

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS218)

Home Office

Written Statement made by: **The Minister of State for Security (Dame Angela Eagle)** on 13 Jul 2026.

National Security

The Government is today laying before Parliament draft regulations under the National Security Act 2023, as amended by the National Security (State Threats) Act 2026, to designate three bodies: the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Islamic Movement of Companions of the Right (IMCR), and the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Volunteer Corps (GRU VC). If approved by Parliament, these will be the first designations made under the new regime.

The National Security (State Threats) Act 2026 provides law enforcement and the intelligence agencies with an additional tool to disrupt and deter foreign power threat activity directed against the United Kingdom and its interests. The Act provides a power for the Home Secretary to designate bodies involved in foreign power threat activity, where it is necessary to protect the safety or interests of the United Kingdom.

Designation introduces new criminal offences relating to supporting, assisting, or obtaining material benefit from a designated body. Where an individual engages in espionage, sabotage or foreign interference for, on behalf of or with the intention to benefit the designated body, they may also be charged under the National Security Act 2023. The maximum penalty for these offences reaches life imprisonment.

For a body to be designated, the Home Secretary must reasonably believe that it is, or has been, involved in foreign power threat activity and must consider that designation is necessary to protect the safety or interests of the United Kingdom. Having considered the available evidence and taken advice from across Government and operational partners, the Home Secretary is satisfied that the statutory test is met in respect of the following three bodies.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

The IRGC is a central component of the Iranian state's security apparatus, answerable directly to Iran's Supreme Leader. Its role extends far beyond that of a conventional military force. It encompasses intelligence activity, the use of proxy actors, and the projection of influence designed to advance Iranian state objectives.

The IRGC Qods Force (IRGC QF) and IRGC Intelligence Organisation, together with the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, form the Iranian intelligence apparatus. IRGC QF maintains and operates covert intelligence networks around the world and plays a central role in extending Iranian influence across the Middle East and beyond.

The United Kingdom has identified activity linked to the IRGC involving threats to life and intimidation on UK soil. In January 2024, the UK announced sanctions targeting Iranian officials

responsible for threat to kill on UK soil and criminal gangs who do the regime's bidding overseas. The Iranian officials designated under these sanctions were members of IRGC Unit 840, which was exposed in relation to plots to assassinate two Iran International TV journalists in the UK.

In 2022, the National Cyber Security Centre issued an advisory alongside international partners exposing malicious activity. The advisory highlighted the threat from cyber proxy actors affiliated with the IRGC targeting a broad range of entities, including entities across multiple US critical infrastructure sectors as well as Australian, Canadian and UK organisations.

The Islamic Movement of Companions of the Right (IMCR)

Between March and May 2026, there were a series of attacks and attempted attacks targeting Jewish communities, journalists and Israeli interests in the United Kingdom and across Europe. These incidents — including acts of arson and intimidation — have caused real fear and distress, and have had a profound impact on those communities affected.

The Islamic Movement of Companions of the Right (IMCR), otherwise known as Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyah, have publicly claimed seven attacks at UK locations linked to Jewish and Israeli communities, and Persian-language media, including the antisemitic arson attack on four Hatzola ambulances in Golders Green on 23 March.

Sitting behind IMCR were members of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force, who almost certainly directed IMCR attacks across Europe.

While the IRGC has already been sanctioned in its entirety by the UK, designation of both IMCR and IRGC under this framework will strengthen our ability to disrupt and take enforcement action against those supporting or facilitating this type of activity, and reinforces the UK's position that these malign actions are unacceptable.

Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Volunteer Corps (GRU VC)

The Government assesses that the GRU Volunteer Corps forms part of a network of volunteer and proxy formations that are controlled, coordinated and overseen by the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (GRU), Russia's military intelligence service. The GRU has a long-standing record of state threats activity directed against the United Kingdom and its allies, including the 2018 Salisbury nerve agent attack and wider sabotage and intelligence activity across Europe.

In 2023, the Russian Ministry of Defence introduced reforms which mandated that volunteer formations fighting in Ukraine should be brought under formal contractual arrangements with the GRU and the Russian Ministry of Defence. Since these reforms, the GRU has directly supervised and funded these volunteer formations, using them as recruitment and deployment mechanisms in support of Russian military and intelligence objectives. This includes elements of the former Wagner Group, who have conducted sabotage activity in the UK, and which now receive direct GRU tasking and supervision.

These arrangements are part of a broader model through which the Russian state combines conventional military capabilities with irregular and deniable forces, intended to project Russian power abroad and undermine European and NATO security.

As such, the Government assesses that the GRU Volunteer Corps are involved in foreign power threat activity, including sabotage and other activity directed against the UK and Europe. This designation will strengthen the United Kingdom's ability to disrupt activity linked to these formations and protect UK national security.

Having carefully considered all the evidence, the Home Secretary has concluded that there is

sufficient basis to reasonably believe that each of these bodies is engaged in foreign power threat activity, and that each designation is necessary to protect the safety and interests of the United Kingdom.