

PRESENTATION BY COLIN MAGUIRE

FRONTEIR ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The Frontier Engagement Team has two Projects; Kraken and Pegasus.

Project Kraken is tasked with guarding the UK borders and coastline and reduce risk of terrorists coming in anywhere on the UK's 350 miles of coastline. Kent is clearly at the forefront of this; there are a lot of vulnerable points and Kent is the quickest route into the UK and provides a corridor to London, Manchester and other large conurbations.

The task force is funded by the Home Office and not the Police so resources are not taking from Police budgets.

Some years ago, an estimated 500 plus (maybe as many 1000) left the UK to fight for ISIS – some will come back, either voluntarily or sent back, and if picked up at ports or airports, they could be arrested and detained. So a more clandestine route of entry using small craft accessing Kent beaches may be used, although using the back of a lorry is still popular. With the disbandment of the migrant camps in Calais, police and immigration have lost sight of possible terrorists they had been keeping an eye on.

So an 'eyes and ears' network around the Kent coast is being built up to report any suspicious activity. Mariners tend to know what is out of the ordinary on 'their patch' and are encouraged to report anything at all suspicious.

OCG – Organised Crime Groups from London and the Medway, are taking over local criminal gangs and are smuggling drugs as well people trafficking into the UK. Police are checking boatyards for sales of small craft. There are 100's of volunteers – harbourmasters, RNLI – although as a Charity, the police are reluctant to 'use' the RNLI. But they have advised RNLI to check the body language of anyone rescued – do others seem to be afraid/in awe of one particular person? Most RNLI groups have been briefed.

Police have walked the Coast, taking arial photographs, and using wide-angled lense to photograph much of the Kent Coast which is shallow.

To report any suspicious activity, phone 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800555111

There is a Special Branch Control Room number as well as a number for project Kraken. (Charter Trustees were given the number but it is not for general information)

Project Pegasus targets the aviation community. Kent has over 100 airstrips and all have been photographed from the air. Although this is a national project, the number of airstrips so close to the continent makes Kent vulnerable to Organised Crime Groups and terrorists.

The penalty for being caught smuggling drugs and firearms could be up to 20 years imprisonment; for people smuggling -including potential terrorists, who may pay between £10k and £20k each to enter the UK – is 18 months – 2 years at Crown Court. It is easy to see that the trade in people smuggling is more lucrative with less penalty attached if caught.