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Home Office

HOME OFFICE EVIDENCE TO THE NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY

2015-2016 PAY ROUND

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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this document is to supplement, and provide additional context from the Home Office perspective, the evidence provided separately to the NCA Remuneration Review Body (“NCARRB”) by the National Crime Agency (“NCA”) with regard to pay and allowances of NCA Officers designated with operational powers.

1.2 The NCA has been established as a Non-Ministerial Department (“NMD”) operationally independent of the Home Office and established to fight serious and organised crime. The NCA has submitted detailed evidence and proposals to the Review Body for consideration.

2. The National Crime Agency

2.1 The National Crime Agency was created to lead the UK’s fight to cut serious and organised crime with part of its core business being to make sure Police forces and national agencies across the UK complement each other and coordinate their activity in a way which most effectively cuts serious and organised crime. As such, the NCA is a UK wide crime –fighting agency, with a highly visible, national profile dedicated to cutting serious and organised crime. It is leading the UK’s fight against serious and organised crime, providing a new focus on economic crime and strengthening policing at the border. For the first time, the NCA brings together a single strategic intelligence picture of serious and organised crime threats to the UK, equipping the whole law enforcement community to better identify, and respond to, threats and vulnerabilities.

2.2 The NCA has a stronger mandate to tackle serious and organised crime nationally than any organisation has had before it. This includes the power to direct Chief Constables in England and Wales and the British Transport Police and align the collective response of UK law enforcement against the most dangerous individuals and criminal groups. The NCA leads, coordinates and supports operations across five main areas: organised crime; cyber; economic crime; child sexual exploitation; and serious and organised crime at, and crossing, the border. The NCA also play an important role in the work against Modern Slavery with the UK Human Trafficking Centre part of the NCA and their collaboration with the Modern Slavery Unit within the Home Office. The Agency also brings together a single strategic intelligence picture of serious and organised crime threats to the UK, equipping the whole law enforcement community to better identify, and respond to, threats and vulnerabilities.

2.3 The NCA is fighting crime in close collaboration with a large number of partners, including police forces across the UK, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement, Police and Crime Commissioners, HMRC, the private sector and the voluntary sector. The Agency’s reach is extensive: it offers support to local organisations when they need a national response or specialist capabilities; it brings greater coordination and more focused targeting to investigations at our borders; and it has officers stationed in key locations around the world so the NCA can tackle organised crime that impacts the UK upstream working alongside our international partners. The ability to share intelligence, capabilities, expertise and assets across the NCA and with wider law enforcement is improving the UK’s effectiveness in relentlessly disrupting serious and organised criminality.

3. The NCA's proposals

3.1 The NCA has provided evidence to the Review Body as a separate submission. The evidence outlines the Agency's proposals together with supporting evidence for the pay and allowances of NCA officers designated with operational powers.

3.2 It is imperative that NCA has a pay and allowances structure that enables it to deliver on the Agency's primary mission to cut crime. As an operational crime-fighting agency, able to respond to the wide range of threats presented by serious and organised crime, it is vital that the Agency is able to recruit and retain individuals with the expertise to support the Agency in developing new investigative techniques and methodology, in line with the changing face of criminal activity.

3.3 Each and every member of the NCA's workforce will play an important part in fighting serious and organised crime. The intention of the NCA is to continue to increase the proportion of NCA officers designated with operational powers, as set out in the Serious Organised Crime Strategy. In line with the Home Secretary's Remit Letter to the Review Body of 25 September 2014, it is the view of the Home Office that in considering its recommendations, the Review Body should have regard to the effects of any pay divergence between NCA officers designated with operational powers and NCA officers who are not designated with operational powers. The NCA workforce is a single workforce: all NCA officers have the potential to be designated with operational powers provided they complete the relevant training and the majority of NCA officers are classified by the Agency as being in an operational role.

4. The Home Office View

4.1 The NCA has stated that their proposals for the pay and allowances of NCA Officers designated with operational powers are affordable within the limits set by the Government's policy on public sector pay for 2015/16. The Home Office accepts that position.

4.2 The announced restrictions on public sector pay awards provide the wider context to the NCA's proposals. In the 2011 Autumn Statement, Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that public sector pay awards would average at one per cent for the two years following the pay freeze (including 2014-15). The 2013 budget statement announced that public sector pay awards in 2015-16 would also be limited to an average of up to 1 per cent. It is therefore the view of the Home Office that the NCA should comply with the wider conditions on public sector pay and that the pay settlement it implements for 2015-16 should be within this one per cent limit.

4.3 The Home Office expects the NCA to deliver its pay proposals within its budget for 2015/16. The NCA's baseline funding in 2014/15 is £463.7m, made up of £417.7m Resource and £46m Capital. The NCA's 2015/16 budget is yet to be announced. The NCA also receives funding from additional sources in support of special projects.

4.4 The Home Secretary has committed to achieving significant efficiencies for both the Home Office and the NCA in future years, in a financial environment of declining budgets through to 2016/17. With this being the case, the Home Office would expect this to be considered by the Review Body in making their recommendations. As set out in the NCA's Framework Document, the Home Office will continue to work closely with the NCA to ensure financial resilience across the two Departments.

5. NCA's progress

5.1 The step-change required to transform the way the UK responds to serious and organised crime cannot be delivered in 12 months, but the NCA has made great progress. In its first year the NCA achieved over 920 disruptions and 415 convictions. Over 1000 children were safeguarded or protected, and assets valued at more than £22m were recovered. The NCA has broken new ground through innovative tasking arrangements and ways of working. It has investigated offences across the full range of serious and organised crime – including modern slavery - and taken assets away from criminals. The NCA led a significant international operation to tackle malware used for cyber-crime and co-ordinated a national operation tackling sharing of child abuse images online with over 704 arrests so far. In May 2014, the NCA published the National Strategic Assessment - the most authoritative assessment of the threat to the UK ever.

5.2 Over the next three to five years, the NCA will embark on a transformation programme (NOVO) that will give the Agency the shape, culture, operating model and approach to improve delivery. Operational transformation will involve implementing new operating models for investigation and intelligence handling reflecting the need for the Agency to exploit fully all sources of information, including digital. This work will deliver a sustainable operating model, building on the evidence base of what works in tackling serious and organised crime. The new operating model will be supported by significant investment in Information Communications Technology, in order to ensure that it can tackle the highest priority OCGs and changing threat and also workforce skills to exploit new capabilities as effectively as possible.

6. Conclusions

6.1 If the National Crime Agency is going to be successful in leading the fight against serious and organised crime as set out in the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, it is imperative that the Agency has appropriate and affordable pay and allowances structures. These structures are essential for the NCA to effectively recruit, maintain and motivate its workforce on a sustainable and affordable basis. In line with the instructions issued in the Home Secretary's Remit Letter to the Review Body, it is the Home Office view that insofar as possible, the NCA workforce as a whole should retain parity of pay if the evidence supports this.

6.2 The NCA needs to build on its strong start and get ahead of the threat. This means continuing to work with a broad range of partners to get the best possible intelligence picture. And using all tools available to disrupt and prosecute organised criminals. The NCA will invest further in skills and capabilities to ensure that it continues to develop into an agency fit to tackle the evolving and future threat from serious and organised crime. The Home Office therefore support changes to pay and allowances that would maximise the effective delivery of the NCA's transformation programme, providing they fall within the pay remit.

6.3 Whilst the Agency should have the necessary resources available to deliver its functions, as a non-Ministerial Department, and as NCA officers are civil servants, the pay and allowances for NCA officers should be consistent with the wider approaches to public sector pay.

6.4 As the NCA's proposals are consistent with the wider limits set for public sector pay, consistent with the ethos of the Transformation programme and are judged (by the NCA) to be affordable within their pay settlement, the Home Office accepts their proposals.