

Update to the UK's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy Inquiry

Submission from the Centre for Long-Term Resilience (IRR0010)

The Centre for Long-Term Resilience

- 1.1 The Centre for Long-Term Resilience (CLTR) is an independent think tank with a mission to transform global resilience to extreme risks. We do this by working with governments and other institutions to improve relevant governance, processes, and decision making. We are based in Whitehall in central London.
- 1.2 Extreme risks are high impact threats with global reach. They have the potential to devastate lives and economies around the world. We focus on two areas of risk where effective governance today could substantially mitigate both current and future threats: Artificial intelligence (AI) and Biosecurity. Most pertinently for this inquiry, we also focus on Risk Management more broadly — the process of both transforming risk governance, and of identifying, assessing and mitigating all extreme risks.
- 1.3 We are submitting evidence because we believe that the *Update to the UK's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy Inquiry* presents a critical opportunity to:
 - maintain a vital focus on building resilience to extreme risks;
 - deliver a comprehensive national resilience strategy, involving the overhaul of the UK's risk management system;
 - transform the Review into an adaptive, dynamic and forward-looking strategy;
 - integrate externally-facilitated, regular workshops amongst senior teams on a cross-functional/departmental basis into the government's risk management and Integrated Review processes.

Recommendations

Maintaining the Integrated Review's vital focus on building resilience to extreme risks

- 2.1 The Integrated Review explicitly identified the danger to the UK posed by extreme risks, emphasising the critical need to "build national resilience across the diverse range of risks facing the UK: malicious and nonmalicious, direct and indirect, and acute and chronic – including low-probability, catastrophic-impact events."¹ The Review goes on to state that "this means integrating national security with economic, health and environmental policy, and taking an approach that covers the full lifecycle of risk: anticipation, prevention, preparation, response and recovery."
- 2.2 This Inquiry takes place during a period – recently coined by the Collins Dictionary as a "permacrisis" – during which the Government is trying to manage as series of

¹ [Integrated Review](#), pp 88

overlapping crises that include energy shortages, public sector strikes, NHS pressures and unexpected floods.² While it is understandable that the Government must devote resources to the management of these ongoing crises, it is critical that the Government doesn't lose sight of the threat to the country of *extreme risks* - low-probability, catastrophic-impact events. The danger is that operating in 'permacrisis mode' will mean these get overlooked – losing the opportunity to take out an 'insurance policy' now rather than waiting for a catastrophic event to happen and spending billions on the consequences.

2.3 **Recommendation 1: ensure that the Updated Integrated Review maintains its vital focus on building resilience to extreme risks.**

Delivering a comprehensive national resilience strategy, involving the overhaul of the UK's risk management system

- 3.1 The Integrated Review committed to "start developing a **comprehensive national resilience strategy** in 2021" [the report's emphasis], focused on establishing a 'whole-of-society' approach to resilience – considering threats and hazards in the round, developing more capabilities that can be used across a range of scenarios, reviewing our approach to risk assessment and strengthening our analytical, policy and operational tools to better assess cross-cutting, complex risks.³
- 3.2 In launching the call for evidence for the National Resilience Strategy in July 2021, Penny Mordaunt as Paymaster-General highlighted the need to deal better with 'whole-system' emergencies: "Without a fundamental step change we simply won't be as safe in future as we have been in the past."⁴
- 3.3 The National Resilience Strategy provides a critical opportunity to overhaul the UK's risk management system. This should involve:
 - i) Implementing the 'Three Lines of Defence' model, in which:
 - Departmental risk owners on the first line would be accountable to a Chief Risk Officer (CRO) on the second line, a single point of accountability for risk management in government;
 - The CRO should be at the core of government (No 10, Treasury or Cabinet Office), reporting to the Prime Minister or Chancellor or Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and advising a cabinet-level subsidiary committee to the National Security Council chaired by the Prime Minister or the Chancellor;
 - An independent review function would form the third line, a National Extreme Risks Institute or equivalent sitting outside government, made up of external risk experts and established by statute (like the Climate Change Committee), reporting to Parliament via a joint select committee such as the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy. This third line

² [Permacrisis declared Collins Dictionary word of the year](#), BBC News

³ [Integrated Review](#), pp 88

⁴ [National Resilience Strategy](#), pp 37

function will ensure the ongoing involvement of experts and the transparency of the overall risk management process.

- ii) Significantly enhance the government's National Security Risk Assessment, by:
 - Implementing an improved National Security Risk Assessment and National Risk Register with an expanded timeline well beyond two years in order to sufficiently capture extreme risks;
 - Institute an enhanced risk identification, assessment and mitigation process involving workshops including horizon scanning, vulnerability assessment, scenario analysis and mitigation action planning.

- iii) Establishing the UK as a global leader in resilience, by:
 - Calling on other countries to create their own 'Three Lines of Defence' risk management structures, and sharing the blueprint to do so;
 - Encouraging annual meetings of CROs from around the world, to share information and learning from each others' views of emerging risks and risk assessments (this could include for example pandemic risk assessments and preparedness plans);
 - Developing a set of light structures and processes for UN member states to address extreme risks, working initially with like-minded nations, as a stepping stone to a formal Treaty on Existential Risks to Humanity, with a series of UN Security Council resolutions to place the new framework on the strongest legal footing.

3.4 These recommendations, which we submitted to the National Resilience Strategy Call for Evidence, have been reflected in the recent report by the Institute for Government on managing extreme risks.⁵

3.5 Sixteen months since the announcement that the Government will develop a National Resilience Strategy, it has not yet been published. The Updated Integrated Review - as the overarching review which first conceived a comprehensive national resilience strategy – must ensure that its component National Resilience Strategy is delivered, and done so as a matter of urgency.

3.6 The National Resilience Strategy must include resilience to extreme risks and be implemented with multi-year staff and funding provision.

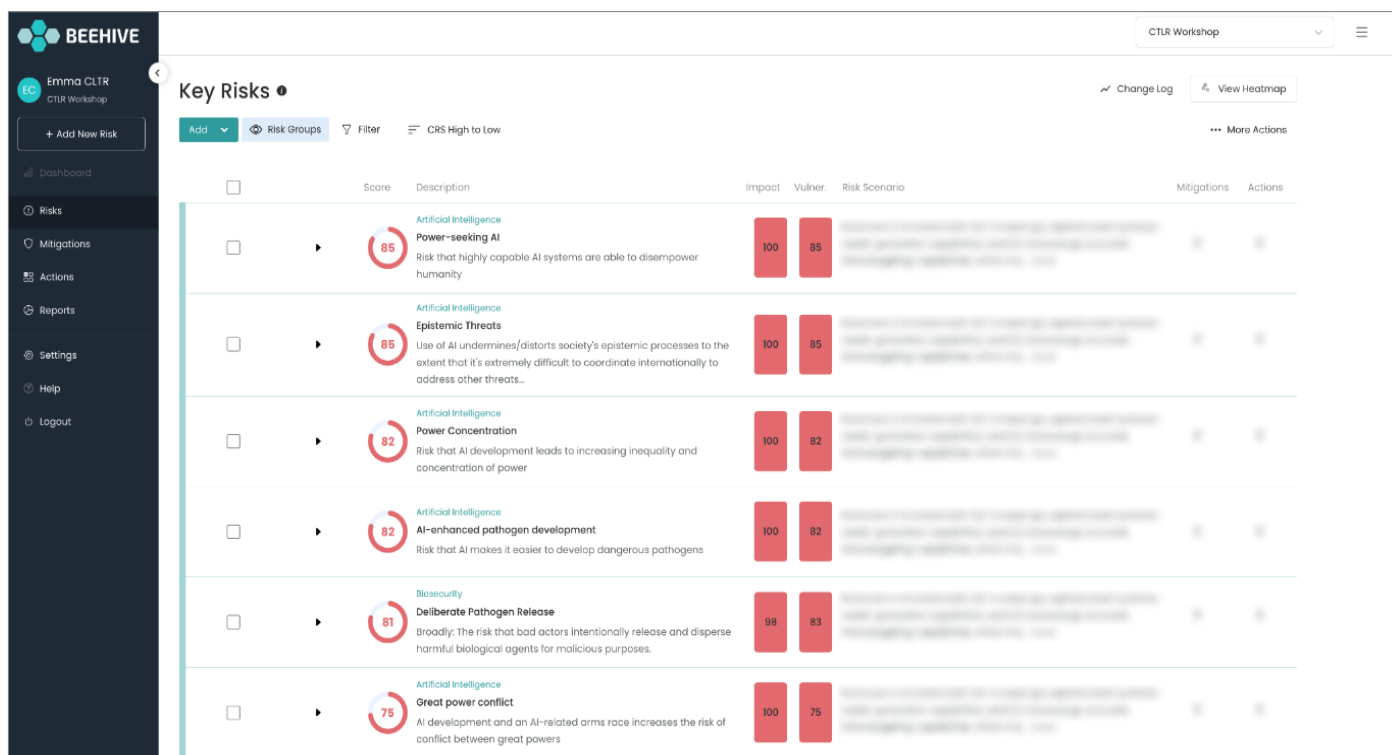
3.7 The National Resilience Strategy should also make provision for resilience work to continue through government transitions with Civil Service leaders in key resilience-related positions (such as the Director for Resilience in the Cabinet office) being expected to fulfil a minimum defined length of service and with encouragement for them to stay longer in post, for example by allowing in-team promotions for outstanding performers.

3.8 Recommendation 2: Deliver a comprehensive national resilience strategy, involving the overhaul of the UK's risk management system.

⁵ [Managing extreme risks](#), Institute for Government, pp 28

Transforming the Review into an adaptive, dynamic and forward-looking strategy

- 4.1 The fact that the Integrated Review is being updated less than two years after it was published shows quickly the geopolitical and security landscape is changing. A pioneering new risk management process that we have developed with a third-party partner (implemented elsewhere with considerable success) would ensure that the Updated Integrated Review is adaptive, dynamic and forward-looking as a strategy.
- 4.2 This process would involve risk identification and assessment conducted through half-yearly workshops with cross-functional senior teams involved, followed by mitigation planning and action assignment as required.
- 4.3 Drawing on an innovative framework and automated tool developed in the private sector – called 'Risk360' – and specifically adapted for government use, existing and emerging risks would be defined, scenarios drawn up, and these assessed and scored in terms of six different impact dimensions and vulnerability to them (considered in terms of existing mitigations to prevent risk events, robustness of response to address them and extent to which the conditions leading to an event are controllable). Further mitigations would then be identified and actions assigned to relevant risk owners. An example is shown in Figure 1 below.



The screenshot shows the 'Key Risks' dashboard in the BEEHIVE system. The dashboard includes a sidebar with navigation options like 'Dashboard', 'Risks', 'Mitigations', 'Actions', 'Reports', 'Settings', 'Help', and 'Logout'. The main content area displays a table of risks with columns for 'Score', 'Description', 'Impact', 'Vulnerability', 'Risk Scenario', 'Mitigations', and 'Actions'. Each risk entry includes a score in a red circle and a description of the risk. The table is filtered by 'CRS High to Low'.

Score	Description	Impact	Vulnerability	Risk Scenario	Mitigations	Actions
85	Artificial Intelligence Power-seeking AI Risk that highly capable AI systems are able to disempower humanity	100	85			
85	Artificial Intelligence Epistemic Threats Use of AI undermines/distorts society's epistemic processes to the extent that it's extremely difficult to coordinate internationally to address other threats...	100	85			
82	Artificial Intelligence Power Concentration Risk that AI development leads to increasing inequality and concentration of power	100	82			
82	Artificial Intelligence AI-enhanced pathogen development Risk that AI makes it easier to develop dangerous pathogens	100	82			
81	Biosecurity Deliberate Pathogen Release Broadly: The risk that bad actors intentionally release and disperse harmful biological agents for malicious purposes.	98	83			
75	Artificial Intelligence Great power conflict AI development and an AI-related arms race increases the risk of conflict between great powers	100	75			

Figure 1: a screenshot showing some existing and emerging risks and their overall scores, based on the different dimensions of impact and vulnerability. The right-hand text is blurred for confidentiality reasons.

4.4 Recommendation 3: Transform the Review into an adaptive, dynamic and forward-looking strategy.

Integrate regular cross-functional/departmental workshops amongst senior teams with external facilitation by risk management experts

5.1 Workshops are an integral part of the risk management process (ref 3.3.ii second bullet and 4.2 above). They are a useful tool to keep the process, risk registers and strategy dynamic, adaptive and forward-looking.

5.2 Recommendation 4: Integrate externally-facilitated, regular workshops amongst senior teams on a cross-functional/departmental basis into the government's risk management and Integrated Review processes.

-Ends-

28 November 2022