LSE Groups - Uncertainty

"Too little too late, useless words"?

An Analysis of the Impact UK Threat Levels have on the Public Perception of their Safety

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Word Count: 3,071

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Abstract

Since 2006, the British government has published UK Threat Levels, an indicator of the likelihood of a terrorist attack happening. Currently, there is a lack of information on the impact of these threat levels on public attitudes. This paper contributes to current research by exploring how the UK threat levels affect the public's perception of their safety. This paper hypothesizes that increasing the terror threat level makes people feel less safe.

Quantitative methods employed include a content analysis of online article comments as well as an online survey. Moreover, a semi-structured interview with a police advisor was conducted to establish a different perspective on the impact of terror threat levels to the surveys and comments. A qualitative content analysis of article comments also provided a more precise picture of people's perceptions and why these perceptions arise.

The results from surveys corroborates the evidence from comments as well as the interview, to suggest that the current implementation of the UK Threat Levels system is increasing public uncertainty regarding safety.

Keywords: UK Threat Levels, Terrorism, Public Perception, Public Safety, Online Comments

Introduction

Our study attempts to contribute to the debate surrounding the influence of UK Threat Levels on the public's perception of their safety. The hypothesis of our study is that higher threat levels make people feel less safe about their safety. This paper discusses whether the threat level serves a purpose to the public about their safety, by assessing each of the three purposes of the threat level against our research to evaluate their credibility. There is a gap in existing literature on UK Threat Levels, and little study on the public's reaction following the recent sharp change in the threat level. This topic, whilst potentially sensitive, is highly pertinent in current, uncertain times. The paper aims to provide a comprehensive account public and policy makers can understand, by detailing each purpose of threat levels and analysing the results within this framework.

Using discourse and qualitative analysis of online comments, an online survey, and a semi-structured interview, our research explores the public's reaction to terror attacks, and controlling for variables, how the public reacts independently to changes in the threat level.

It is relevant because there exists uncertainty over how the public should respond to changes in the level, and when terror attacks might strike, and is useful to informs the development of new policy towards a more effective and informative system.

Literature Review

Whilst UK Threat Levels were considerably discussed in the news following the Manchester Arena bombing, there is less focus in academic research. Some discussion of why the UK Threat Levels system was introduced in 2006 exists, albeit limited. Mythen and Walklate[1] discuss the weaknesses of BIKINI levels, the predecessor to UK Threat Levels, arguing that the poor governmental communication on terror threats, due to BIKINI's non-public nature, led to strained relations between politicians and the public. For example, the government's inaction against erroneous reports on terror threats, such as the false bomb plot story at Old Trafford in *The Sun*, amplified public anxiety. More specifically, Kirby[2] notes the lowering of the BIKINI level from severe to substantial in May 2005, shortly before the 7/7 bombings, was the catalyst for a new alert system to inform the public. Furthermore, the Intelligence and Security Committee's Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005 recommended "greater transparency of the threat level and the alert system"[3] and noted that following the attacks there was a "greater need for members of the public to be better informed"[4].

The effect of public threat levels is explored by Klick and Tabarrok[5] in their Washington DC case study. During high alert phases and increased police presence, levels of street crime, such as auto-theft, decreased. More research is needed to generalise this result across

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[1] Gabe Mythen and Sandra Walklate, "Communicating the terrorist risk: Harnessing a culture of fear?", *Crime Media Culture,* 2 (2), 2006.
[2] Philip Kirby, "The End of the Rainbow? Terrorism and the future of public warning", *The Rusi Journal*, 158 (4), 2013
[3] Great Britain and Intelligence and Security Committee. *Report into the London terrorist attacks on 7 July 2005*. Vol. 6785. Stationery Office, 2006, para. 85, pg 24.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Jonathan Klick and Alexander Tabarrok, "Using terror alert levels to estimate the effect of police on crime", *The Journal of Law and Economics,* vol. 48, 2005.

cities, but it highlights a benefit of threat levels and their correspondent policing measures. However, benefits are restricted to a specific type of crime, auto-theft and theft from cars, and cannot be generalized to wider public safety. Additionally, Kalist[6] analysed the effect of terror alert levels on public attendance of baseball matches and found, in the short term, declining attendance. However, recent alerts have not impacted attendance, since the public are desensitised to subsequent terror threat levels. In the US, alerts are issued under three categories whereas the UK issues alerts under five categories, which makes this study only relevant to the US. In addition to limited research on the effect of UK Threat Levels on public confidence levels, this is a gap our research hopes to fill.

Goodwin et al[7] take a psychological approach to the public's perception of threats. Although increasingly seeing the world as a dangerous place might increase the desire for security, they found little change in public behaviour in response to terror. In their study of 100 workers at the British Library in Central London, only 8% of participants claimed they changed their behaviour.

 A more recent study by Kirby[8] discusses the public's behaviour in response to UK threat levels. Kirby states that, now threat levels are public, the public must be drilled on how to respond to a warning, but adds there are not clear instructions and the correct response to 'critical' is unclear. Furthermore, Kirby argues few people pay attention to warnings and fewer still change their behaviour. Whilst useful to critique the current threat level system, Kirby fails to produce evidence to support his claims and fails to assess the effect on the public's perception of their safety.

[6] David E Kalist, "Terror alert levels and Major League Baseball attendance", *International Journal of Sport Finance*, 5 (3), 2010.
[7] Robin Goodwin, Michelle Willson and Stanley Gaines Jr, "Terror threat perception and its consequences in contemporary Britain", *British Journal of Psychology,* 96(4), 2006.
[8] Phillip Kirby, "The end of the Rainbow?", 2013.

Our study attempts to further contribute to the debate surrounding UK Threat Levels and their influence on the public's perception of their safety, by detailing the three purposes of the UK Threat Level system, and evaluating their effectiveness against our findings. Our findings can contribute towards the development of a more effective and informative system for the public.

Methodology

The complexity of the topic endorses the use of multiple research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the public's perception of their safety. The content analysis of online comments focused on articles detailing the Manchester attack and the subsequent changes in UK Threat Levels. The top ten publicly rated comments were analysed from the five most circulated newspapers in the UK: The Daily Mirror, The Sun, The Metro, The Evening Standard, and the Daily Mail. These were sources from the newspapers' websites and social media. Using the top ten comments ensured efficiency, and as they were rated by other readers, these comments better represent the public's attitudes, rather than random sampling.

Although those responding to an article link on Facebook may comment without reading the full article, this does not pose a problem as the announcements of the attack or the changes in threat level were clear in the headline linked on the Facebook pages, and can elicit a response without the need to read the full article.

For each paper, three articles were coded. The first announced the Manchester Attack on 22nd May, the second announcing the increase in the threat level to Critical on 23rd May, and the third announcing the reduction to Severe on 27th May. This allows us to control the impact of terrorist attacks on the public's attitudes towards threat levels, analysing comments regarding the attack and attitudes towards threat level changes separately. The coding categories emerged from the comments and were collectively agreed upon. The coding produced quantitative data displaying the frequency of each category. Qualitative

analysis for comments on key articles from 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2017[9] was completed. For consistency, the same selection of comments and categories was used as content analysis. Themes were identified from comments, the most prevalent being anger towards government and abuse towards migrants. This qualitative analysis allowed for a thorough and comprehensive explanation of emotions, since exactly what the public are angry about, and exactly why certain groups were abused, could be identified. The consistency in the selection process allows for these two methods to complement each other.

A semi-structured telephone interview was conducted with an independent police advisor. This method was selected to provide the perspective of someone who works with communities and has greater access to information on the reaction in public attitudes to threat level changes. This presents an alternative outlook to the survey and discourse analysis. To ensure high ethical standards, the interviewee agreed first to record the phone-call and use direct quotes from the discussion.

Following the London Bridge attack part way through the research, the survey methodology was adapted to account for heightened sensitivity regarding terrorism, and the survey was therefore limited to online platforms. Consequently, face-to-face surveys were not carried out, but using online surveys provided a wide range of views with a time-efficient solution (178 responses). Initially, the online survey was distributed to friends and other students at

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[9] In 2010, there was an increase in the threat level from substantial to severe because of MI5 information. In 2014, the threat level was increased from substantial to severe, because of information about Syria and Middle East terrorists. In November 2015, there was discussion about whether to increase threat level because of the Paris attacks. In March 2017, the article is in response to the threat level staying the same after the Westminster attack.

the LSE through department-wide emails. To ensure a representative and focused sample of the wider public it was also shared on appropriate online messageboards.

The sensitivity of this topic necessitated careful consideration of research ethics and the survey provided information for places of support should participants require it. Furthermore, the intended use of collected data was clearly outlined, and an opt-out option was also clearly communicated.

Results/Discussion

Tool for security practitioners:

MI5 state that one purpose of the UK Threat Levels is as a "tool for security practitioners…in determining what protective security response may be required"[10]. For example, when the threat level was raised to critical on the 23rd May 2017, following the Manchester Attack, the government reinforced security in public spaces by deploying military personnel alongside police.

The results show that, in theory, the increased policing following increases in the threat level is supported by the public, as policing makes them more certain of their own safety. However, in practice, due to government cuts in policing, the public are uncertain about their safety after threat announcements.

The survey data showed that 72%[11] of respondents felt less worried or felt indifferent about their safety when policing is increased after a terrorist attack. However, the majority of those who were unaffected by policing were respondents who did not frequently worry about terrorism, and vice versa. The interviewee confirmed this, stating there "is still a lot of confidence in the security service and the police", which makes the public feel "reassured". The visible presence of the police helps the public feel safer, since they can witness that they are being protected.

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[10] https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels
[11] See P7 of appendix

Furthermore the qualitative analysis of comments on articles from 2015 and 2017 demonstrate the public's strong desire for increased policing whenever an increase in the threat level was discussed. In 2015 the overwhelming theme in responses to the threat level was uncertainty of the government's ability to keep the public safe due to police cuts. Typical comments from 2015 include: "the cuts this government have imposed on our police and armed forces have left us wide open"[12], and "Britain on high alert, WHAT the Hell can we do, we have no police and no forces"[13]. In 2017, the public became more uncertain about their safety, calling for drastic police action and armed forces: "Time to give ALL police guns"[14], "let's just hope our army and police are allowed to do what is needed"[15]. After the threat level was raised to critical following the Manchester attacks, comments regarding policing included "what has increased the threat level is seven years of cuts in police, security forces and military numbers"[16].

These results imply that the public are not critiquing the concept of threat levels, but feel that the security changes corresponding to the threat levels are weak, fostering uncertainty around the public's safety.

Informing the Public:

Whilst the threat levels require no specific response from the public, MI5 state "sharing national threat levels with the general public keeps everyone informed. It explains the context for various security measures"[17].

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[12] 14th November 2015, The Sun
[13] 14th November 2015, The Sun
[14] 22nd March 2017, Metro
[15] 22nd March 2017, Metro
[16] 23rd May 2017, London Evening Standard
[17] https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels

Data indicates the majority of respondents listen to certain changes in threat levels, suggesting they are partially successful in informing the public. However there is a lack of public understanding of how to respond to these announcements and how the government is combating terrorism. This contributes to increased public uncertainty surrounding their safety.

The earliest qualitative data on threat levels came from 2010. When it increased in that year, no commenters paid attention. Overwhelmingly, they suspected threat levels were purely politically motivated. Typical comments include: ""Red Alert" is nothing more than a TOTAL SCAM to detract from...the incompetent government"[18] and "Take no notice of the terror level."[19]. Others questioned "What exactly does it expect us to do?"[20]. Some of this suspicion behind government motives remains today and may decrease the effectiveness of threat levels in informing the public. By 2014, most commenters had accepted announcements of increased threat levels as tools to inform them of impending terror attacks. However across all five sources there were no reports or comments on decreased threat levels, which may indicate people do not notice announcements of decreases. This is supported by the survey, which showed that 55% of people have some reaction to an increase in threat level,[21] whereas only 35% of people reacted when there was a decrease in threat level.

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[18] 24 January 2010, Daily Mail
[19] 24 January 2010, Daily Mail
[20] 24 January 2010, Daily Mail
[21] See P6 of appendix

Additionally, comments after the 2017 Westminster attack suggest announcements of threat levels remaining constant are informationally ineffective. Responses included "pointless"[22] and "scaremongering"[23].

Furthermore, survey data showed limited knowledge of the threat level system from the 178 respondents. More noticed threat levels in 2016-2017 than had done previously.[24] Whilst 50% of respondents correctly stated that they knew it most recently decreased, 46% were not informed.[25] Also, when asked to identify the current threat level, only a slight majority could correctly state the current level, Severe.[26] The next most popular answer was Extreme, a false threat level used to test participants' knowledge.

Since the threat level does not necessitate a particular response, the public feels uncertain over how to respond to changes. Regarding changes in threat level, 73% of survey respondents said they would not change their plans or activities.[27] This included almost half the people who said they would change their plans or activities if there was a terrorist attack. However the interview showed that individuals change their social interactions in response to threat levels. Whilst individuals continue to meet the "demands of their lifestyle", such as by going to work and school, hate crime and prejudice increases following terror events. Certain minority groups are suspected of terrorism and are subsequently treated differently. For example, individuals might react to a member of this group by moving further away from them on a train. These everyday social interactions as the

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[22] 22nd March 2017, Metro
[23] 22nd March 2017, Metro
[24] See P4 of appendix
[25] See P5 of appendix
[26] See P5 of appendix
[27] See P8 of appendix

interviewee pointed out, may have a significant impact on the public's perception of their own safety.

Thus, there is a variation in the public's responses to threat level announcements, some continue with their activities whilst others also adapt their social interactions. These variations may occur because of uncertainty over which of these responses ensures their safety due to inadequate guidelines published by the government.

Additionally, the interviewee suggests the definitions of 'severe' and 'critical' confer little meaningful information to the public. The interviewee expressed that people generally "don't know the significance between" the terms, but it does serve importance to the police, who face more demand and "stress on a personal level". There is a misalignment between police's understanding of the threat levels, and the public's (lack of) understanding of the nuanced changes in threat levels. This misalignment implies a limitation in its design. Qualitative analysis of Manchester comments supports this. Following the changes in the threat level in May 2017, comments regarding the increase included "useless words"[28], "and the difference is?"[29], and "pathetic threat level means F all"[30].

Whilst academic discussion of the UK Threat Level system show that there is a need for the levels to remain public, there is room for further research on the classification of threat levels, and whether this could be made clearer for the public. This would potentially reduce uncertainty surrounding what threat levels mean for the public's safety.

Broad indication of terror attacks:

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[28] 23rd May 2017, The Sun
[29] 27th May 2017, Daily Mail
[30] 27th May 2017, The Sun

Threat levels also serve a third purpose of indicating the likelihood of a terror attack.

Threat levels are often criticized for being an inadequate indicator. The announcements overwhelmingly draw public attention towards their anger with government rather than towards terrorism. When attention is drawn towards terrorism, it causes public uncertainty of their safety, which is often expressed through xenophobia.

Content analysis of the Manchester comments displays an overwhelming level of anger towards threat levels following their announcements, as displayed in the graph below.
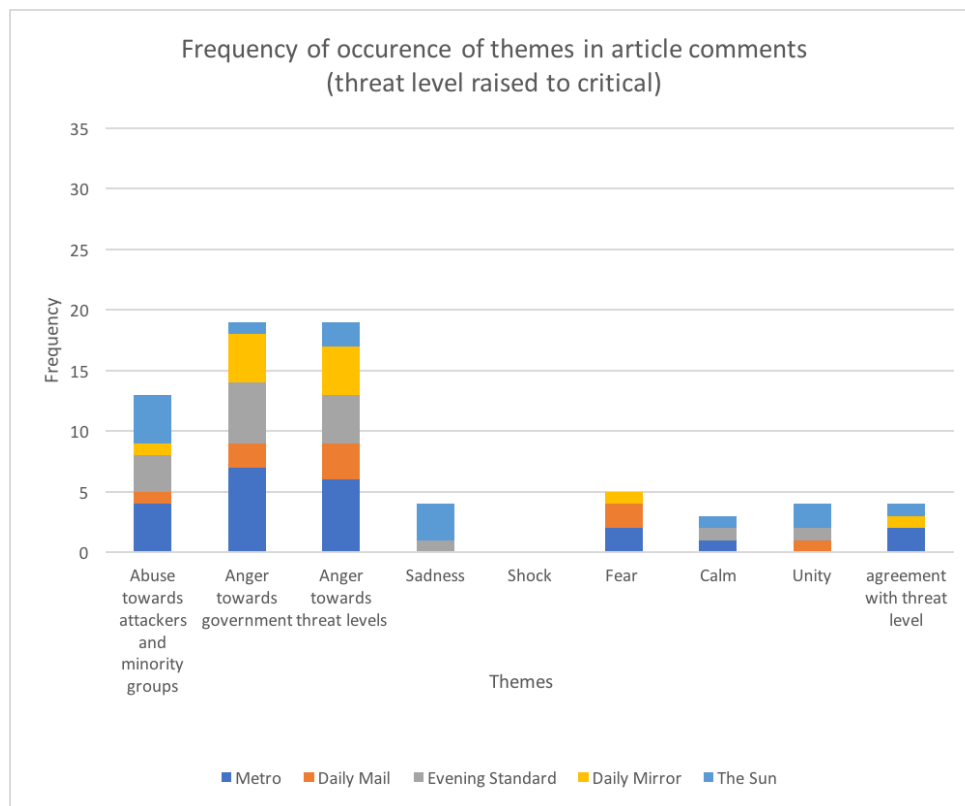
The above graph shows that following the increase to critical on 23rd May, over half of the coded comments displayed anger towards government or anger towards threat levels.

Frequency of occurence of themes in article comments
(threat level reduced to severe)
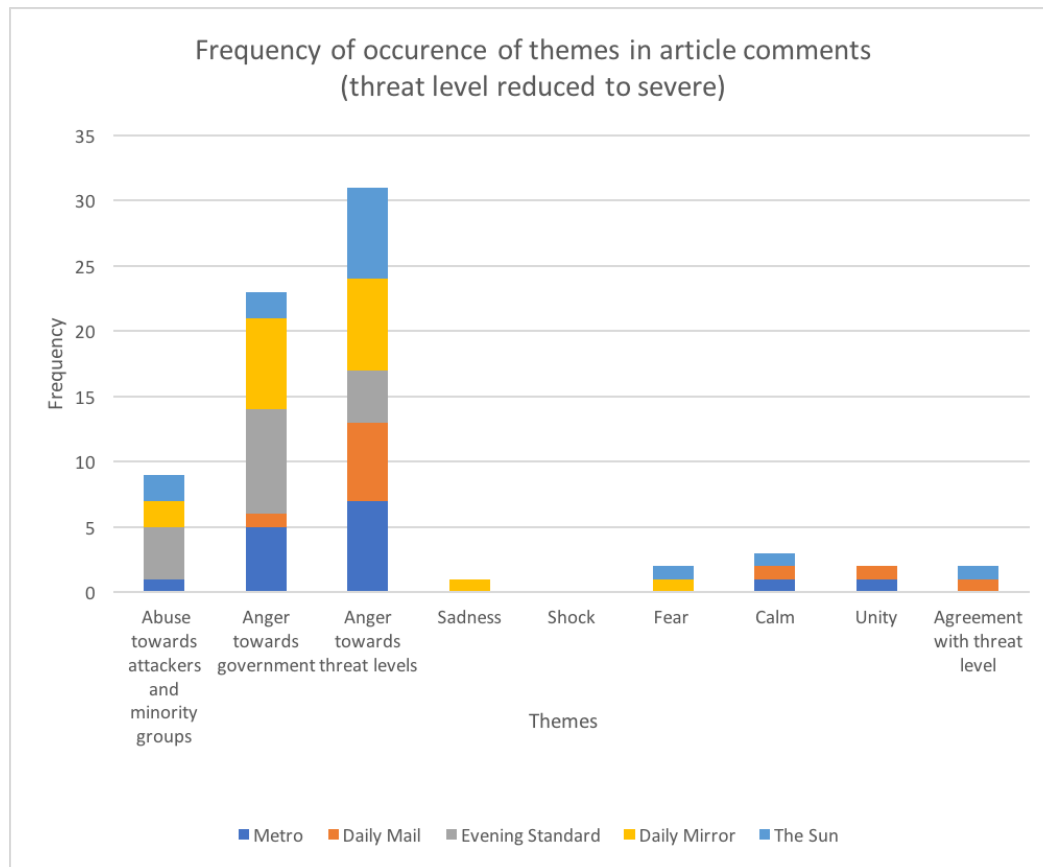
Similarly, after the decrease to severe on the 27th May, the most prevalent theme amongst comments was anger towards threat levels, as shown by the graph above.

Closer analysis of these categories through qualitative analysis shows that public anger towards threat levels relates to their use as indicators. Comments such as "too little too late"[31] when the threat level was raised, as well as "until the next attack"[32] when it was reduced on the 27th May 2017, imply the public feels the government is failing to change threat levels appropriately, contributing to uncertainty around their safety.

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[31] 14 November 2015, Daily Mail
[32] 27 May 2017, London Evening Standard

The survey confirmed that most people feel less safe or unaffected after an increase in threat levels.[33] However, most of those who felt unaffected were respondents who did not frequently worry about terrorism anyway.

Public uncertainty surrounding their safety is also displayed in qualitative analysis of comments from 2014-2017. Each announcement of threat levels caused increased fear of terrorism within the public. Common responses were "I do not feel safe in my own country" [34] and "we're all targets"[35].

The paranoia of terrorism often resulted in xenophobic comments or nationalistic fears of an "Islamic invasion"[36] of the UK. The increased abuse towards minorities post threat level announcement is demonstrated in the content analysis charts where "abuse towards minorities" is consistently one of the most frequent responses. Additionally, the fear often resulted in policy recommendations that go beyond the threat level system such as "get migrants and all muslims out of Britain"[37].

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[33] See P6 of appendix
[34] 29th August 2014, Daily Mail
[35] 22 March 2017, Daily Mirror
[36] 14 November 2015, London Evening Standard
[37] 23rd May 2017, Metro.

Conclusion

The research combined discourse and content analysis of online comments, an interview and survey results, to explore how the UK Terror Threat level system affects the public's perception of their safety.

The findings indicate the current UK threat level system increases public uncertainty regarding their own safety. The public are unsure of the meaning of the threat levels and how to respond. Whilst increasing policing to mirror increasing threat levels is supported by the public, there is anger and uncertainty surrounding police cuts. Furthermore, much of the public anger surrounding threat levels is related to their inadequacy as an indicator of terrorism.

A key limitation of the study arose from the terror attack which occurred during the research, which meant we could not survey people in person. Consequently, we were limited to an online survey, where the respondents fell largely within the 18-25 age bracket, who might respond differently to an older age bracket.

The findings demonstrate how threat levels are perceived by the public and explains which aspects of the threat level policy are increasing public uncertainty regarding safety. Whilst the results note the weaknesses of the threat level system, more research is needed to explore a potential change to the system such as clarification of threat level terminology.

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'Threat Levels' available at https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels

Appendix

Section 1: Survey

• This survey was shared various acquaintances and fellow students as well as the following online message boards:

–https://www.reddit.com/r/ukpolitics/
–https://www.reddit.com/r/london/
–https://www.reddit.com/r/manchester/
–https://www.reddit.com/r/unitedkingdom/
–https://www.reddit.com/r/research/
–http://www.politicsforum.co.uk

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

We are students conducting research at the London School of Economics (LSE).
Last week, we began collecting data for a project researching public response to a UK counter terrorism policy.

Given the recent London Bridge event, we acknowledge the sensitivity of this subject. However, your help with the survey would be greatly appreciated and could improve understanding of the issues.

This survey takes approximately 5 minutes

By taking part in the survey you are agreeing to participate anonymously and for your answers to be used in this research project. All your response data will be held securely. We have followed the ethical approval process associated with this project.

If you wish to stop the survey at any point, feel free to close the window.
If you feel particularly affected by the content, there is UK government-issued support here.

If you have any questions about the survey or the research project,
please contact a.s.rafiq@lse.ac.uk or visit LSE Groups Website

Thank you for your participation.

How effective do you think the UK government's counter terrorism policies have been?

Totally ineffective	Very ineffective	Somewhat ineffective	Neither effective nor effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective	Totally effective
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

How regularly do you worry about terrorism?

I never worry about this	a few times a year	a few times a month	a few times a week	everyday	I don't know/don't remember
○	○	○	○	○	○

How concerned about your safety do you feel after a terrorist event?

A lot less concerned	slightly less concerned	it doesn't affect my feelings	slightly more concerned	a lot more concerned
○	○	○	○	○

After a terrorist event how do your plans and activities change?

(Plans/activities include: holiday plans, going to public places, routes taken to work, using public transport etc)

They become a lot less cautious	They become slightly less cautious	My activities and plans don't change	They become slightly more cautious	They become a lot more cautious
○	○	○	○	○

Would you like to elaborate on what activities or plans you do or don't change and why?

[   ]

After a terrorist incident, for how long do you feel more worried about terrorism?

I don't feel more worried	Only on the day of the incident	For 0-1 weeks	For 1-2 weeks	For 2-3 weeks	For 3-4 weeks	For over a month
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Do you pay attention to changes in the UK Terror Threat levels?

e.g a change in the terror threat level from substantial to severe

I don't notice changes in the threat level	I rarely know when threat levels change	I sometimes know when threat levels change	I always know when threat levels change	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○

Would you like to elaborate on why you do/don't notice threat level changes?

[   ]

>>

When did you start paying attention to UK Terror Threat levels?

I don't notice changes in the threat level	2006-2007	2008-2009	2010-2011	2012-2013	2014-2015	2016-2017	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Optional: Would you like to elaborate on when you notice changes in threat levels?
E.g only after terror event, during holidays etc

[_____]

Do you know what the current UK Terror Threat level is?

Low	Moderate	Substantial	Severe	Extreme	Critical	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

How did the UK Terror Threat level change MOST RECENTLY?

I know it decreased	I think it decreased	I think it increased	I know it increased	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○

How did the UK Terror Threat level change MOST RECENTLY?

I know it decreased	I think it decreased	I think it increased	I know it increased	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○

After an INCREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel about terrorism?

significantly less worried	slightly less worried	my feelings aren't affected by these announcements	slightly more worried	significantly more worried	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○	○

Optional: If you picked "less worried" would you like to elaborate why?

[_____]

After a DECREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel about terrorism?

significantly less worried	slightly less worried	my feelings aren't affected by these announcements	slightly more worried	significantly more worried	I don't know/ don't remember
○	○	○	○	○	○

There was an increase in policing/military presence after the recent terrorist events in the UK.

How did this make you feel?

significantly less worried	slightly less worried	my feelings aren't affected by policing/military presenced	slightly more worried	significantly more worried
○	○	○	○	○

Is there a difference in how you feel if the threat level changes AFTER a terror event versus if it changes with NO PRIOR terror event?

I feel more afraid if the threat level changes AFTER a terror event	I feel equally afraid or unafraid in both cases	I feel more afraid if the threat level changes with NO PRIOR terror event	I don't know/ don't remember how I feel about this
○	○	○	○

Optional: Would you like to elaborate on how you feel when the threat level changes AFTER vs NOT AFTER a terror event?

[_____]

After an increase in the UK terror threat level WITHOUT a prior terror event, how do your plans and activities change?

my plans and activities become less cautious	my plans and activities don't change	my plans and activities become more cautious	I don't know/ don't remember how I feel about this
○	○	○	○

From 2008 to 2017, how has your fear of terrorism changed?
○ It has constantly decreased
○ Over the years it has both increased and decreased but I am now LESS afraid
○ Over the years it has sometimes decreased and sometimes not changed
○ My fear of terrorism hasn't changed
○ Over the years it has sometimes increased and sometimes not changed
○ Over the years it has both increased and decreased but I am now MORE afraid
○ It has constantly increased

Consider the following list of events. Did you feel more afraid of terrorism after any of these events? Select all that apply.

- [ ] July 2005 7/7 bombing
- [ ] 2007 Glasgow airport attacks
- [ ] 2013 murder of Lee Rigby
- [ ] 2013 Pavlo Lapshyn anti-muslim stabbing
- [ ] 2015 Charlie Hebdo attack
- [ ] 2015 Leytonstone stabbings
- [ ] 2015 Paris attacks
- [ ] 2016 murder of Jo Cox
- [ ] 2016 Bastille day lorry attack in Nice
- [ ] 2016 Berlin Christmas market
- [ ] 2017 Westminster attack
- [ ] 2017 Manchester attack
- [ ] None of these events affected my feelings but other terror events have affected me

What is your age?

- ( ) Under 18
- ( ) 18-25
- ( ) 26-45
- ( ) 46-59
- ( ) 60+

What is you religion?

- ( ) Christian
- ( ) Muslim
- ( ) Sikh
- ( ) Hindu
- ( ) Jewish
- ( ) Non religious
- ( ) Other
- ( ) Prefer not to say

What is you ethnicity?

- ( ) White (English, Irish, European, Gypsy traveller, any other white background)
- ( ) Black (African, Caribbean, and other black background)
- ( ) South Asian (Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives)
- ( ) East and South East Asian (China, Korea, Mongolia, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam Malaysia, Singapore, other east/southeast asian background)
- ( ) Other
- ( ) Prefer not to say

Where do you currently reside?

- ( ) London
- ( ) Manchester
- ( ) Other UK City
- ( ) UK non city
- ( ) Outside of UK
- ( ) Prefer not to say

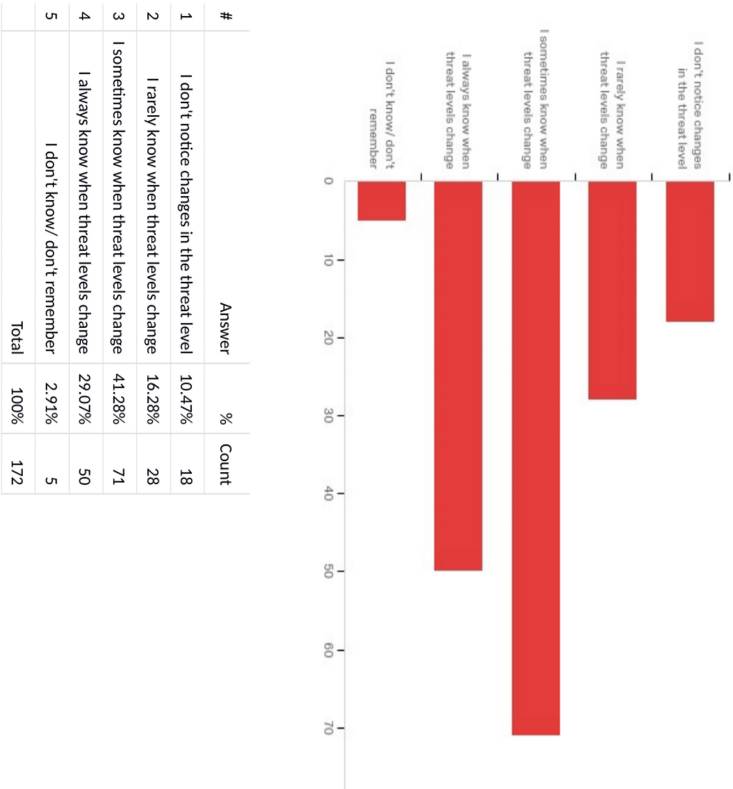## What is your occupation? (If you prefer not to say, state 'N/A')

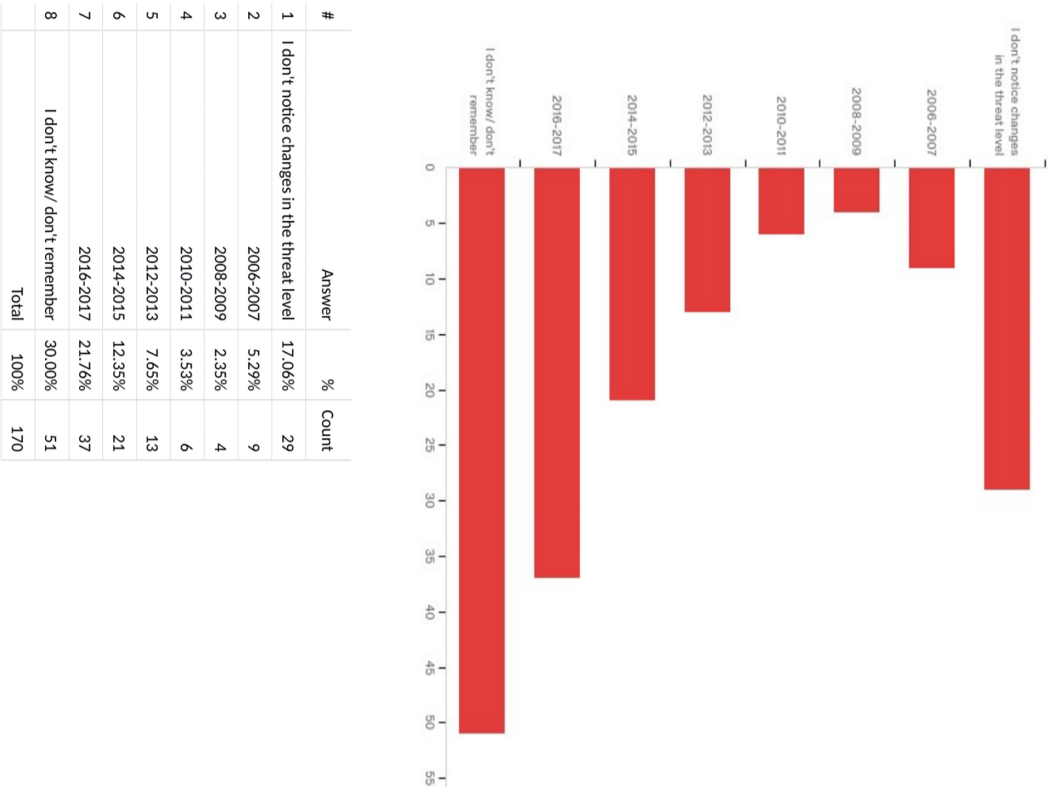[   ]

Section 2: Survey Results

- These are selected results from the survey used for our analysis. Contact a.s.rafiq@lse.ac.uk for full survey results and they shall be provided in a suitable format

Q6a - Do you pay attention to changes in the UK Terror Threat levels? e.g a change in the terror threat level from substantial to severe

#	Answer	%	Count
1	I don't notice changes in the threat level	10.47%	18
2	I rarely know when threat levels change	16.28%	28
3	I sometimes know when threat levels change	41.28%	71
4	I always know when threat levels change	29.07%	50
5	I don't know/ don't remember	2.91%	5
	Total	100%	172

Q7a - When did you start paying attention to UK Terror Threat levels?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	I don't notice changes in the threat level	17.06%	29
2	2006-2007	5.29%	9
3	2008-2009	2.35%	4
4	2010-2011	3.53%	6
5	2012-2013	7.65%	13
6	2014-2015	12.35%	21
7	2016-2017	21.76%	37
8	I don't know/ don't remember	30.00%	51
	Total	100%	170

P4

Q8 - Do you know what the current UK Terror Threat level is?
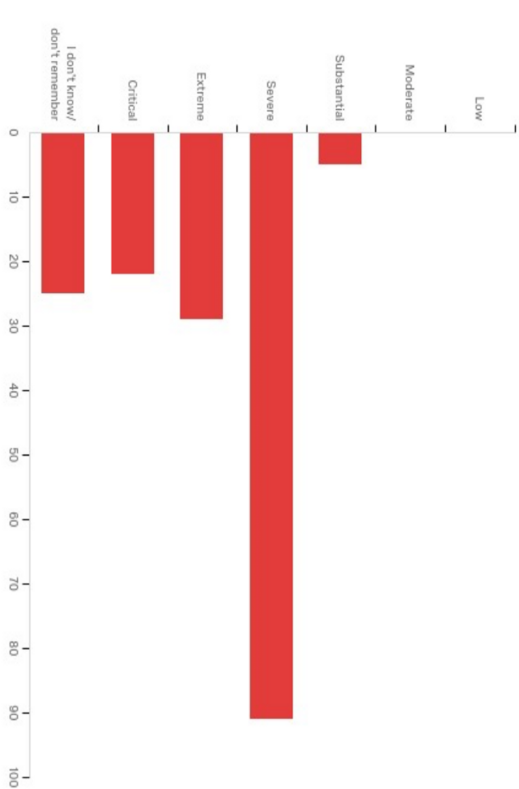
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Low	0.00%	0
2	Moderate	0.00%	0
3	Substantial	2.91%	5
4	Severe	52.91%	91
5	Extreme	16.86%	29
6	Critical	12.79%	22
7	I don't know/ don't remember	14.53%	25
	Total	100%	172

Q9 - How did the UK Terror Threat level change MOST RECENTLY?
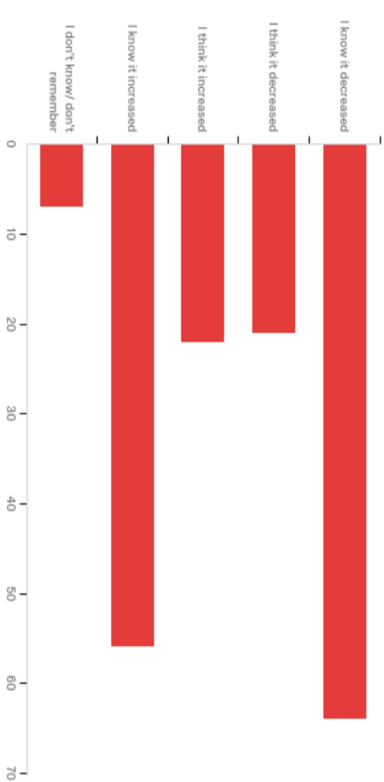
#	Answer	%	Count
1	I know it decreased	37.65%	64
2	I think it decreased	12.35%	21
3	I think it increased	12.94%	22
4	I know it increased	32.94%	56
5	I don't know/ don't remember	4.12%	7
	Total	100%	170

Q10a - After an INCREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel about terrorism?
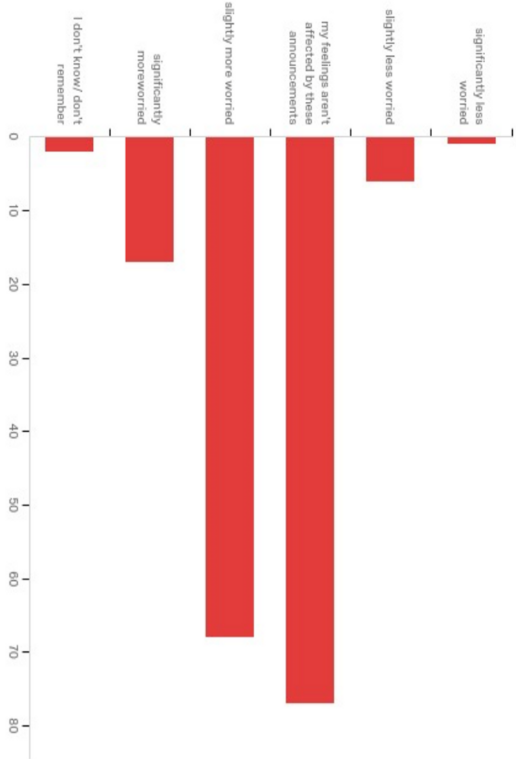
#	Answer	%	Count
1	significantly less worried	0.58%	1
2	slightly less worried	3.51%	6
3	my feelings aren't affected by these announcements	45.03%	77
4	slightly more worried	39.77%	68
5	significantly more worried	9.94%	17
6	I don't know/ don't remember	1.17%	2
	Total	100%	171

Q11 - After a DECREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel about terrorism?
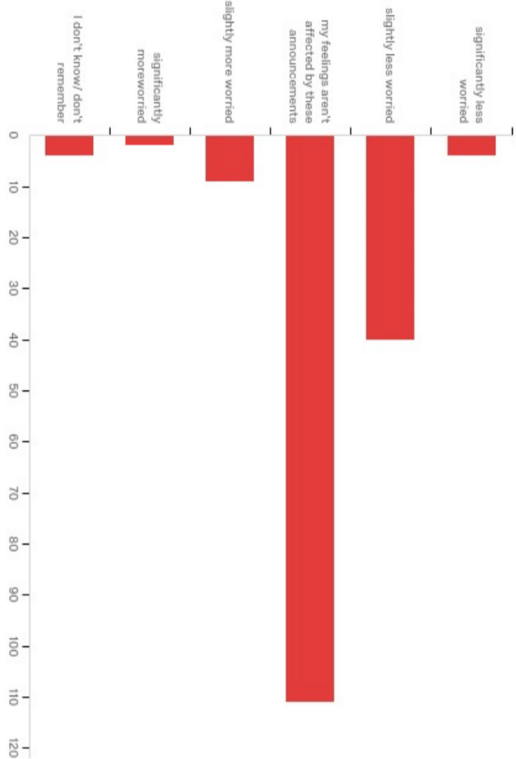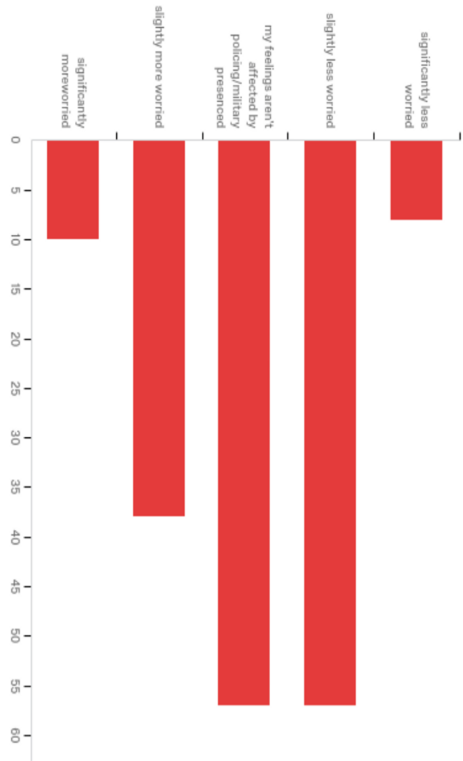

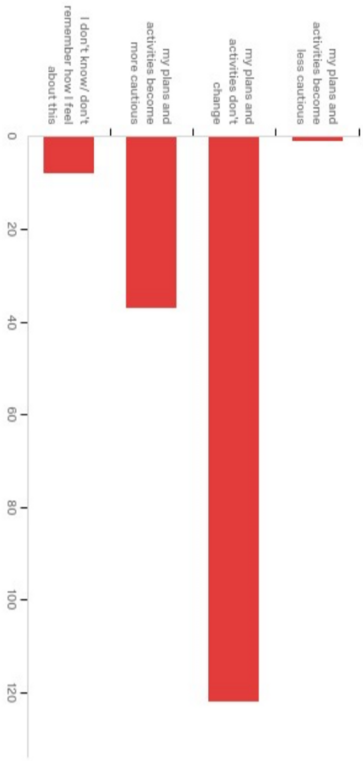| #	Answer	%	Count
1	significantly less worried	2.35%	4
2	slightly less worried	23.53%	40
3	my feelings aren't affected by these announcements	65.29%	111
4	slightly more worried	5.29%	9
5	significantly more worried	1.18%	2
6	I don't know/ don't remember	2.35%	4
	Total	100%	170

Q12 - There was an increase in policing/military presence after the recent terrorist events in the UK.
How did this make you feel?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	significantly less worried	4.71%	8
2	slightly less worried	33.53%	57
3	my feelings aren't affected by policing/military presenced	33.53%	57
4	slightly more worried	22.35%	38
5	significantly more worried	5.88%	10
	Total	100%	170

Q14 - After an increase in the UK terror threat level WITHOUT a prior terror event, how do your plans and activities change?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	my plans and activities become less cautious	0.60%	1
2	my plans and activities don't change	72.62%	122
3	my plans and activities become more cautious	22.02%	37
4	I don't know/ don't remember how I feel about this	4.76%	8
	Total	100%	168

Comparison of response to increased police presence and concern for terrorism

		How regularly do you worry about terrorism?						
		I never worry about this	a few times a year	a few times a month	a few times a week	everyday	I don't know/don't remember	Total
There was an increase in policing/military presence after the recent terrorist events in the UK….	significantly less worried	2	2	4	0	0	0	8
	slightly less worried	8	20	16	7	6	0	57
	my feelings aren't affected by policing/military presenced	25	12	6	8	4	2	57
	slightly more worried	10	8	8	9	3	0	38
	significantly more worried	1	2	2	2	3	0	10
	Total	46	44	36	26	16	2	170

		How regularly do you worry about terrorism?
There was an increase in policing/military presence after the recent terrorist events in the UK….	Chi Square	34.20*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.02

*Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.

Changes in activity in response to threat level changes and terrorist attacks

		(Plans/activities include: holiday plans, going to public places, routes taken to work, using public					
		They become a lot less cautious	They become slightly less cautious	My activities and plans don't change	They become slightly more cautious	They become a lot more cautious	Total
After an increase in the UK terror threat level WITHOUT a prior terror event, how do your plans a…	my plans and activities become less cautious	0	0	0	0	1	1
	my plans and activities don't change	0	0	97	26	4	127
	my plans and activities become more cautious	0	1	9	25	4	39
	I don't know/ don't remember how I feel about this	0	0	3	5	1	9
	Total	0	1	109	56	10	176

		(Plans/activities include: holiday plans, going to public places, routes taken to work, using public
After an increase in the UK terror threat level WITHOUT a prior terror event, how do your plans a…	Chi Square	57.93*
	Degrees of Freedom	12
	p-value	0.00

*Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.

Comparison of reaction to increase in threat level and concerns for terrorism

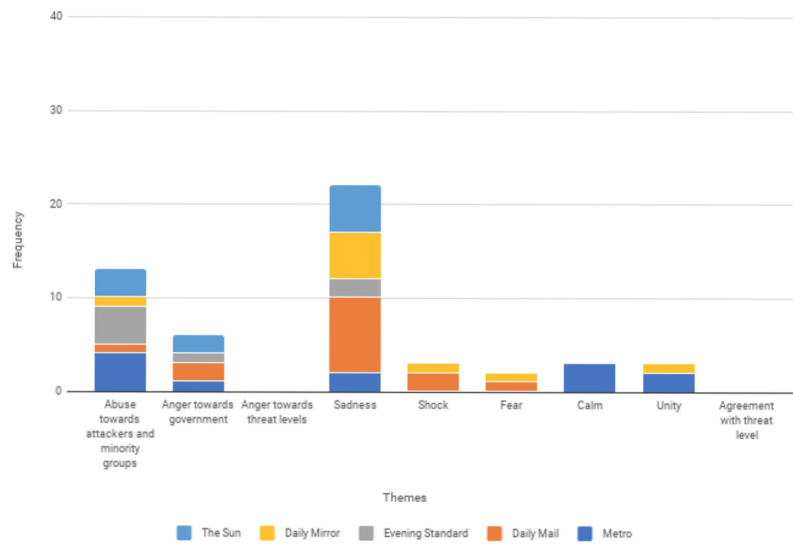|		How regularly do you worry about terrorism?						
		I never worry about this	a few times a year	a few times a month	a few times a week	everyday	I don't know/don't remember	Total
After an INCREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel…	significantly less worried	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	slightly less worried	2	2	2	0	0	0	6
	my feelings aren't affected by these announcements	36	24	10	3	2	2	77
	slightly more worried	6	17	21	19	5	0	68
	significantly more worried	0	0	3	5	9	0	17
	I don't know/ don't remember	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Total	46	44	36	27	16	2	171

		How regularly do you worry about terrorism?
After an INCREASE in the UK terror threat level is officially announced, how worried do you feel…	Chi Square	97.89*
	Degrees of Freedom	25
	p-value	0.00

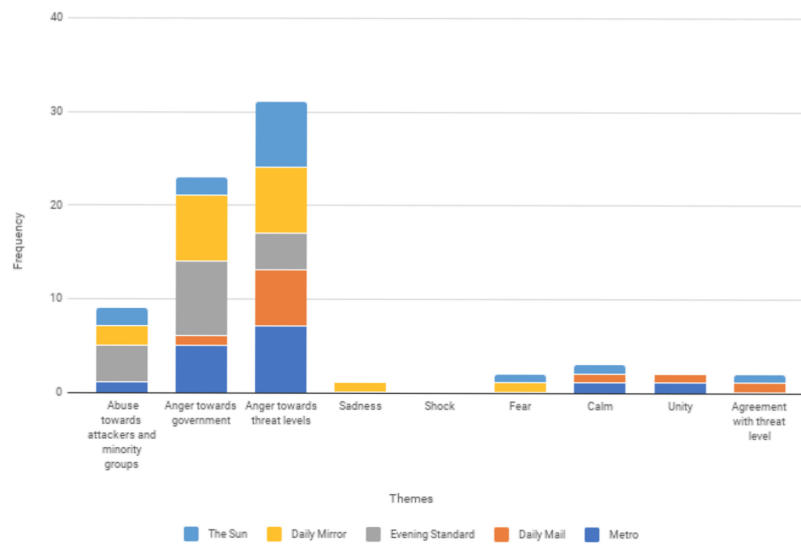*Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.

Threat Level Comment Analysis -

Themes identified	Metro	Daily Mail	Evening Standard	Daily Mirror	The Sun
Abuse towards attackers and minority	4	1	4	1	3
Anger towards government	1	2	1	0	2
Anger towards threat levels	0	0	0	0	0
Sadness	2	8	2	5	5
Shock	0	2	0	1	0
Fear	0	1	0	1	0
Calm	3	0	0	0	0
Unity	2	0	0	1	0
Agreement with threat level	0	0	0	0	0

Themes identified	Metro	Daily Mail	Evening Standard	Daily Mirror	The Sun
Abuse towards attackers and minority	4	1	3	1	4
Anger towards government	7	2	5	4	1
Anger towards threat levels	6	3	4	4	2
Sadness	0	0	1	0	3
Shock	0	0	0	0	0
Fear	2	2	0	1	0
Calm	1	0	1	0	1
Unity	0	1	1	0	2
agreement with threat level	2	0	0	1	1

Themes identified	Metro	Daily Mail	Evening Standard	Daily Mirror	The Sun
Abuse towards attackers and minority	1	0	4	2	2
Anger towards government	5	1	8	7	2
Anger towards threat levels	7	6	4	7	7
Sadness	0	0	0	1	0
Shock	0	0	0	0	0
Fear	0	0	0	1	1
Calm	1	1	0	0	1
Unity	1	1	0	0	0
Agreement with threat level	0	1	0	0	1

Frequency of occurence of themes in article comments

Frequency of occurence of themes in article comments

Frequency of occurence of themes in article comments