

Racetracks



Terrorism threat to racetracks

- It is likely that terrorist actors would have the intent to conduct attacks against racetracks in the UK.¹ This is due to the high number of attendees at racing events that are staged over large areas of land and the symbolic value that any attack against a high-profile event would receive.
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a racetrack 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 could have the capability to conduct a high sophistication attack at a racetrack in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Device (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED), or Firearms attack. However, the complicated nature of plotting a high-sophistication terrorist attack makes it highly likely that there will be greater opportunity for UK police and security services to disrupt potential attacks.
- It is almost certain that the threat posed to any racetrack in the UK would be subject to change dependent on the public profile of the event. E.g., It is almost certain that terrorist actors would prioritise attacks against high-profile races hosted at major tracks such as Silverstone, Brands Hatch, Goodwood Circuit, etc., compared to smaller, less-known tracks and events.
- The assessments in this report were made using the PHIA Probability Yardstick, for further information please see the Assessment Methodology [section below](#).

Previous terrorist incidents related to racetracks in the UK and overseas

- At this time, there have been no terrorist attacks conducted against racetracks in the UK.
- Although there have currently been no terrorist attacks conducted at racetracks globally, racetracks have previously been impacted by terrorism-related activity, including:
 - **2023 UAE;** The UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) warned of a high terrorism threat in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the realistic possibility of an increased threat against Western interests and UK citizens in the area prior to the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.²
 - **2022 Saudi Arabia;** The Saudi Arabia Grand Prix was nearly cancelled due to Houthi rebel attacks on a nearby factory leading to concern that the race would also be targeted.³
 - **2003 Bahrain;** The UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) warned individuals travelling to the inaugural Bahrain Grand Prix due to the heightened threat from terrorism against UK and Western interests in the region.⁴

Other potential threats to racetracks in the UK

- Due to the sophisticated search and screening procedures at large/high-profile racetracks in the UK, there is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors could prioritise attacks against a site's external spaces, proximal locations, or at points of security challenge. E.g., Approaches to the ground, external concourses, transport hubs, security checkpoints, etc.
- There is a realistic possibility that the threat posed to racetracks in the UK could be heightened by the presence of high-profile individuals. E.g., The Silverstone F1 Grand Prix is routinely attended by a range of high-profile celebrities. It is almost certain that terrorist actors in the UK would have the intent to conduct attacks against high-profile individuals.
- There is a realistic possibility that events held as part of a race weekend could alter the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to target any given site. E.g., A live music event during and/or after a race could attract busy crowds that would be an attractive target for any terrorist actor seeking to conduct an indiscriminate attack.
- Additionally, there is a realistic possibility that non-sporting events held at racetracks outside of the racing calendar could alter the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to target any given site. E.g., A conference held at a high-profile racetrack in the UK could attract busy crowds and high-profile individuals that would be an attractive target for any terrorist actor seeking to conduct an attack.
- Although it is highly unlikely that any such event would be designated as terrorism, it is almost certain that Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA) protest groups would have the intent to stage protests at racetracks in the UK. Protest groups have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to target racetracks in the UK, including:
 - **2023 Silverstone;** Six "Just Stop Oil" climate activists were convicted of causing a public nuisance for posing "an immediate risk of serious harm" to F1 drivers and race marshals when they stormed the Silverstone circuit in July 2022.⁵
 - **2003 Silverstone;** An individual with a placard which stated "Read the Bible. The Bible is always right" ran across the track at the F1 Silverstone Grand Prix. He was later arrested and sentenced to two months imprisonment for aggravated trespass.⁶

Continued

- There is a realistic possibility that directly engaged staff at racetracks could pose an Insider Threat in several ways, including:
 - Security staff could enable terrorist actors in the UK to access the site with malicious items by bypassing security mitigations and vetting procedures.
 - Staff could grant terrorist actors access to high-profile individuals and/or drivers in the VIP areas of a racetrack.
 - Individuals associated with motor-racing could exploit vehicular access to the site to smuggle attack devices or conduct an attack against members of staff and/or busy paddock areas.
 - Third party vendors, temporary hospitality staff, or non-vetted service providers could exploit vehicular access to the hospitality areas of a racetrack in order to smuggle attack devices or items into the site.

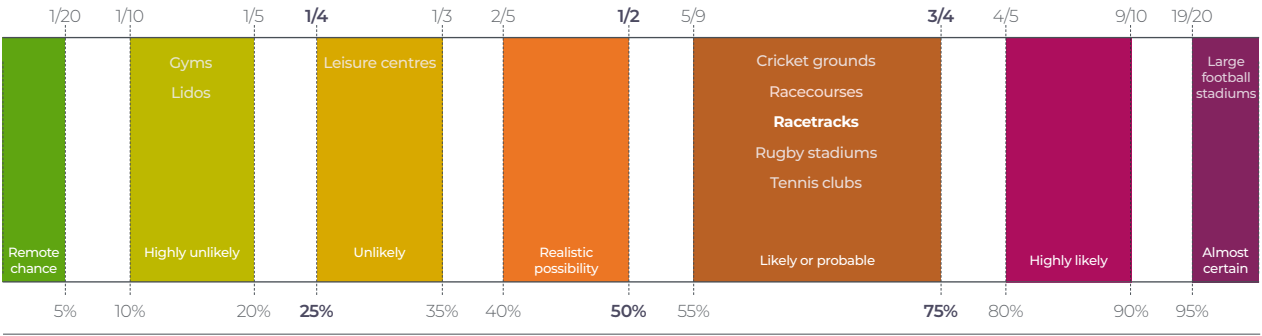
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against racetracks 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.

Continued

Intelligence cut-off date: 21 June 2024

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

Bibliography

1. Race Track is defined in this report as a circuit with associated facilities used for motor racing.
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3. Saudi Grand Prix to go ahead despite Houthi attacks say organisers - Reuters
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4. 'Terrorist threat' to Bahrain grand prix; Formula One - The Guardian
5. Just Stop Oil activists who staged Silverstone protest convicted; Just Stop Oil - The Guardian
6. Man charged over track protest; Sport - The Guardian
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