



Report on Resilience First & PA Consulting Webinar

30 June 2020

‘National resilience – what does it mean?’

Speakers:

Elisabeth Braw, Senior Research Fellow, Modern Deterrence, RUSI

Alex Ellis CMG, Deputy National Security Adviser, Cabinet Office

Chair:

Cate Pye, Partner, PA Consulting

Key Messages

- National resilience is important because without it the country is exposed to potential calamities from either nature or our adversaries. In terms of military defence, the UK is well prepared but the nation may be underprepared below the military threshold. It is not enough to have preparedness in government alone but should involve business and the wider public. However, this requires closer and earlier dialogue between government and business to be effective.
- Adversaries will have noted our unpreparedness to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic and may be ready to exploit vulnerabilities. A good degree of resilience can confer an element of deterrence.
- Opportunities for people to play their part in national resilience/security other than joining the armed services should be possible. There is a need for a voluntary reserve to meet other critical functions as well. Such a reserve could be a resource allowing the government to surge in a crisis.
- The public could be viewed as a resource in a crisis and not a burden that the government needs to look after. However, the public and voluntary sectors need to be incentivised. (The existing National Youth Service in the UK already has problems recruiting.)
- Other countries can provide valuable lessons. Sweden, for instance, is currently conducting a ‘total defence exercise’ that brings together all parts of society while Finland has a national defence course for upcoming managers from both government and industry in order to improve collaboration. (Latvia is reportedly introducing a similar programme.) Public awareness campaigns have been deployed in Sweden, for instance, without causing undue alarm.
- Young people could be selected for their talent and skills with resilience training between school and university including first-aid training, survival skills and disaster preparedness. This could create a critical mass of the population that would act as a surge resource for first responders.

- Ideas could include new resilience compliance reporting requirements for business, and exercises including business and citizens as well as government and first responders. During the pandemic, several public services including the NHS and the police called up reserves from their retired employees.
- The UK Government's Integrated Review is part of a standard five-year review process that guides future spending reviews. On the political stage, the government is committed to remain an open and international player. The Covid-19 pandemic has shone a 'sharp light' on national and international resilience as well as accelerated trends in technology, security and resilience. Resilience (anticipate, deter, withstand, respond, recover) will be a major theme of the Integrated Review.
- The review will highlight the need to reduce fragility in order to minimise harm from both national and international threats, including pre- and post-conflict. This will see better cross-government, cross-departmental collaboration, as well as work closely with international partners and organisations. The public-private engagement over vaccine development for SARS-CoV-2 has been a mark of such collaboration.
- There is a need for a 'whole of society' response. This will involve a broader interpretation of the critical national infrastructure. It may require legislation such as a re-examination of the CCA (2004), enhanced reporting by organisations, better education, diversifying supply chains as well as possibly more onshoring, and greater planning and exercising in more risk areas to mention a few. It may also involve creating a reserve force. That has a cost to it but is a way of creating additional capacity. The government can lead in these developments but it needs to ensure the burden is spread across society.
- The review will look at how do we together make the country more resilient and incentivize the right kinds of behaviours. The key question is how do we achieve the aim of making the country more resilient, not just through government, but through all of us. It will require the active participation of industry.
- The Integrated Review offers a unique opportunity to design how we use national and international capabilities to help build UK resilience and drive our economy beyond the Coronavirus pandemic.

The speakers answered a series of questions from the participating audience.

The full video recording can be found [here](#).

Speakers' Biographies

Cate Pye

Cate is an experienced Strategic Partner and Adviser who has worked extensively at senior levels in the defence, security and cyber sectors. She has advised on policy, strategy and delivery of large and high-profile programmes and change initiatives, and provides coaching to senior leaders in both corporate and government departments.

Following her Master's in Engineering from Churchill College, Cambridge, Cate joined the UK Ministry of Defence working across engineering projects and international policy. This included work on Eurofighter Typhoon, submarines and surface ships, as well as policy for UK support to the South Caucasus during the Rose Revolution in Georgia, and Civil Contingencies and Emergency Response for the EU and NATO.

Cate moved to Management Consultancy in 2006, first at PA Consulting then leading EY's Government Cyber and Security Business. Here the focus was on helping clients with their most challenging transformations and programme deliveries. Highlights have included work on Olympic Security, High Value Exports and the National Cyber Security Programme to name but a few.

Cate has recently returned to PA Consulting to lead the Digital Trust and Cyber Security Transformation capability, helping clients understand what is important as they grow their organisations in an increasingly fast moving and enabled world.

Cate is a Chartered Engineer, Fellow of the IMechE and has published and spoken widely on the challenges to cyber and security.

Elisabeth Braw

Elisabeth Braw directs RUSI's Modern Deterrence project, which focuses on how governments, business and civil society can work together to strengthen countries' defence against existing and emerging threats. Prior to RUSI, she worked at Control Risks following a career as a journalist where she reported from the United States, Germany, Italy and other countries. She is a columnist for *Foreign Policy* and contributes to the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times*, the *Times* and (writing in German) the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

Elisabeth has also been a Visiting Fellow at the University of Oxford. A native of Sweden, she attended university in Germany, finishing her Magister Artium degree in political science and German literature with a dissertation on nuclear weapons reduction in Europe. She speaks German, Swedish, English and conversational Italian.

Elisabeth is a member of the steering group of the Aurora Forum (the UK/Nordic/Baltic leadership forum) and the author of *God's Spies*, about the state, church and spy craft in East Germany. She also hosts the *On the Cusp* podcast.

Alex Ellis CMG

Alex Ellis started as Deputy National Security Adviser for the Integrated Review on diplomacy, development and defence in January 2020. Prior to that, he was Director General in the Department for Exiting the EU for three years.

Alex has extensive experience in security issues and strategy, including as:

- DExEU Director General responsible for the UK-EU security partnership, international agreements with the UK's closest partners and domestic and EU engagement on Brexit.
- British Ambassador to Brazil (2013-2017) and Portugal (2007-10).
- Director of Strategy in the Foreign Office responsible for developing new tools for improving FCO and government policy.
- Member of the Cabinet of the President of the European Commission, with responsibility for energy, climate change, competition, development, trade and strategy; before that in the UK Representation to the EU working on the negotiations to establish the euro, the seven-year budget, and then institutional issues including the Treaty of Nice. Alex has worked in the British Embassy in Madrid and started his civil service career as part of the team supporting the transition to multi-party democracy in South Africa, following the release of Nelson Mandela.