

Briefing on human trafficking for Police and Crime Commissioners

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a global phenomenon which needs to be tackled at a local, national and international level. Men, women and children are moved and exploited for sex, labour, domestic servitude, and other criminal activities.

Victims may come from all over the world. They may enter the UK legally, on forged documentation or clandestinely, or they may be a UK citizen living in the UK. It must be remembered that human trafficking is not just a cross-border crime.

Trafficking is a relatively low risk crime. Victims are often unwilling to come forward, fearing reprisals from their traffickers, and may not be recognised as trafficking victims by those who come into contact with them.

Human trafficking offences are not carried out in isolation. Quite often they are linked with individuals who are involved in a range of other serious and organised crimes.

'People trafficking is the fastest growing means by which people are enslaved, the fastest growing international crime, and one of the largest sources of income for organised crime.' (UN Office on Drugs and Crime)

The police response

Of the 43 police forces in England and Wales, information collated by the UK Human Trafficking Centre shows that human trafficking victims have been identified in at least **39 force areas** during 2012.

The police play an important role in identifying potential victims. In some cases, victims may only be treated as perpetrators of immigration crime, criminal activity or prostitution, and any wider trafficking issues may be overlooked.

The UK Human Trafficking Centre, based in SOCA, provides tactical advice and support to police forces in the UK who are dealing with human trafficking cases.

Senior police officers responsible for human trafficking have been identified in each force area to help raise awareness and to provide a focus for human trafficking activity.

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)

We recommend that PCCs consider:

- raising awareness of human trafficking in force areas – with the police, statutory bodies, local authorities and the public;
- looking at how potential human trafficking offences are identified and dealt with effectively;
- ensuring that investigations and prosecutions are pursued appropriately;
- how to better utilise national resources such as the UK Human Trafficking Centre and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority;
- making links locally, for example with local authorities and non-governmental organisations; and
- recognising the potential link between human trafficking and other serious and organised crime which may be happening in force areas.

Available resources

- National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) e-learning package on human trafficking
- Human trafficking operational handbook available to order from the Home Office on 0870 241 4680 (press '0' on your keypad to speak to the Home Office publications team) or email homeoffice@prolog.co.uk (product code UKHT-OPGUIDE)
- UK Human Trafficking Centre tactical advice to forces 08447782406 / UKHTC@soca.x.gsi.gov.uk
- Gangmasters Licensing Authority 0845 602 5020 / intelligence@gla.gsi.gov.uk
- The Metropolitan Police Specialist Crime & Operations (SC&O) Tel: 020 7321 7751.
- The Home Office Human Trafficking Policy Team Tel: 0207 035 8205/3341/4179.
- ACPO contact for liaison with senior police officers responsible for human trafficking: Katherine Allenby Tel: 07769684711
email: Katherine.Allenby@sussex.pnn.police.uk

Key facts

- In 2012, **1186** potential victims of trafficking were identified through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This represents a **25% increase** on 2011.
- The recent UK Human Trafficking Centre's baseline assessment, published in August 2012 estimated that there were **2,077** potential victims of human trafficking encountered in the UK, in 2011, by the police, NGOs, local authorities and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.
- In England and Wales in 2011 there were **8 convictions** for human trafficking (on a principal offence basis).