



Home Office

**Office for Security and  
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Lorraine Inglis  
request-377637-62080e18@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Ref: 42200  
Date: 19 January 2017

Dear Ms Inglis,

Thank you for your e-mail of 16 December, in which you raise concerns about a Home Office statement regarding Prevent and fracking. You ask specifically:

*In quite a number of media articles (see below for an example), the Home Office was quoted as saying "Prevent is about safeguarding people at risk of being drawn into terrorism – support for anti-fracking is not an indicator of vulnerability."*

*Could you please provide more details on this quote... who said it, if it was in press release from the Home Office, which media company called for the quote, any paper or electronic correspondence regarding the request for this quote.*

*Link: <https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/home-affairs/terrorism/news/81612/home-office-anti-fracking-campaigners-are-not-%E2%80%98extremists%E2%80%99>*

In relation to your questions, I am able to provide some information. The Home Office Press Office issued a statement in response to a query from the Observer newspaper. The relevant email correspondence is included in the attached Annex.

Please note that the sub headline in the article you reference could be misleading. The sub headline states that 'a council and a school used the Government's counter-terrorism programme against environmental protesters.' While a reference to fracking did appear in a local counter terrorism document, it was in the context of a number of other local tensions. The document was clear that anti-fracking protests were not linked to terrorism.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference 42200. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Rights Team  
Home Office  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Peel Building  
2 Marsham Street

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E-mail: [FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

FOI Team

## **Annex – information for release**

In response to your questions, please note the information provided. The Home Office Press Office issued a statement in response to a query from the Observer newspaper.

### **BEGINS**

**Subject:** FOR INFORMATION: Observer on Prevent and anti-fracking

Ok

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Further to the below, a journalist from the Observer has contacted Press Office to ask for comment on councils, police forces and schools using Prevent to 'target' anti-fracking campaigners.

The journalist is aware Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb has asked a PQ about what procedures exist for challenging and correcting Prevent practitioners who include participation in anti-fracking groups within their training materials. Officials advise they will be submitting a draft response to this next week.

The journalist has asked us to confirm whether we condone this use of Prevent, and if not, whether we plan to do anything about it.

Press office proposes issuing the below cleared statement and verbal guidance. We will issue this at 6.30pm if you do not raise objections.

#### **A Home Office spokesperson said:**

**“Prevent is about safeguarding people at risk from being drawn into terrorism - support for anti-fracking is not an indicator of vulnerability.”**

#### **VERBAL GUIDANCE**

- **Clearly if someone was displaying other concerning behaviour relating to terrorism, appropriate support would be considered.**

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Thanks XXX – I will issue now.

Best wishes

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Content, thank you

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Thanks XXX, I'll flag to BEIS now. Private Office, is the Minister content?

Best wishes

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Ok but can we flag to BEIS given fracking angle.

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Press Office has been contacted by the Yorkshire Post about a newsletter sent from Driffield School in June outlining their response to the Prevent duty.

The newsletter reads:

*The aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and to prevent all forms of terrorism (prioritising according to threats posed to national security). At present nationally, the greatest resource is devoted to preventing people from joining or supporting the so called Islamic State (IS) group, its affiliates and related groups. More locally, the East Riding's main priorities are far right extremism, animal rights and anti-fracking.*

It is available online here: <http://hub.driffieldschool.net/newsletter/Newsletter24.06.16.html>

The journalist says the anti-fracking lobby in Yorkshire has taken exception to the reference to anti-fracking in the same breath as far right extremism and IS and has asked for a comment on whether the school has acted appropriately.

DfE has advised that East Riding of Yorkshire Council and the school have issued the following statement clarifying their remarks:

*A spokeswoman for East Riding of Yorkshire Council said: "In delivering Prevent training to its schools, the council uses a Home Office training script. This includes a reference to 'environmental terrorism' and some audiences have asked if this includes anti-fracking. In response to that, we make it clear that we do not regard anti-fracking campaigners as an appropriate group to monitor as part of the Prevent strategy."*

*The Head of Driffield School said: "Prevent training requires schools and public organisations to be aware of all forms of extremism, but it is not the view of the school that anti-fracking is a form of extreme behaviour and we apologise that the link has been made."*

They also advise that the school have said the comments were made by the safeguarding lead in error and she has since been corrected.

Home Office officials advise that participation in or support for anti-fracking groups would not be considered an indicator that an individual was vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism in the same way that participation in right wing political groups is not an indicator that an individual was vulnerable to being drawn into extreme right wing terrorism. They further advise that they are currently drafting a response to Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb who has asked a PQ on what procedures exist for challenging and correcting Prevent practitioners who include participation in anti-fracking groups within their training materials.

Press Office proposes issuing the statement below to make clear anti-fracking sentiment would not by itself be considered a safeguarding risk. Are you content with this approach?

Best wishes

Richard

**A Home Office spokesperson said:**

**"Prevent is about safeguarding people at risk from being drawn into terrorism - support for anti-fracking is not an indicator of vulnerability."**

#### **VERBAL GUIDANCE**

- **Clearly if someone was displaying other concerning behaviour relating to terrorism, appropriate support would be considered.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**ENDS**