nazi salute while surrounded by Nazi Hakenkreuz and SS flags amongst other far-right symbolism.²
 - **2018 UK;** Members of the proscribed terrorist group, National Action, allegedly converted a warehouse in Howley into a training camp for an "imminent race war".³
 - **2017 UK;** In CCTV footage obtained by *The Times*, the perpetrators of the 2017 London Bridge attack were seen together outside a gym in Ilford, East London. Khuram Butt, the alleged ringleader of the attack, later entered the gym.⁴
- There is a realistic possibility that gyms with 24 hour access, and reduced staff could be exploited by terrorist actors seeking to plan or facilitate an attack. Potential terrorist actors could attend any site at quiet times in order to hold covert meetings and discussions.

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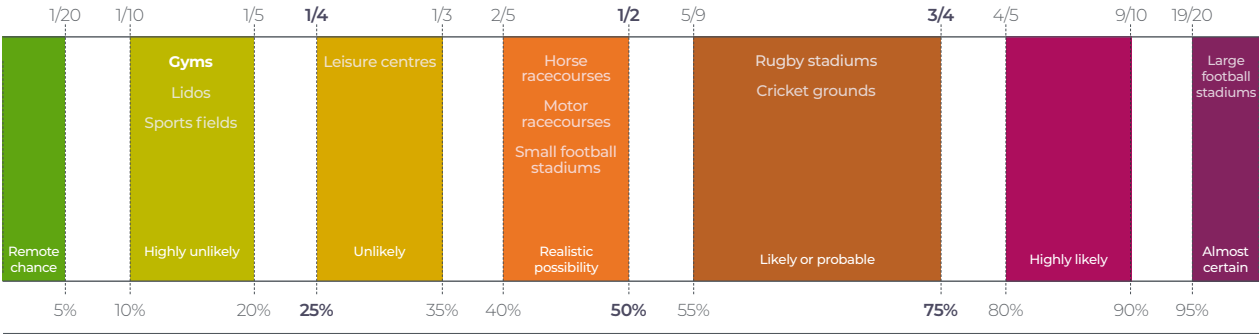
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against gyms within the arts, culture and entertainment sector.

Terrorist intent can be defined as the desire and/or determination of an individual to conduct an attack against any given site.

The intent of terrorist actors to conduct an attack against the arts, culture and entertainment sector in the UK is subject to change based on the assessments outlined in this report.

Note: The terrorism threat to any given site is not based solely on intent, but also the capability of terrorist actors in the UK as outlined in this report. Terrorism threat is also mitigated by the UK’s countrywide terrorism risk mitigation infrastructure including both public and private security and safety capabilities.



Assessment Methodology

The assessments made in this report have been made using the Professional Head of Intelligence’s “Probability Yardstick” (above). The Probability Yardstick is a standardised instrument used to provide a professional standard for intelligence assessment.

- **Almost certain:** An event has a greater than 90% chance of occurring.
- **Highly likely:** An event has a 76% to 90% chance of occurring.
- **Likely:** An event has a 55% to 75% chance of occurring.
- **Realistic possibility:** An event has a 40% to 54% chance of occurring.
- **Unlikely:** An event has a 25% to 39% chance of occurring.
- **Highly unlikely:** An event has an 10% to 24% chance of occurring.
- **Remote chance:** An event has a less than 10% chance of occurring.

Time spans

- **Short Term:** 0–6 Months.
- **In the next 12 months.**
- **Medium Term:** 12 months–5 Years.
- **Long Term:** 5+ Years.

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Intelligence cut-off date: 12 February 2024

For more information please contact solutions@poolre.co.uk

Bibliography

1. Suspect arrested in German gym attack that left 4 wounded - AP News
Man held over German gym attack suspected in earlier killing - The Independent;
Court in Germany convicts a man inspired by the Islamic State group of committing 2 knife attacks - AP News
2. Inside the Melbourne boxing gym with a neo-Nazi underbelly - (theage.com.au)
3. WATCH: Step inside gym in Howley used by alleged terror group to prepare for 'race war' - Warrington Guardian
4. London attack: CCTV video shows terrorists laughing while planning atrocity at Ilford gym - The Independent

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