



Channel Panel Annual Assurance Statement – 2021-22

INTRODUCTION

This AAS template 2021-22 should be completed with reference to the accompanying explanatory notes Annex B.

This assurance statement captures local authority compliance with the requirements laid out under sections 36 – 41 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA) (as amended by the Counter Terrorism Border Security Act 2019) relating to Channel panels and improving outcomes for those identified individuals who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. This assurance statement forms part of a self-assessment for local authorities capturing Channel practice within each local authority area and levels of compliance against aspects of Channel delivery articulated in the Channel Statutory Duty Guidance 2020. Section 36 (7) of the CTSA states that panels must have regard to this guidance.

This is the second annual assurance statement issued to local authorities, so will be used to compare against the baseline submission for local authority Channel practice from last year (2020/21); The information gathered from this statement will also be used to identify where additional support to Channel panels needs to be undertaken, direct Homeland Security Group (HSG) support, or provide a trigger for further reviews or observations, such as dip sampling. The statement forms part of the strengthened quality assurance framework for Channel panels across England and Wales with findings reported into HSG business assurance arrangements.

Form instructions

The following tabs set out key areas of control with assurance statements relating to standards to be achieved and options for assessment. Each local authority is asked to state the extent to which they believe their authority meets each of these standards and indicate the relevant RAG rating based on the definitions below. In the event of a combined panel it is essential that **each separate authority serviced by the combined panel is required to complete the statement.**

Green = Able to give reasonable assurance that the key area is being applied.

Amber = Able to give reasonable assurance that the key area is being met. However, issues have arisen that may impact on this, and further explanation is provided in the assurance statement.

Red = Unable to give reasonable assurance that the key area is being met. Reasons for this are provided in the assurance statement.

The evidential statement box is an opportunity for examples of ‘good practice’ to be recorded and provide assurance to HSG that the standard has been addressed. Where the assessment indicates that improvements are required, please:

- Provide an outline of the steps needed with a timescale for completion is required.
- Use the drop down box to select the RAG rating against the statement most applicable to your current position
- Provide a basis for the assessment and proposals (including a timeframe) for addressing areas of improvement.
- For panels where no recent cases have been held, a rating is still required to provide assurance that processes are in place to progress future cases.

The statement should represent an honest critique of the arrangements in place at the end of the financial year 2020/21. Whilst evidence should be available to support your assessment, this is not required to accompany the statement submission, but should be reasonably accessible.

Sign off instructions

Chief Executive or Strategic Director level sign off is required for this assurance statement. In the final tab labelled 'FINISH - Compulsory signature', the **Local authority Chief Executive/ Strategic Director** needs to electronically sign in the given box **marked with an 'X'**.

Completion is required by all local authorities in England and Wales. Please return completed statements to Channel@homeoffice.gov.uk by **18th April 2022**.

This form is split into the following 5 sections, all to be completed by the most appropriate party:

Section 1	Legal Requirements under CTSA 2015
Section 2	Strategic Governance
Section 3	Chairing skills / core competencies
Section 4	Panel Function and Form
Section 5	Data Protection

1. Legal Requirements under CTSA 2015					
	1.1 A panel is in place for the area (or combined area) with the sole purpose of providing support to those individuals who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.	1.2 Membership of the panel includes the local authority and police for that area which is wholly or partly within the authority.	1.3 Partners of the panel (as listed in Schedule 7 CTSA) act in cooperation with panel in carrying out its functions under section 36(4) CTSA. This includes the giving of information to determine whether an individual should be referred to the panel (section 38(3)). <small>[All references to panel partners comprise those identified by the Channel chair, in addition to partners listed within Schedule 7.]</small>	1.4 Partners of the panel have regard to the Channel duty guidance issued by the Secretary of State.	1.5 In the instance of combined panels, appropriate representatives from each local authority and Policing area covered within the combined panel geography attend panel meetings.
Green/ Amber/ Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	
Please include here any further details behind any amber/red entries or examples of good practice	adults and children. Channel Panel meets monthly, even where there aren't live cases, to enable continuity, sharing best practice and learning points.	covering adults and children. Channel Panel meets monthly, even where there aren't live cases, to enable continuity,	adults and children. Channel Panel meets monthly, even where there aren't live cases, to enable continuity, sharing best practice and learning points. Partners of the panel include	Yes partners have regard to the guidance and discuss when making decisions on referrals	N/A
Please include here areas for improvement and timescales for completion					

2. Strategic Governance					
	2.1 Channel, as a local authority statutory function (Section 36 of the CTSA), is included within the local authority's constitution.	2.2 Channel Panel activity is overseen by a local strategic multi-agency partnership board where Channel is a specified agenda item. The Channel chair attends this board.	2.3 The chair for strategic governance does not hold responsibility for elements of Channel panel delivery or hold the Channel chair function.	2.4 An escalation process to strategic governance is in place for the Channel Panel. This process is publicised to panel members/partners and referred to in any relevant governance public facing websites	2.5 Channel (as part of Prevent reporting) is included within the local authority's governance arrangements.
Green/ Amber/ Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Please include here any further details behind any amber/red entries or examples of good practice	Channel Panel Terms of Reference are in the Council's Constitution.	The Dorset CONTEST Board has overall responsibility for the local overview and monitoring of partners implementation of Channel and the wider Prevent duty. Officers in the council with responsibility for	No the chair does not hold responsibility for the channel panel delivery or chair	The Dorset CONTEST Board has overall responsibility for the local overview and monitoring of partners implementation of Channel and the wider Prevent	The Dorset CONTEST Board has overall responsibility for the local overview and monitoring of partners implementation of Channel and the wider Prevent duty. Officers in the council with responsibility for Channel /
Please include here areas for improvement and timescales for completion					

	<p>3.1 The Chief Executive (or equivalent Head of Paid Service) has designated local authority officers as named chair and deputy chair, details of whom have been provided to HSG.</p> <p>[Changes to designated Channel chairs/deputy chairs must be notified to HSG via Channel@homeoffice.gov.uk]</p>	<p>3.2 The Chair and deputy chair hold sufficient authority to direct multi-agency delivery.</p>
<p>Green/ Amber/ Red</p>	<p>Jonathan Price, Interim Corporate Director – Adult Social Care (Commissioning) Jonathan.Price@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk b.Named Channel deputy chair and email contact: Paula Golding, Head of Locality & Strategy - Dorchester & West Locality paula.golding@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Please include here any further details behind any amber/red entries or examples of good practice</p>		
<p>Please include here areas for improvement and timescales for completion</p>		

3. Chairing skills / core competencies

<p>3.3 Chair and deputy chair have previous experience in chairing multi-agency panels or meetings.</p>	<p>3.4 Chair and deputy chair have a sound understanding of Channel, Prevent and CONTEST strategies.</p>	<p>3.5 Chair and deputy Chair have a degree of separation from any Home Office Prevent funded post in the local authority.</p>
<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>
		<p>Dorset does not receive any Home Office Prevent funded posts.</p>

3.6 Chair and deputy Chair are committed to completing training programmes requested by HSG.

Green

4. Panel Function & Form

	<p>4.1 The Panel assesses the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and creates a support plan to address identified vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>4.2 The support plan for individuals is kept under review to ensure individual needs are being met in line with identified or changing vulnerabilities. The panel assesses the impact of its actions or inactions when reviewing the support plan.</p>	<p>4.3 All standing panel members are actively involved in panel discussion, decisions and delivery.</p>	<p>4.4 Panel meets monthly (within 20 days of the Police Gateway Assessment) to oversee all Channel cases in their area where there are live cases for discussion, referrals for decision or case reviews to be undertaken.</p>
<p>Green/ Amber/ Red</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Please include here any further details behind any amber/red entries or examples of good practice</p>				<p>Channel Panel meets monthly even where there aren't live cases. Included in our revised terms of reference.</p>
<p>Please include here areas for improvement and timescales for completion</p>				

4. Panel Function &

<p>4.5 Information is effectively shared between panel members and partners and appropriate processes are in place to facilitate this (e.g. ISA).</p>	<p>4.6 Consent to receive support is obtained in writing and no later than 3 months after the panel first adopts a case and offers an individual support.</p>	<p>4.7 Consent is informed, explicit and freely given without coercion or duress and processes are in place to provide panel assurance that these requirements are being met.</p> <p><small>[Consent to access Channel support should not feature as part of any process whereby a sanction is imposed for non-compliance (e.g Child safeguarding arrangements, Probation or Youth Offending licence conditions, or court orders)</small></p>	<p>4.8 Vulnerability Assessment Frameworks (VAF) are updated by the Channel Case Officer at least every 3 months or when any significant event impacts on the individual's vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism.</p>	<p>4.9 The initial VAF and subsequent updates are circulated to all relevant panel members and partners in advance of the meeting.</p>
<p>Amber</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Personal Information Sharing Agreement is currently being created and due to be implemented shortly.</p>	<p>Consent in writing has been obtained from all subjects over the past 12 months using the HO template form. The only issue we had was that the form hadn't been branded to Dorset and</p>			<p>Completed by case officer and provided to Channel admin prior to the meeting who should circulate.</p>
<p>Within 3 months</p>				

Form

<p>4.10 Home Office approved Intervention Providers are considered for all cases where support is to be offered and the rationale for their use or preclusion is documented in the minutes.</p>	<p>4.11 The panel, in conjunction with counter terrorism police, keep the safeguarding risk and the terrorism risk under review when considering actions taken or proposed. Mitigating actions to reduce these risks are considered.</p>	<p>4.12 Channel minutes accurately reflect decisions made by the panel and a rationale for those decisions. Minutes are taken by a minute taker who is not a member or partner of the panel.</p>	<p>4.13 All adopted cases are reviewed by the panel at least 6 and 12 months after closure which includes police checks, relevant service involvement, change of circumstances (including making family contact where appropriate), concerns arising since case closure and contact with initial referrer.</p>	<p>4.14 Channel panel is proactive in considering families (where appropriate) within the assessment process and the support offer.</p>
<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>
				<p>From the recently implemented friends and family toolkit, there is now an information leaflet that the case officer will hand/send to relevant family members.</p>



4.15 There is a structured, agreed process for providing updates to family members. Each case is appointed a liaison for the family where appropriate.

Green



	5.1 Management of data is compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018.	5.2 Local Data Protection Information Notices have been updated to reflect Channel Panel functions and use of personal data.
Green/ Amber/ Red	Amber	Amber
Please include here any further details behind any amber/red entries or examples of good practice	Personal Information Sharing Agreement is currently being created and due to be implemented shortly.	Personal Information Sharing Agreement is currently being created and due to be implemented shortly.
Please include here areas for improvement and timescales for completion	Within 3 months	Within 3 months

5. Data Protection

<p>5.3 Local data protection policies are being followed for Channel data stored locally</p>	<p>5.4 Panel receives assurances from the case officer that all relevant Channel case documents including minutes, VAFs, Intervention Provider reports and support plans are uploaded onto the HSG-approved Case Management Information System [refer to explanatory notes for completion requirements]</p>	<p>5.5 All individuals receiving support from Channel are signposted to the Home Office Channel Data Privacy Notice for the HSG-approved Case Management Information System.</p>
<p>Amber</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Personal Information Sharing Agreement is currently being created and due to be implemented shortly.</p>		<p>The consent form has been in use for some time and this includes the relevant signposting.</p>
<p>Within 3 months</p>		

This assurance statement provides an accurate assessment of compliance with Channel panel requirements for the financial year 2021/22, as detailed within the CTSA 2015 and Channel Duty guidance 2020. A commitment is made for those areas identified for improvement to be progressed within the timeframes stated.

The **Local authority Chief Executive/ Strategic Director** needs to electronically sign in the box below **marked with an 'X'**.

Double click on the X below to open the signatory window. The box may automatically let you sign it, which you can do so by using your mouse to scribe your signature. If not, it'll ask you to select an image of your signature, if you already have one please upload. If not, to draw up a signature, open up the Paint app and using the pen/ pencil function draw your signature and save as an image/ photo in your documents. Then please open this form back up again, double click on the signatory 'X' and attach the file in the box specified.

Local authority Chief Executive/ Strategic Director Signatory:

Signed X _____

Date

Position

Local Authority.....

Please indicate if part of a combined panel.....

Please return completed statements to Channel@homeoffice.gov.uk by **18th April 2022**.