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ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE

Alan Waddell

Police Scotland Headquarters
Tulliallan Castle
Kincardine
FK10 4BE
Tel: 01259 733139

ACCOperationalSupport@scotland.police.uk

Dear Candidate

As the Police Scotland lead for the forthcoming Scottish Parliament Election on Thursday 7th May 2026, I would like to take the opportunity to share with you a range of personal security guidance and good practice recommendations that I believe may be of benefit to you and your staff during the forthcoming election campaign.

The current UK national threat level from all forms of terrorism is SUBSTANTIAL, meaning an attack is likely.

While it is recognised that a small number of extremist groups hold opposition to democratic principles, and may view elections as potential targets, it is equally important to note that there are measures in place to help mitigate these risks. I wish to further assure you that I am not aware of any specific threat to either this election or to any candidate standing in Scotland.

In this context, I consider it appropriate to highlight the following advice and recommendations, which are intended to support your safety and resilience throughout the campaign. The undernoted guidance has been curated by a Police Scotland Counter Terrorism Security Advisor.

The attached document, '**Guidance for Election Candidates in Scotland**', compiled in conjunction with the Electoral Management Board, outlines behaviours which candidates may experience. While certain behaviours may, in some cases constitute criminal conduct, I would like to reassure you that historically the number of such incidents reported by candidates has been low.

The attached document, '**The Blue Book – A Guide to Personal Security**', produced by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), serves as a comprehensive and authoritative resource on the topic of personal security.

The attached document, '**My Digital Footprint a Guide**', produced by the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA), the national technical authority for physical and personnel security, is designed to provide practical steps you can take to minimise online security risks.

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The attached document, 'The Preparation and Use of Safer Areas to Protect High-Risk Individuals', produced by NPSA, contains advice on the use of a safer area within your home or workplace to protect yourself and those living or working with you from immediate threats to your personal safety and security.

Furthermore, please see the following additional online sources of guidance.

Personal Safety and Security for High-Risk Individuals

This NPSA guidance is intended for individuals who face heightened risks affecting their personal safety and security. Threats may arise from national security concerns, such as those from state-backed actors or terrorists.

[Personal Safety & Security for High-Risk Individuals | Specialised Guidance | NPSA](#)

Guidance for Individuals in Politics

Produced by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and NPSA, the guidance is designed for those working in political life and provides security advice for both the physical and online space.

[Defending Democracy | National Security Act | NPSA](#)

[Defending Democracy - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

[UK Gov Candidate Security Guidance Collection](#)

The NCSC [Individual Cyber Defence](#) (ICD) services are available to all party members and election candidates to improve their personal cyber resilience. ICD forms part of the NCSC cyber offer that was created in the run up to the General Election in response to ongoing cyber threats to UK Officials' personal accounts.

Think Before You Link

Guidance produced by the NPSA warning that criminals and hostile actors may pose as recruiters online to steal sensitive information and offers guidance on recognising, responding to, and reducing such threats to individuals, organisations, and UK national security.

[Think Before You Link \(TBYL\) | NPSA](#)

Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) Suite of Products

The NaCTSO website 'ProtectUK' contains additional protective security guidance and up to date developments affecting UK security. The website also hosts the 'ACT Suite of Products', aimed at raising awareness and capability of counter terrorism measures. The training packages include 'ACT eLearning'. This is an entry level, interactive product designed to provide guidance to help mitigate against current terrorist methodology, information on how to spot the signs of suspicious behaviour and understand what to do in the event of a major incident.

protectuk.police.uk

Safety on the Doorstep

To assist with safe campaigning, advice is contained at:

suzy.lamplugh.org/staying-safe-on-the-doorstep

Protest Advice

Contact venues in advance. If you become aware of a protest at a venue you are visiting venue staff should assist, including alternative entry/exit routes and for security to be in place to assist you. Consider the most appropriate route minimising potential engagement with protest sites. The police may have pre-planned protest sites allocated, so it is also worth considering contacting police for advice on your attendance. In some circumstances, such attendance may place yourself in a vulnerable position, so consider not attending and removing yourself to a place of safety where necessary.

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Online Candidate Security Briefings

Police Scotland will be hosting online drop-in security briefings for candidates in the run up to the election. These sessions will be 1 hour in length and can be accessed via the details in the attached document, **'Online Candidate Security Briefings'**.

As previously stated, I am not aware of any specific threat in relation to this election or any candidate standing in Scotland. If you have any specific concerns relating to protective security matters, please contact your local police station or dial 101 and identify yourself as a candidate for election. As always, should you feel that an incident necessitates an immediate police response please dial 999.

Please be assured that Police Scotland remains fully committed to your safety and wellbeing throughout the election period. Should you have any questions or need further security advice in relation to your role as an election candidate, our advisors can be contacted on OSDBridgerFordFEOA@scotland.police.uk and are here to support you, answer your questions, and help you feel confident as you go about your campaign activities.

We value the important role you play in the democratic process and will continue working closely with you to ensure you and your team feel safe, informed, and supported at every stage.

I trust you will find this to be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Al Waddell'.

Alan Waddell
Assistant Chief Constable
Operational Support

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