

*These notes refer to the Terrorism Act 2000 (c.11)  
which received Royal Assent on 20th July 2000*

# **TERRORISM ACT 2000**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **COMMENTARY**

#### **Part I: Introductory**

##### ***Section 1: Terrorism: interpretation***

10. Under the PTA, terrorism “means the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear” (section 20). The definition in the PTA is limited in that the powers and offences in that Act only apply to terrorism connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland (“Irish terrorism”) or Irish and international terrorism. The Act, as suggested in the consultation document, adopts a wider definition, recognising that terrorism may have religious or ideological as well as political motivation, and covering actions which might not be violent in themselves but which can, in a modern society, have a devastating impact. These could include interfering with the supply of water or power where life, health or safety may be put at risk. *Subsection (2)(e)* covers the disrupting of key computer systems. *Subsection (3)* provides that where action involves firearms or explosives, it does not have to be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public to be included in the definition. This is to ensure that, for instance, the assassination of key individuals is covered.
11. *Subsection (4)* provides for the definition to cover terrorism not only within the United Kingdom but throughout the world. This is implicit in the PTA definition but the Act makes it explicit.