



## ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS REPORT 2008





**ABOVE:** Antisemitic graffiti on a pavement in north London, October 2008

**FRONT COVER:** Swastika cut into ground opposite a Jewish school, Essex, July 2008

# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2008</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Extreme Violence</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Assault</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Damage and Desecration of Property</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Threats</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Abusive Behaviour</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Literature</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Victims</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Perpetrators and motives</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Trigger events and baseline levels</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Typology of incidents: mission, opportunistic or aggravated</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Antisemitic incidents on and off campus</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Geographical locations and differences</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Graphs and tables</b>	
<b>Geographical breakdown of antisemitic incidents in the UK 2008</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Antisemitic incidents category totals 2008</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Annual incidents figures since 1998</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Monthly incidents figures 1998 - 2008</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annual incidents figures by category 1998 - 2008</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annual incidents figures full breakdown for 2008</b>	<b>19</b>

# Executive summary

- 541 antisemitic incidents were recorded by CST in 2008. This is the third-highest annual total since CST began recording antisemitic incidents in 1984.
- The total of 541 incidents is a fall of four per cent from the 2007 total of 561<sup>1</sup> incidents. This is the second consecutive year in which the annual total has fallen, from a high of 598 incidents in 2006.
- The decrease in the number of incidents is due to the absence during 2007 and 2008 of significant 'trigger events' that can cause temporary increases in antisemitic incidents. The one trigger event that did occur during 2008, the fighting between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, came too close to the end of the year to affect the overall trend for 2008, but it is likely to cause a rise in the incidents total for 2009.
- There were 88 violent incidents in 2008, a fall of 25 per cent from the 117 assaults recorded in 2007. The 2007 figure was the highest number of violent antisemitic assaults ever recorded by CST.
- The 88 violent incidents include one incident categorised as Extreme Violence, in which a Jewish man in Manchester was stabbed to death. His assailant, who had delusions that Jewish people were persecuting him, has been indefinitely detained in a high security psychiatric hospital. This is the first antisemitic killing in Britain since CST began recording antisemitic incidents in 1984.
- Incidents of Damage & Desecration to Jewish property rose by 14 per cent, from 65 incidents in 2006 to 74 incidents in 2008.
- There were 314 incidents of Abusive Behaviour in 2008, a fall of seven per cent from the 336 incidents recorded in 2007. This category includes verbal abuse, hate-mail and antisemitic graffiti on non-Jewish property. This is the second consecutive year in which this category total has decreased.
- There were 28 incidents reported to CST in the category of Threats, which includes direct threats to people or property, rather than more general abuse. This is an increase from the 24 incidents reported to CST in 2007.
- There were 37 incidents recorded in the category of Literature in 2008, which covers mass-produced antisemitic mailings rather than individual hate-mail. This is a 95 per cent rise from the 19 incidents in this category in 2007, largely due to the actions of a single perpetrator who sent over 20 antisemitic mailings to Jewish communal organisations.
- In 67 incidents the victims were Jewish students, academics or other student bodies. This is a 14 per cent rise from the 59 student-related incidents recorded in 2007, which was itself a large rise from the 18 such incidents in 2006. This partly reflects better reporting of incidents by students to CST.
- 50 incidents were targeted at Jewish schools or schoolchildren, a six per cent rise from the 47 incidents relating to schools and schoolchildren recorded in 2007. Of the 50 incidents, 33 were against Jewish schoolchildren on their journeys to or from school, while nine took place on Jewish school premises.
- Of the 541 incidents recorded by CST, 236 took place in Greater London, 125 in Greater Manchester and 180 were reported to CST from over 50 other locations around the country.
- In addition to the 541 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2008, a further 347 reports of potential incidents were received by CST, but not included in the total number of antisemitic incidents as there was no evidence of antisemitic motivation, targeting or content.

<sup>1</sup> This is a higher number than the 547 incidents cited in CST's Antisemitic Incidents Report 2007, as it includes incidents reported to CST after the publication of that report. Similar 'late' incidents have also been taken into account for 2005 and 2006.

# Introduction

## Community Security Trust

Community Security Trust (CST) advises and represents the Jewish Community on matters of antisemitism, terrorism, and security. CST received charitable status in 1994 and is recognised by Government and Police as a model of a community security organisation.

CST provides security advice and training for Jewish schools, synagogues and communal organisations and gives assistance to those bodies that are affected by antisemitism. CST also assists and supports individual members of the Jewish Community who have been affected by antisemitism and antisemitic incidents. All this work is provided at no charge.

An essential part of CST's work involves representing the Jewish Community to police, legislative and policy-making bodies and providing people inside and outside the Jewish Community with information to combat antisemitism.

CST has recorded antisemitic incidents in the United Kingdom since 1984.

## Reporting of incidents

CST classifies as an antisemitic incident any malicious act aimed at Jewish people, organisations or property, where there is evidence that the act has antisemitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are (or are believed to be) Jewish. Incidents can take several forms, including physical attacks on people or property, verbal or written abuse, threats or antisemitic leaflets and posters. CST does not include the general activities of antisemitic organisations in its statistics; nor does it include antisemitic material that is permanently hosted on internet websites. However, CST will record as incidents, antisemitic comments posted on blogs or internet forums, if they meet CST's criteria for recording off-line material as an antisemitic incident.

Antisemitic incidents are reported to CST in a number of ways, most commonly by telephone,

e-mail or by post. Incidents can be reported by the victim or by someone acting on their behalf. In 2001, CST was accorded third-party reporting status by the Police, which allows CST to report antisemitic incidents to the Police and to act as a go-between for victims who are unable or unwilling to report to the Police directly. CST works closely with Police services in monitoring and investigating antisemitic incidents.

Not all antisemitic incidents will be reported to CST and therefore the true figures will be higher than those recorded. No adjustments have been made to the figures to account for this. It is likely that this non-reporting also varies from category to category. For instance, while most antisemitic assaults are probably reported, it is likely that the vast majority of cases of verbal abuse are not. All reports of incidents are investigated thoroughly before being included in CST's incident statistics. If there is no evidence that an incident is antisemitic then it is not included. In 2008, CST received 347 reports of potential incidents that were rejected for this reason, and are not included in the total number of antisemitic incidents. These represent 39 per cent of the potential incidents reported to CST and mostly involved criminal damage to, or theft from, Jewish property, assaults on, or theft from, Jewish people; or suspicious activity around Jewish locations, where CST believes there was no evidence of antisemitic motivation, targeting or content. Anti-Israel activity, which does not use antisemitic language or imagery and is directed at pro-Israel campaigners rather than Jewish people, buildings or organisations, would also not be recorded as an antisemitic incident.

CST takes the wishes of victims, both individuals and the heads of Jewish organisations or communal buildings, very seriously. In particular, CST treats the issue of victim confidentiality as a top priority. If an incident victim chooses to remain anonymous, or wishes there to be no publicity about an incident, CST will observe their wish whenever possible.

# Antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2008

CST recorded 541 antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2008. This is the third-highest annual total since CST began recording antisemitic incidents in 1984, and is a four per cent fall from the 2007 figure of 561<sup>2</sup> incidents. This is the second year in succession that the annual total of antisemitic incidents in the UK has fallen from a high of 598 incidents in 2006. This fall in incidents is due to the absence of significant 'trigger events' in 2007 and 2008, particularly from the Middle East, in contrast to 2006 when the record high number of incidents was a consequence of reactions to the war in Lebanon between Israel and Hizbollah. The only trigger event to occur in 2008, the fighting between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, occurred too close to the end of the year to affect the annual trend.

While the number of antisemitic incidents has now fallen by ten per cent over two years, the 2008 total is still the third-highest annual total ever recorded by CST. It is more than double the 236 incidents recorded by CST ten years ago in 1998, and significantly higher than the 375 incidents recorded in 2003. While this increase partly reflects the increased size and reach of the CST's work, and better reporting rates to CST from the Jewish community, there is a long-term trend of rising numbers of antisemitic incidents across Britain since the late 1990s. Hopes that 2007 and 2008 may represent the beginning of a downward trend could easily be dashed by future events that trigger enough antisemitic incidents to maintain the long-term upward trend. This already appears to be the case for 2009, which has seen an unprecedented number of antisemitic incidents in January, triggered by the crisis in Gaza: This is likely to be enough to cause an increase in the annual total for 2009.

CST classifies antisemitic incidents by six distinct categories: Extreme Violence;

Assault; Damage and Desecration of Property; Threats; Abusive Behaviour and Antisemitic Literature. Definitions of these categories, and examples of the incidents that occurred in each one in 2008, are given below. In addition, and not included in the antisemitic incident figures, CST collects and analyses incidents of potential reconnaissance against the Jewish Community by hostile groups and individuals and criminal activity at Jewish locations or against Jews.

## Extreme Violence

Incidents of Extreme Violence include any attack potentially causing loss of life or Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH). There was one incident of Extreme Violence in 2008, the same as in 2007.

The incident of Extreme Violence in 2008 involved a Jewish man, Michael Kahan, who was stabbed to death in north Manchester in June. His attacker, Jonathan Mills, was a paranoid schizophrenic who had delusions that Jewish people were preventing him from getting his medication. Mills was quoted as telling a psychiatrist after his arrest: "I was having thoughts of attacking a Jew. I got out of the car. I heard a voice saying, 'Do it. Do it now.' I stabbed him twice in the stomach. I didn't say anything to him. I thought he was Jewish. He looked Jewish." Mills admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and has been indefinitely detained in a high security psychiatric hospital. This is the first antisemitic killing of a Jew in Britain since CST began recording incidents in 1984.

## Assault

Incidents of Assault include any physical attack against a person or people, which does not pose a threat to their life and is not GBH.

<sup>2</sup> This is a higher number than the 547 incidents cited in CST's Antisemitic Incidents Report 2007, as it includes incidents reported to CST after the publication of that report. Similar 'late' incidents have also been taken into account for 2005 and 2006. As well as affecting the annual totals for these three years, these adjustments mean that some of the monthly and category figures for these years cited in this report differ from previously published data.

CST recorded 87 incidents of Assault in 2008. By combining this with the single incident of Extreme Violence, we can see the full range of physical attacks on Jews. This gives a total of 88 antisemitic assaults, a 25 per cent fall from the 117 violent antisemitic assaults recorded by CST in 2007. This welcome fall reverses two years of consecutive increases, in which 2007 had seen the highest-ever number of assaults reported to CST. However, the long-term trend is still worrying: the 2008 total of 88 is much higher than the 17 violent antisemitic assaults reported to CST ten years ago, in 1998, or the 54 incidents recorded in this category in 2003. In 2000, 2001 and 2002, incidents of Assault and Extreme Violence made up 13 per cent of the overall total. This figure rose steadily until 2007 when physical attacks against Jews constituted 21 per cent of the overall figure. In 2008, this decreased, as violent assaults made up 16 per cent of the overall total of 541 antisemitic incidents.

81 of the 88 incidents of Assault or Extreme Violence recorded in 2008 were random, opportunistic attacks on Jewish people in public places. 77 incidents targeted people who were visibly Jewish, usually due to their religious or traditional clothing. In at least four of the 88 incidents, the victims required hospital treatment for their injuries. 23 of the incidents involved objects, often eggs, being thrown at visibly Jewish people from passing cars. Particular targets for this kind of incident are the Strictly Orthodox communities in Salford and Bury in north Manchester and Golders Green, Hendon and Stamford Hill in north London. There were 19 assaults of congregants on their way to or from synagogue, while 16 were on Jewish schoolchildren. There were four assaults on Jewish students during 2008.

Incidents in the category of Assault in 2008 included:

- Three Orthodox Jewish men were attacked in Manchester by a group of fifteen white youths. One youth shouted "dirty fucking Jews" and hit one of the Jewish men in the face with a knuckleduster, knocking him unconscious.
- A Rabbi was walking down the street in London when a gang of youths on bicycles surrounded him, called him a "fucking Jew" and kicked and punched him.
- A 13 year old Jewish girl was walking down a street in north London when two white girls approached her, made comments about Hitler not having done his job properly and then punched her in the face.
- A visibly Jewish man was walking home from synagogue in London when a car drove past; the occupants shouted "you're a fucking Jew" and then threw a firecracker and an egg at him.
- An Orthodox Jewish man, on holiday in Llandudno, was attacked by two white men who pushed him to the ground, punched him in the face and removed his hat and yarmulke (skullcap) before running off.

### **Damage and Desecration of Property**

This category includes any physical attack directed against Jewish property, which is not life-threatening. This includes the daubing of antisemitic slogans or symbols (such as swastikas), including stickers and posters, on Jewish property, or damage caused to Jewish property, where it appears that the building has been specifically targeted because of its Jewish connection.

There were 74 incidents of Damage and Desecration in 2008, an increase of 14 per cent on the 2007 figure of 65 incidents. Of the 74 incidents, 33 involved the desecration of synagogues, compared with just nine in 2007. There were two desecrations of Jewish cemeteries, compared with six in 2007. 14 incidents in this category were targeted at people's homes and there were five arson attacks on Jewish properties during the year.



Antisemitic graffiti, Nottinghamshire, November 2008

Incidents of Damage & Desecration in 2008 included:

- Two Jewish buildings in Gateshead were subject to arson attacks within fifteen minutes of each other on the same night in January.
- "Fuck the Jews" was daubed in paint on the wall of a synagogue in west England.
- "Bastard Jew" and a Star of David were painted on the gate of a Jewish person's house in Manchester.
- Stickers from the extreme right wing group Combat 18 were stuck on the

outside wall of a synagogue in south London, and three weeks later, a bag of excrement was left outside its entrance.

- On two nights in November, eggs and bricks were thrown at the windows of a synagogue in west London. The damage to the windows was limited due to protective security film that had been installed by CST.
- " Hamas HQ" was written on the wall of a Jewish building in Manchester, two days after fighting began in Gaza between Israel and Hamas.
- "Jihad 4 Israel" and "Jihad + Israel" were daubed on synagogues in London, three days after fighting in Gaza began.

### Threats

This category includes only direct threats, whether verbal or written.

There were 28 antisemitic threats recorded in 2008, a rise of 17 per cent on the 2007 total of 24 threats, and the same as the 2006 total of 28. 19 of the 28 threats were verbal, of which five were by phone, and there were two bomb threats.

Incidents in the category of Threats in 2008 included:

- A visibly Jewish man was walking through a London park when an Arab man shouted "Hizbollah" and chased the victim, threatening to kill him.
- A Jewish woman from Lancashire was walking near her home when three Asian men shouted at her: "You fucking Jew, get out of this area or we will kill you, we will kill all of you, you fucking Jew."
- A Jewish woman was walking in Manchester when two Asian men approached her and said: "Kill the Jews and Israel, we are going to join al-Qaeda and bomb all of you."

- A synagogue in Yorkshire received a letter that read: "Listen here you dirty Jew boys fuck off back to the Middle East before it's too late: you are being watched and attacks will be soon: time for ugly Jews to go: no place for gypo conmen in our society so take heed of this warning ugly parasitic yids!"
- The driver of a car shouted "You Jew, I'm going to cut your throat" at a Jewish pedestrian in Manchester.
- A group of congregants were standing outside a synagogue in south Manchester when a car drove past and one of the occupants leant out of his window, gave a Nazi salute and shouted "Sieg Heil".
- A group of Orthodox boys from a Jewish school in Manchester were visiting Llandudno. As they were walking, several car drivers hooted at them, and one passenger got out and shouted "You lot should've been killed in the camps" and "Get back to Israel".

### Abusive Behaviour

This category includes verbal and written antisemitic abuse. The verbal abuse can be face-to-face or via telephone or answer phone messages. The category also includes antisemitic e-mails and text messages, as well as targeted antisemitic letters (that is, those aimed at and sent to a specific individual), irrespective of whether or not the recipient is Jewish. This is different from a mass mailing of antisemitic leaflets or other publications, which is dealt with by the separate Literature category. Antisemitic graffiti on non-Jewish property is also included in this category.

There were 314 incidents of Abusive Behaviour reported to CST in 2008, a fall of seven per cent from the 336 incidents reported in 2007. This is the second year in succession that the total has fallen. It is still the third-highest total ever recorded by CST in this category.

Incidents of Abusive Behaviour in 2008 included:

- A Jewish member of the House of Lords received an antisemitic letter from the leader of a far right group, the England First Party, which denied the Holocaust.
- A Rabbi was walking through north London when a white man shouted: "Fucking Jew boy, Hitler didn't do enough in the Holocaust" at him.

- "Kill the Jews" was written on a toilet wall at Leeds University.
- A sticker reading "Keep campuses Nazi free", that had been stuck on the wall of a student union shop at a London college, had been altered to read "Keep campuses Jew free".
- "Gas the Jews" was painted on a pavement in Brighton.
- A synagogue in Scotland received a letter that read: "Death 2 the Jewish pigs!" and "Al-Qaeda & Taliban pals act 4ever".
- A bus stop in a Jewish area of north London was daubed with: "Kill Jews" and "Jihad 4 Israel", three days after the fighting in Gaza began in December.

### Literature

This category covers the distribution of mass-produced antisemitic literature which is distributed in multiple quantities. This can involve a single mass mailing, or repeated individual mailings, but it must involve the multiple use of the same piece of literature in order to fall into this category. This is different from one-off cases of hate-mail targeted at individual people or organisations, which would come under the category of Abusive Behaviour or Threats (depending on its content). The Literature

category includes literature that is antisemitic in itself, irrespective of whether or not the recipient is Jewish, or cases where Jews are specifically targeted for malicious distribution, even if the material itself is not antisemitic. This would include, for instance, the mass mailing of neo-Nazi literature to Jewish homes, even if the literature does not mention Jews. This category also includes e-mails that are sent to groups of recipients, but not material that is generally available on websites.

The statistics for the category of Literature give no indication of the extent of distribution. A single mass mailing of antisemitic literature is only counted as one incident, although it could involve material being sent to hundreds of recipients.

There were 37 Literature incidents in 2008, a rise of 95 per cent from the 19 incidents recorded in this category in 2007. This rise came after three consecutive falls in the annual total in this category. This is mostly because of the activities of a single perpetrator, who sent antisemitic hate-mail to Jewish community organisations and leaders on 26 occasions during the year.

Examples of Literature incidents in 2008 included:

- Palestinian student activists at the National Union of Students conference in Blackpool distributed leaflets equating Israel with Nazi Germany.
- Jewish community organisations and leaders received repeated abusive faxes relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- An email was sent to several non-Jewish organisations falsely claiming that the Jewish religious book, the Talmud, permits Jews to have sex with children.

## Victims

The victims of antisemitic incidents come from the whole spectrum of the Jewish community, from Strictly Orthodox to Liberal, Reform and secular Jews; from the largest Jewish communities of London and Manchester to small, isolated communities all over the United Kingdom; from Jewish schoolchildren to Members of Parliament.

In 273 incidents, the victims were attacked or abused at random while going about their daily business in public places. In 206 of these, the victims were visibly Jewish, usually due to their religious or traditional clothing, school uniform or jewellery bearing Jewish symbols.

67 incidents targeted synagogue property and staff, and a further 51 incidents targeted congregants on their way to or from prayers. 9 incidents took place at Jewish schools, 8 at non-Jewish schools and an additional 33 incidents targeted Jewish schoolchildren on their journeys to and from school. Taken together, these 50 incidents involving schools and schoolchildren show a small rise from the 47 incidents of this type in 2007. There were 67 incidents against Jewish students, academics and student bodies, also an increase from the 59 such incidents recorded in 2007. 43 incidents targeted people in their homes.

In 39 incidents, the victims were Jewish communal organisations and their events, including representative bodies, youth movements and welfare and cultural organisations. There were 41 incidents that targeted communal leaders, politicians, journalists or other high-profile individuals.

## Perpetrators and motives

Identifying the motives and ethnicity of the perpetrators of antisemitic incidents can be a difficult and imprecise task. Many antisemitic incidents involve public

encounters where the antisemitic abuse may be generic, brief and sometimes non-verbal. In cases involving physical or verbal abuse, it depends on the evidence of victims of, and witnesses to, antisemitic incidents, and may rely on the perpetrators' physical appearance, language or other indicators. It is obviously an easier task to analyse, for instance, a sample of hate-mail, where the content of an antisemitic letter often reveals the political motivation of the perpetrator, although it would be a mistake to assume to know the ethnicity of a hate-mail sender on the basis of their political beliefs.

A physical description of the perpetrator was provided in 190 of the 541 incidents recorded by CST<sup>3</sup>. Of these, 111 were white; 8 were East European; 13 were black; 42 were Asian and 16 were of Arab appearance. Therefore, there were white perpetrators (taking white and East European together) in 62 per cent of incidents where a physical description of the perpetrator was given. These figures partly reflect the fact that Britain's Jewish communities tend to live in relatively diverse urban areas. Events during the year also have an impact on the ethnicity of incident perpetrators. The percentage of perpetrators of antisemitic incidents who are identified as being of Asian or Arab appearance tends to fluctuate according to whether the trigger events for antisemitism in a particular year are related to the Middle East. So this figure stood at 38 per cent of identified incident perpetrators in 2004 and 34 per cent in 2006, when there were significant trigger events from the Middle East, but fell to 27 per cent in 2007 and 30 per cent in 2008, and two years in which there were fewer trigger events from that part of the world.

Analysing the content of incidents can also help to identify the motives of incident perpetrators. In 2008, 90 incidents included direct reference to Israel and the Middle East; of

which 62 showed anti-Zionist motivation as well as involving clear antisemitism. This is a large rise from 2007, when 46 incidents made reference to the Middle East and 34 were anti-Zionist as well as antisemitic. This is not easily explained in a year that did not contain any major 'spikes' in incidents as a result of trigger events from the Middle East, and may indicate that anti-Zionist and anti-Israel rhetoric is becoming increasingly common in the discourse used by the perpetrators of antisemitic incidents. In addition, 34 incidents in 2008 showed clear Islamist motivation, while 23 involved the use of Islamist or Islamic language or imagery. Both these figures have increased from 2007, when 12 incidents had an Islamist motivation and 16 involved the use of Islamist or Islamic discourse.

A more traditional antisemitic discourse is that involving references to the Nazi period, such as swastika daubings or Holocaust-related abuse. In 2008, 88 incidents involved the use of this sort of language or imagery, of which 76 showed clear far right motivation. In contrast to incidents with anti-Zionist or Islamist motivations, this is a decrease from 2007, when 127 incidents involved the use of language or symbols from the Nazi period and 87 incidents were motivated by extreme right sentiments.

There is not necessarily a direct correlation between the discourse used in an antisemitic incident and the ethnicity of the perpetrator. One of the changes in contemporary antisemitism is the fact that the use of far right references is no longer the preserve of neo-Nazis; nor is mention of Israel and the Middle East solely the favoured expression of Muslim or Arab perpetrators of incidents. Also, some incidents involve the simultaneous use of neo-Nazi and anti-Zionist discourse by the same perpetrator. It is more accurate to say that the Middle East and the Nazi period are both used by antisemites of all backgrounds as sources for material to use when abusing Jews.

<sup>3</sup> CST uses the 'IC1-6' system, used by Police, for categorising the ethnic appearance of incident perpetrators. This uses the codes IC1, IC2, IC3 etc, for 'white', 'East or Dark European', 'black', 'Asian', 'Far Eastern' and 'Arab' respectively. This is obviously not a foolproof system and can only be used as a rough guide: for example, an East European perpetrator could potentially be described as IC1 or IC2, depending on whether an incident victim or witness is capable of identifying their nationality by their appearance, accent, language or some other indicator.



Anti-Israel and antisemitic graffiti at a bus stop, north London, December 2008

### Trigger events and baseline levels

It is well established that trigger events in Britain and, especially, in the Middle East, that are perceived to involve Jews or Israel in some way, can spark a temporary rise in antisemitic incidents against British Jews. In 2006, Israel's war against Hizbollah in Lebanon saw the largest such 'spike' in antisemitic incidents ever recorded by CST up to that point; when 134 incidents were recorded in the UK during the 34 days of fighting. This was the single most important reason for the record high of 598 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2006. In contrast, in 2007 there were no significant trigger events, from either the Middle East or the UK, to cause any identifiable spike in antisemitic incidents to distort the overall picture. The only significant trigger event in 2008, the fighting in Gaza, began on 27 December and can be directly linked to 17 incidents that happened before the end of

the year. However, most of the impact of this trigger event came in early 2009 and is likely to be reflected in an increase in the annual total for that year.

Given the lack of large numbers of incidents that can be linked to specific triggers, the figure of 541 incidents for 2008 can be taken as a rough picture of the baseline level of antisemitism in the UK. This makes it possible to assess the most common types of incidents that make up this 'background antisemitism'. This appears to confirm the picture that emerged in 2006, whereby temporary spikes in incident levels that are triggered by specific events, such as the war in Lebanon, tend to consist of hate-mail or other forms of abusive communication to Jewish organisations or communal leadership. These incidents are more premeditated and 'political' than the incidents of verbal harassment, abuse or

physical assault against individual Jews on the street that make up much of the baseline level of day-to-day antisemitism in Britain today.

The relevant figures for 2008 are similar to those for 2007 – another year lacking a trigger event – but significantly different from 2006. In 2008, 50 per cent of incidents targeted individual Jews in public, similar to the 52 per cent in 2007. 33 per cent targeted Jewish organisations, synagogues and community leaders compared to 24 per cent in 2007. In 2006, however, relatively fewer incidents – just 38 per cent – targeted individual Jews in public, while 33 per cent targeted Jewish organisations, synagogues and schools. In 2008, 49 per cent of incidents involved verbal abuse (58 per cent in 2007) with 15 per cent coming by way of hate-mail, the same as in 2007; whereas in 2006, a ‘trigger event’ year, hate-mail was relatively more common, accounting for 22 per cent of incidents, while verbal abuse was proportionally less common, accounting for 47 per cent.

### **Typology of incidents: mission, opportunistic or aggravated?**

A study of antisemitic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service from 2001 – 2004<sup>4</sup> defined ‘mission’ incidents as those in which “the offender takes some premeditated action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim. In addition, antisemitism seemingly drives the offender’s actions – as manifest by their language or symbols they use” (Iganski, Keilinger & Paterson, 2005). Applying this definition to the 541 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2008 reveals that 350 incidents, or 65 per cent of the total, showed evidence of being ‘mission’ incidents.

Examples of ‘mission’ incidents recorded in 2008 included:

- A group of Asian youths stood outside a Holocaust Memorial event in Luton,

shouting antisemitic abuse including Holocaust denial.

- A rabbi was walking home from synagogue in north east London when two white men drove past him and shouted abuse. They then drove past again a couple of minutes later and sprayed the rabbi and his family with a shaken up bottle of drink.
- Two Asian men were seen driving down a road in Manchester, hooting and giving Nazi salutes to several groups of visibly Jewish people walking home from synagogue.

The 350 ‘mission’ incidents recorded by CST can be broken down further by type of incident. The three examples given above are all what can be referred to as ‘mission-direct’, which involves direct, face-to-face contact between perpetrator and victim. There were 128 such incidents in 2008. Other incidents which do not involve this face-to-face contact can be classified as ‘mission-indirect’; there were 137 of these, including:

- A message was left on the answer phone of a synagogue in the south of England, saying: “Leave the Palestinians alone you heartless Jews”.
- An email was sent to a Jewish organisation two days after the fighting in Gaza began in December, which read: “I am absolutely pained to say this but after your nation’s display over the last few days in Palestine I wish Hitler had been allowed to complete his task. The world in 2009 would have been a better place without your contamination. You think you are the chosen ones but in the afterlife you will realise that you were nothing but bigots!”

Other ‘mission’ incidents do not target a specific victim, but rather take place in a public area where the victims can be any

<sup>4</sup> Iganski, Keilinger & Paterson, “Hate Crimes against London’s Jews” (Institute for Jewish Policy Research, London 2005).

members of the public who happen to pass by. There were 69 of these 'mission-indiscriminate' incidents in 2008, including:

- "Kill the Jews" was written on the wall of the library at Birmingham University.
- "Jihad 4 Israel" graffiti was daubed in at least ten different locations in Jewish areas of north and north-east London on a single night in May. Similar graffiti was again daubed in those areas in December.

The final type of 'mission' incidents that make up the 350 incidents of this type in 2008 were 'mission-inadvertent', whereby the perpetrator's expression of antisemitism is inadvertently overheard or seen by somebody for whom it was not intended, or who the perpetrator did not intend to offend or abuse. There were 16 of these in 2008, of which this is one example:

- A Jewish student at a university in Yorkshire was on a university trip to a local mosque, when the Imam of the mosque asked the lecturer leading the trip if he was Jewish. The lecturer replied, "I might have a big nose but I'm not Jewish".

By comparison, 125 incidents, or 23 per cent, appeared to be 'opportunistic', whereby "the offender takes immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself to vent their antisemitism, rather than engineering the incident in a premeditated way" (Iganski, Keilinger & Paterson, 2005). Examples of these include:

- A Jewish family were walking in Golders Green, north London, when two Polish men saw them and shouted: "Kill the Jews" and other comments about gassing Jews.
- A visibly Jewish man was waiting at a bus stop when a Muslim man who was also at the bus stop said, "Stop looking at me, Jew". The victim ignored him but the

perpetrator continued, saying "I'm Muslim, I'm Muslim, Hizbollah", before saying "It's not Jews I don't like, it's Israel."

37 incidents, or 7 per cent, were what may be categorised as 'aggravated' incidents, whereby "the offender and victim are caught up in a conflict situation that initially does not involve antisemitism. However, in the course of the conflict the offender's bigotry emerges" (Iganski, Keilinger & Paterson, 2005). Examples of 'aggravated' incidents recorded by CST in 2008 included:

- A Jewish man in north London was involved in a minor car accident. After exchanging details, the other driver said: "Make sure you tell your insurance company that Hitler should have gassed all the Jews".
- A Jewish property developer was involved in a dispute over the use of land for development that was reported in the local press. At one point in the dispute, "A Jew lives here" was daubed on the perimeter fencing of the land.

#### **Antisemitic incidents on and off campus**

The 67 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2008 in which the victims were students, student bodies or academics, represents a rise of 14 per cent from the 59 incidents of that type recorded in 2007. However, both 2007 and 2008 show a substantial rise from previous years. There were 18 such incidents recorded in 2006, 11 in 2005 and 21 in 2004. This rise is partly explained by efforts to improve reporting of antisemitic incidents by Jewish students to CST, through the development of a network of student security officers and publicity campaigns run jointly with the Union of Jewish Students. It would be complacent to assume, though, that this rise can be put down to better reporting alone; changes in the number of antisemitic incidents reported from a particular campus can often reflect changes in the political tensions at that location, usually over Israel-related issues.

Of the 67 student-related incidents reported to CST, 41 took place on campus and 26 off campus. 35 of the 41 on-campus incidents were in the category of Abusive Behaviour. There were 15 cases of antisemitic graffiti and 18 incidents involved antisemitic verbal abuse. There was one physical assault and one incident of Damage & Desecration of Jewish property. In 34 of the 41 incidents, the victims were Jewish students; there was one incident that targeted an academic and three that directly targeted Jewish and non-Jewish student bodies. In 18 of the incidents, the perpetrator was clearly identified as a student, and in two cases the perpetrator was an academic. The 41 incidents recorded on campus took place at 19 different universities and colleges. There were five antisemitic incidents recorded at Nottingham University, four each at Leeds and Manchester Universities and four at the National Union of Students Annual Conference in Blackpool.

Ten of the 41 on-campus incidents took place within the direct context of political campaigning. Other incidents involved political content, for example graffiti using swastikas, political imagery or language, that did not occur in the immediate setting of otherwise legitimate political activity. Of the 41 incidents, 11 appeared to be anti-Zionist in motivation as well as being antisemitic, five had extreme far right motivation and two showed evidence of Islamist motivation.

Examples of antisemitic incidents that took place on campus in 2008 included:

- A Jewish student at a college in south west England was repeatedly told by a classmate that she was "Killing Palestinians".
- A swastika was drawn on a desk in the University of Manchester Students' Union building.
- A Jewish student in Nottingham found the word "Jew" carved into the door opposite her bedroom.
- A Palestinian student approached a Jewish student at Manchester University and screamed at her: "You Jews are killing my people." The Jewish student said, "What, me personally?" to which the perpetrator replied, "Yes, you fucking Jew."

Off campus, 16 of the 26 incidents recorded took place in Leeds, where there is a large Jewish student body. Other off-campus incidents were reported to CST from Manchester (three incidents), Nottingham (two incidents), Birmingham, London, Liverpool and Oxford (one each). 22 of the 26 off-campus incidents were in the category of Abusive Behaviour, of which 18 involved verbal abuse, and there were three physical assaults. Examples of antisemitic incidents that took place off campus in 2008 included:

- A group of Jewish students in Nottingham were walking to a pub when a group of Asian youths saw them and shouted, "Yid army".
- A visibly Jewish student in Leeds was walking to synagogue for Friday evening service when a car drove past and one of the occupants shouted "Fucking Jewish bastard" at him.
- "Jews go home" was written on the garage door of a Jewish student's house in Leeds.

### **Geographical locations and differences**

Two thirds of the 541 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2008 took place in Greater London and Greater Manchester, the two largest Jewish communities in the UK. Of these, 236 incidents took place in London and 125 in Manchester. This continues the pattern whereby a disproportionately high number of incidents (23 per cent in 2008) take place in Manchester, despite the fact that only ten per cent of British Jews live there. There were 30 antisemitic incidents in Leeds (of which 21 were student-related), 26 antisemitic incidents in Hertfordshire,

14 in Liverpool, nine in Glasgow and nine in Nottingham (of which seven were student-related). There were six incidents recorded by CST in Luton, four in Birmingham and four in Reading. Half of the 236 incidents in London were recorded in the borough of Barnet, which has the largest Jewish community of any London borough, while in Manchester, all but four of the incidents recorded by CST took place in the boroughs of Bury, Salford and Manchester.

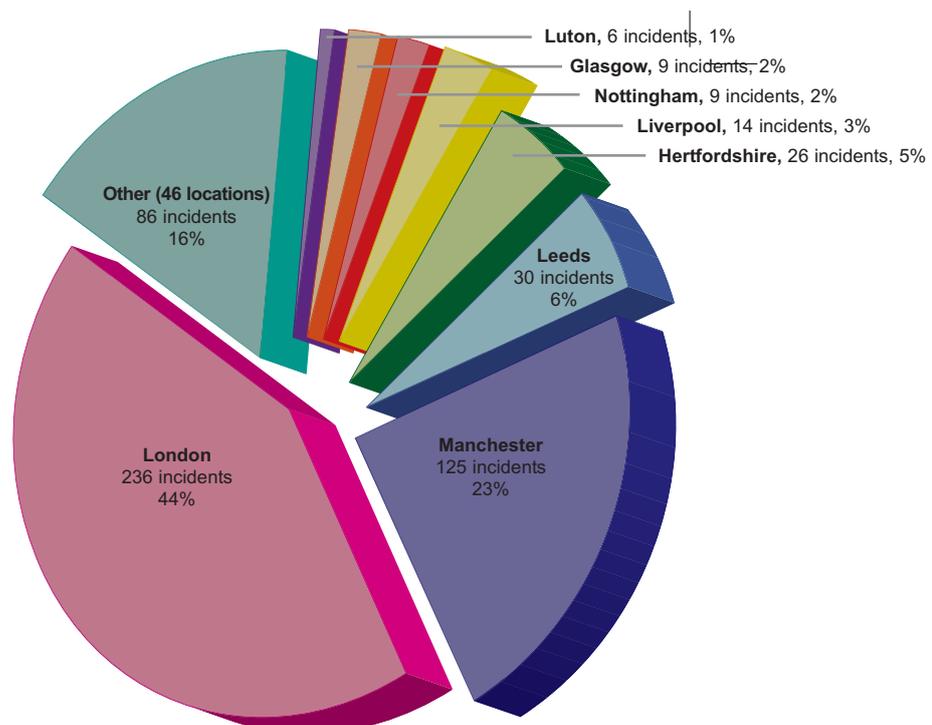
The 236 antisemitic incidents that took place in London constitute a six per cent fall from the 2007 London total of 247 incidents. The total in Manchester fell by an even greater proportion of, 17 per cent, from 147 incidents in 2007 to 125 in 2008. Incidents in Manchester tend to be more violent than in London; Extreme Violence and Assault made up 25 per cent of the incidents in Manchester, compared with 17 per cent in London. Both are more violent than the national average; of the 541 incidents recorded across the whole of the UK, 16 per cent fell into those two categories. There were

no Literature incidents in Manchester, but 29 in London. This probably reflects the fact that literature incidents tend to target the Jewish communal leadership, which is based in the capital.

Further differences between incident types in London and Manchester can be drawn out of the statistics. Incidents in London are more likely to include political discourse: 51 per cent of incidents in London invoked far right, Islamist or anti-Zionist language or imagery alongside the antisemitism, compared with just 15 per cent in Manchester. This would seem to fit with the fact that 'mission' incidents made up 69 per cent of incidents in London, compared with 54 per cent in Manchester. This reflects the fact that incidents motivated by extreme political views tend to take the form of hate-mail, abusive phone calls or antisemitic graffiti, rather than spontaneous street thuggery against individual Jews.

This explanation seems to be supported by other data. For example, 'opportunistic'

**Geographical breakdown of antisemitic incidents in the UK 2008**



incidents made up 34 per cent of the incidents in Manchester, but just 17 per cent in London. Incidents in Manchester are more likely to target individual Jews in public than in London (74 per cent of Manchester incidents compared to 49 per cent of London incidents). They are also more likely to involve verbal abuse (Manchester 61 per cent, London 41 per cent) rather than hate-mail. While 25 per cent of London incidents involved hate-mail, there was just one hate-mail incident in Manchester. In both cities, the proportion of identified incident perpetrators who were white was higher than for the country as a whole (74 per cent in London, 66 per cent in Manchester).

One change to the geographical picture in 2008 was that a growing number of incidents reported to CST came from outside London and Manchester: an increase of 13 per cent to 180 in 2008 compared to 159 incidents in 2007. This represents 33 per cent of the total incidents reported to CST, compared with 28 per cent of the incidents in 2007. This growth is probably a reflection of better reporting rates, as CST's offices in London and Manchester have made particular efforts in the past year to improve contacts with smaller Jewish communities in locations beyond the main urban areas. The increase in incidents involving students also contributes to this total, as there are Jewish students at universities and colleges all over the UK.

### **Information Collection & Suspicious Behaviour**

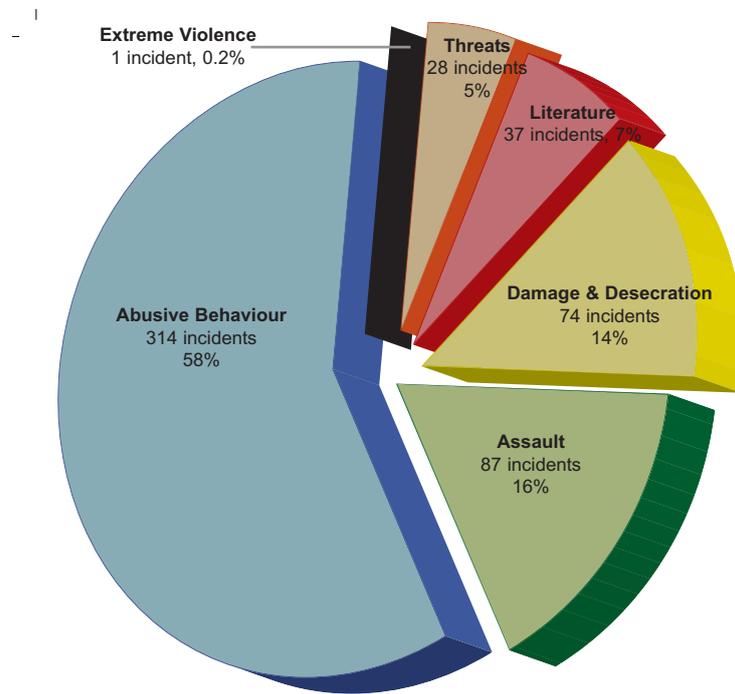
One of the most important jobs CST does is to record and analyse incidents of Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour around Jewish locations. It is well known that terrorist groups often collect information about their targets before launching an attack. Preventing the gathering of this kind of information is an integral part of CST's work in protecting the community from the danger of terrorism. Jewish communities have long been the targets of terrorists of different and varied political and religious motivations.

Since the late 1960s there have been over 400 terrorist attacks, attempted attacks and foiled terrorist plots against Jewish communities and Israeli targets around the world. Most recently, Jewish communities in Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia have all been attacked by al-Qaeda and its supporters, while plots to attack Jewish communities in Germany, Australia and the United States have been foiled by police action. Here in the UK, a group of Islamist extremists jailed in April 2007 for plotting terrorist attacks in Britain were found to have downloaded lists of synagogues from the internet, possibly as potential targets for attack. Two men convicted in Manchester in December 2008 for belonging to al-Qaeda and directing terrorism, had gathered information about a prominent Jewish communal leader.

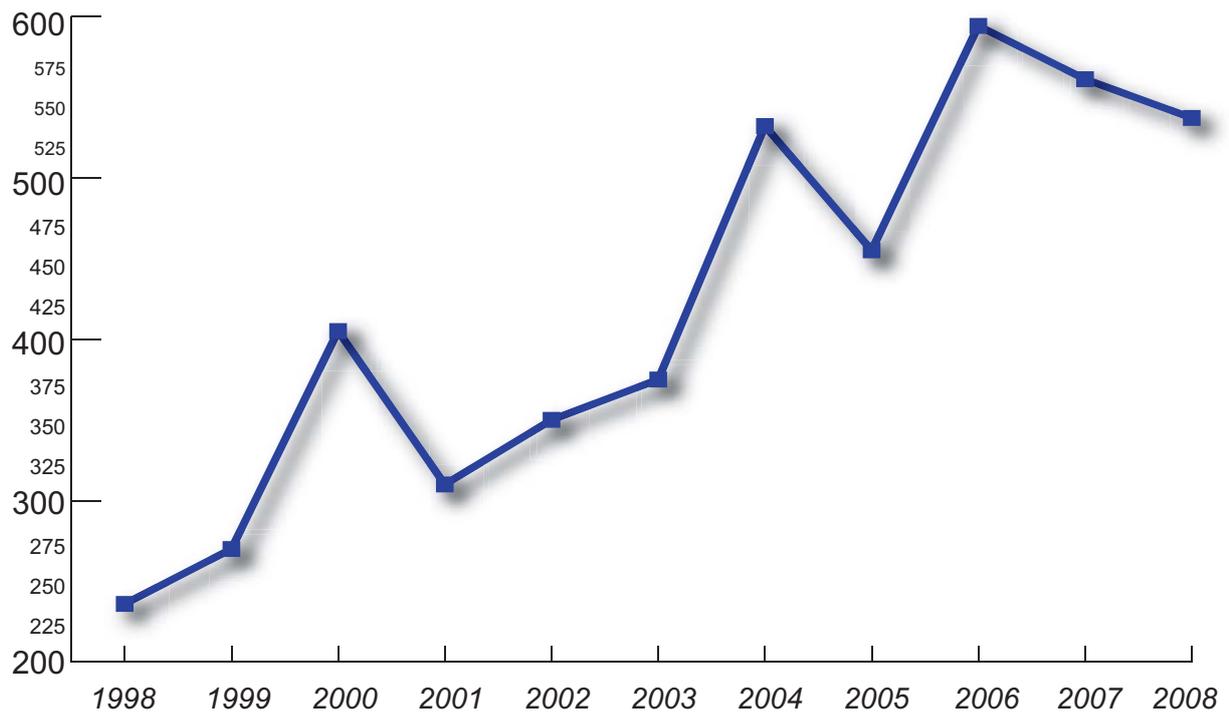
Cases of Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour are not included in the antisemitic incident statistics, as the motivation for many of them is not possible to determine. The vague and uncertain nature of many of these incidents means that they are easier to analyse if the two categories are combined, rather than treated separately. Taken together, there were 137 such incidents reported to CST in 2008, compared with 164 in 2007, 168 in 2006 and 167 in 2005.

Of the 137 incidents of Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour reported to CST in 2007, 37 involved the photography or videoing of Jewish buildings, while in 17 cases suspicious people tried to gain entry to Jewish premises. Although most of the 137 incidents will almost certainly have innocent explanations, neither CST nor the Police underestimate the threat posed to Jewish communities by Jihadist or other terrorist organisations and networks. Preventing this kind of information gathering and surveillance of community buildings or other potential terrorist targets is an important part of reducing the possibility of future terrorist attacks.

### Antisemitic incidents category totals 2008



### Annual incidents figures since 1998



Monthly incidents figures 1998 - 2008<sup>5</sup>

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
January	14	26	37	16	15	23	20	60	34	33	43
February	16	19	19	14	11	24	28	45	56	40	52
March	20	18	25	20	26	48	100	39	40	36	40
April	23	34	35	33	47	29	62	49	33	59	39
May	22	29	29	32	47	27	39	39	44	36	62
June	38	21	24	30	26	34	64	38	37	42	39
July	18	20	29	28	31	30	48	40	94	60	52
August	18	18	16	20	15	20	29	32	78	49	20
September	14	25	23	50	47	22	60	30	67	81	46
October	20	23	105	48	45	57	29	45	59	55	57
November	11	24	42	14	28	36	29	22	36	37	45
December	22	13	21	5	12	25	24	20	20	33	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>541</b>

Annual incidents figures by category 1998-2008<sup>5</sup>

Category	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1. Extreme Violence	0	0	2	1	5	0	4	2	4	1	1
2. Assault	17	33	51	40	42	54	79	79	110	116	87
3. Damage & Desecration	31	25	73	90	55	72	53	48	70	65	74
4. Threats	16	31	39	37	18	22	93	25	28	24	28
5. Abusive Behaviour	136	127	196	122	216	211	272	278	366	336	314
6. Literature	36	54	44	20	14	16	31	27	20	19	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>541</b>

## Annual incidents figures full breakdown for 2008

Category	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
1. Extreme Violence	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2. Assault	7	11	2	7	10	6	7	4	13	9	6	5	87
3. Damage & Desecration	5	2	8	7	5	5	5	1	10	6	12	8	74
4. Threats	3	2	4	1	2	4	1	0	3	4	2	2	28
5. Abusive Behaviour	28	33	26	22	40	17	24	14	20	37	23	30	314
6. Literature	0	4	0	2	5	6	15	1	0	1	2	1	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>541</b>

<sup>5</sup> This is a higher number than the 547 incidents cited in CST's Antisemitic Incidents Report 2007, as it includes incidents reported to CST after the publication of that report. Similar 'late' incidents have also been taken into account for 2005 and 2006. As well as affecting the annual totals for these three years, these adjustments mean that some of the monthly and category figures for these years cited in this report differ from previously published data.

**London (Head Office) 020 8457 9999**  
**Manchester (Northern Regional Office) 0161 792 6666**

**[www.thecst.org.uk](http://www.thecst.org.uk)**

*Registered charity no. 1042391*

*Published by Community Security Trust*