

# Have you got what it takes?

**Working with the National Crime Agency (NCA)**



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### Important facts

#### What is the NCA?

The NCA will be a highly visible agency of operational crime fighters, leading the UK's fight against serious, organised and complex crime, providing a new focus on economic crime, strengthening policing at the border and helping to ensure local police forces are linked up to work nationally and overseas.

Subject to the passage of the Crime and Courts Bill, the NCA will be fully operational by December 2013. Before the NCA becomes fully operational, the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will be working with police forces and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) on serious, organised and complex crime.

The NCA will be led by a Director General who is directly accountable to the Home Secretary and, through her, to Parliament. The NCA's first Director General, Keith Bristow QPM, took up post in December 2011 and is currently leading work to establish the Agency and drive early operational progress through a set of 'shadow' arrangements.

#### Why is the NCA needed?

Serious and organised crime is an increasingly sophisticated threat to our national security and the safety of our communities. It costs the UK an estimated £20-£40bn per year. The effects of organised crime are felt locally on a daily basis – it is directly or indirectly responsible for much of the crime we see on our streets.

Estimates suggest that there are around 30,000 individuals operating in over 7,500 criminal groups across the UK. The past response to this threat has been fragmented, with too many criminals operating beyond the reach of law enforcement. The creation of the NCA is a key part of the Government's strategy, 'Local to Global', for tackling organised crime.

#### How will the NCA operate?

The NCA will transform our operational response and better protect the public. For the first time, a single agency will hold the complete intelligence picture and have the authority to lead and task the whole law enforcement response.

The Director General of the NCA will be able to ask any UK police force or law enforcement agency to undertake a task that helps the NCA to fight serious, organised and complex crime. And, because it is critical that law enforcement operates in a mutually beneficial way, UK police forces and law enforcement agencies will also be able to ask the NCA for support. We are currently identifying what forces and wider law enforcement can expect from the NCA, including the operational support and capabilities it will offer.

In those very rare cases where agreement cannot be reached, or cannot be reached in time, about the type of action needed, the Director General will have the power to direct police forces in England and Wales and the British Transport Police to carry out specific activities.

#### What does the NCA mean for wider law enforcement and PCCs?

It is critical that wider law enforcement, particularly policing, is ready for the NCA's arrival. The NCA will need the support of the police service and regional policing structures.

Moreover, it is not just the NCA who will be responsible for the fight against serious, organised and complex crime. The strategic policing requirement (SPR) lists organised crime as one of the national threats against which forces are expected to respond. Chief Constables and PCCs will have to 'have regard to' (take account of) the SPR in preparing their police and crime plan.

### Further information

Further detail on the NCA is available in the [NCA plan](#) and on the [Home Office website](#).

Further information on the Government's organised crime strategy can be found on the Home Office website.

Please also visit the factsheets on '[Tackling organised crime](#)' and '[Providing a national policing response](#)'.

To find out more about SOCA visit [www.soca.gov.uk](http://www.soca.gov.uk)