

**The Executive Action Plan On  
Tackling Paramilitary Activity,  
Criminality And Organised Crime  
Evidence Base for the Delivery of  
Focused Impact Interventions:  
Communities in Transition project  
(Commitment B4)**

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**Tackling Paramilitarism Programme**



Long Term  
Prevention



Confidence in  
Justice System



Tackling  
Criminal Activity



Building Community  
Capacity

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## 1. Introduction

In late December 2016 the Programme Board which oversees delivery of the Executive Action Plan on Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime commissioned independent research aimed at providing an evidence base to inform decisions on the identification of geographical areas for focused intervention through commitment B4 of the Executive Action Plan, the Communities in Transition project. The work was conducted throughout January 2017.

This piece of work was undertaken with the agreement that in order to effectively take forward the Communities in Transition project (Commitment B4 of the Executive Action Plan), there was a need to implement focused impact interventions to support communities in transition. It was recognised that issues relating to paramilitarism vary from area to area, and that providing an area based approach for this particular action would allow The Executive Office and the Programme Board to understand the impact of layered and focused interventions that are based on the needs of a particular area. It was agreed that in order to deliver impactful interventions, this work should begin in 6-8 areas.

Essentially, the exercise involved ranking geographical areas which are impacted by ongoing criminality linked to paramilitary activity.

The researcher was guided throughout the exercise by the following definition:

***The purpose of the task is to identify areas which are at particular risk from on-going paramilitary activity***

The remainder of this report sets out the methodology used and the findings from the data analysis.

It is important to note that whilst the decision was taken to implement focused interventions in a number of geographical areas for the Communities in Transition Project (Commitment B4); the action plan is a much wider programme with a variety of projects which are not geographically bound, taking place in local communities across Northern Ireland.



## 2. Methodology

The following section highlights the approach taken, data sources used and the methodology developed to identify geographical areas impacted by criminality linked to ongoing paramilitary activity.

### 2.1 Approach

For the purposes of identifying and ranking areas at risk of on-going paramilitary activity the researcher employed several methodological approaches. These included:

- Consulting with a range of media sources from the period January 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 (main papers but not an exhaustive list);
- Reviewing and analysing multiple data sets;
- Reviewing academic literature and research reports around the issues associated with paramilitary activity and behaviours, and
- Informal discussions with a range of stakeholders, facilitated through the Programme Board.

Prior to the commencement of the project a series of indicators of paramilitary activity was developed to support the analysis and final selection and ranking of areas. These indicators included:

- Verified incidents of paramilitary intimidation;
- Claimed incidents of paramilitary intimidation;
- Paramilitary assaults;
- Paramilitary shootings;
- Community Supervision Orders;
- Terrorist and/or Political Motivated Offenders;



- Location of bonfires, murals and memorials;
- Public perceptions of local crime and policing agencies;
- Security situation statistics;
- Community Priority Index data;
- Media reporting of paramilitary activity.

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## 2.2 Range of sources consulted

At the outset of the project, the Programme Board provided the researcher with contact details for a number of organisations with data sets pertaining to the topic. These are outlined below.

**Figure 1: Data supplied by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

Northern Ireland Housing Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Homeless presentation due to paramilitary intimidation</b></li> <li>• <b>GIS database of murals, memorials and flags</b></li> </ul>
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**Figure 2: Data supplied by the Police Service for Northern Ireland**

Police Service for Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Priority Index</b></li> <li>• <b>Casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults and shootings</b></li> <li>• <b>Security situation statistics</b></li> </ul>
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**Figure 3: Data supplied by the Probation Service for Northern Ireland (PBNI)**

Probation Service for Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Individuals on community supervision by offence grouping</b></li> <li>• <b>Individuals on community supervision for Terrorist and/or politically motivated offenders</b></li> </ul>
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**Figure 4: Data supplied by the Department of Justice**

Department of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Perceptions of crime</b></li> <li>• <b>Perceptions of policing, justice and anti-social behaviour</b></li> </ul>
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Data was also provided by a number of Non-governmental Organisations who work in the areas and deal with a number of relevant issues such as threats and paramilitary style attacks.

### 2.3 Limitations of comparing multiple data sets

There are of course limitations surrounding the analysis of multiple data sets. The data is not uniform and each data set utilises different indicators. Furthermore, data has been collected and collated in various ways, and applies different boundaries, definitions and terms around presentation. However, taken collectively they provide a narrative of paramilitary activity.

### 3. Area selection

This section draws together all of the sourced material and provides a scoring for geographical areas in relation to 'on-going paramilitary activity'. The material used to develop the scoring matrix consisted of the data sets presented in the previous two sections, discussions with key stakeholders, and a review of academic material along with research and policy papers.

There are some limitations to any exercise which seeks a clear evidence base in relation to complex issues related to coercive control in communities that is linked to paramilitary activity.

The research and data sets used to analyse 'paramilitary activity' may only be explaining part of the picture. There is no doubt that activities go unreported, in both the media and/or official statistics. Therefore, it is only possible to estimate the extent of activity and the geographical areas in which it is taking place.



The analysis relied on multiple data sets that presented statistics in various formats, time periods and geographical boundaries. It is evident that 'paramilitary activity' is not time bound, and these data sets capture a 'narrative' at a particular time.

### 3.1 Areas and indicators

The process of identifying and ranking areas involved the formulation of a series of indicators (figure 5), followed by establishing a scale of 1-3 to rate the level of activity pertaining to that indicator in the geographical area (figure 101). The scale rated (1) as minimal and/or limited activity, (2) a significant amount of activity, and (3) as extremely problematic. Each area was scored against each indicator, with an equal weighting, and the total amounts were calculated at the end of the process (figure 102). However, in the case of the indicator 'security situation statistics' a scale of one to six was applied, due to the significance of the issue.

#### Figure 5: Indicators of paramilitary activity across the identified geographical areas

- Verified incidents of paramilitary intimidation;
- Paramilitary assaults and shootings;
- Supervision orders for Terrorist and/or Political Motivated Offenders;
- Paramilitary symbols;
- Security situation statistics;
- Community vulnerability;
- Review of literature and stakeholder contributions



The following table provides a list of the top 13 geographical areas impacted by on-going criminality linked to paramilitary activity, which emerged following the initial review as outlined in this report.

**Figure 6: Completed list of geographical areas identified from area review**

<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>Code</b>
The Mount (1) (2) and Ballymacarrett (2) and (3) in East Belfast	<b>Area A</b>
Donegall Pass and Road, Sandy Row and Roden Street	<b>Area B</b>
Lower Falls, Twinbrook, Poleglass, Upper Springfield, Turf Lodge and Ballymurphy.	<b>Area C</b>
Shankill (upper and lower, and includes the Woodvale)	<b>Area D</b>
New Lodge and Greater Ardoyne	<b>Area E</b>
Larne area, including Antiville and Kilwaughter and Carrickfergus area including Northland and Castlemara	<b>Area F</b>
Ballysally and Central Coleraine	<b>Area G</b>
Clandeboyne (2) and (3) and Conlig (3) which includes Kilcooley.	<b>Area H</b>
Brandywell and Creggan	<b>Area I</b>
Coalisland, Dungannon and Magherafelt	<b>Area J</b>
Ballybot and Daisy Hill	<b>Area K</b>
Drumgask and Kilwilkie in Craigavon/Lurgan	<b>Area L</b>
Hillhall - Lisburn	<b>Area M</b>



The following table (figure 7) provides the scoring applied to each geographical area against the data in relation to on-going paramilitary activity. Equal weighting was applied to each indicator. The scale rated (1) as minimal and/or limited activity, (2) a significant amount of activity, and (3) as extremely problematic. Each area was scored against each indicator, with an equal weighting, and the total amounts were calculated at the end of the process). However, in the case of the indicator 'security situation statistics' a scale of one to six was applied, due to the significance of the issue.

**Figure 7: Scoring matrix applied to each area against the set of indicators of paramilitary activity**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
<b>Paramilitary intimidation</b>	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	3
<b>Paramilitary assaults/shootings</b>	2	2	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Supervision orders - TPMO</b>	-	-	2	2	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	1
<b>Paramilitary symbolism</b>	2	1	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Security situation</b>	3	4	6	3	6	3	2	3	6	5	5	4	3
<b>Community vulnerability</b>	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	1
<b>Review of literature/stakeholders</b>	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>



The analysis revealed the areas experiencing the highest level of on-going paramilitary activity across Northern Ireland based on the available data (figure 8). The Programme Board decided to begin interventions in these 8 areas as a starting point.

It is also important to note the indicator that captured security related issues was assessed out of six, as opposed to a score of three.

**Figure 8: Top eight areas experiencing on-going paramilitary activity across Northern Ireland**

Area	Score
New Lodge and Greater Ardoyne	23
Lower Falls, Twinbrook, Poleglass, Upper Springfield, Turf Lodge and Ballymurphy.	23
Shankill (upper and lower, and includes the Woodvale)	20
Brandywell and Creggan	20
Larne area, including Antiville and Kilwaughter and Carrickfergus area including Northland and Castlemara	19
The Mount (1) (2) and Ballymacarrett (2) and (3) in East Belfast	16
Drumgask and Kilwilkie in Craigavon/Lurgan	15
Clandeboyne (2) and (3) and Conlig (3) which includes Kilcooley.	15

#### 4. Summary

The analysis of the available data and resources allowed for the development of a series of broad indicators to measure on-going paramilitary activity across Northern Ireland. Further extrapolation of the data involved scoring the



geographical areas against these indicators, which allowed for the identification and ranking of areas experiencing the most paramilitary activity.

It is important to point out that the Communities in Transition Project (Commitment B4) is one of 43 actions within the action plan. There are a range of projects and interventions which are not geographically bound involving every aspect of government, the community, voluntary and private sector and, indeed every citizen, taking place in local communities across Northern Ireland.

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