Home Office

NCA
National Crime Agency

Revised Framework document for the National Crime Agency

Date: November 2026

Revised Framework Document for the National Crime Agency

Presented to Parliament pursuant to paragraph 6(2)(c) of Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013

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FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT FOR THE NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY

This Framework Document replaces the second Framework Document signed by the then Home Secretary and the then Director General of the National Crime Agency in March 2015.

1. Introduction

1.1 The National Crime Agency (NCA) has two statutory functions in s.1 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013, ('the Act'). Firstly, it has a crime reduction function concentrating on efficient and effective activities to combat serious and organised crime (SOC), which includes coordination of the national law enforcement response to SOC. Secondly, the NCA has a criminal intelligence function which focuses on gathering, analysing and disseminating information.

1.2 The NCA will lead and co-ordinate the overall law enforcement system response to SOC in England and Wales. It will work in agile partnership with Policing including the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) SOC Lead and Counter Terrorism (CT) Policing, the UK Intelligence Community (UKIC), Border Security System, the Devolved Administrations, international partners, the third and private sectors and Local Authorities to tackle those who pose the greatest SOC threat to the UK. As part of its leadership role, the NCA will host an array of national capabilities, providing support to policing and other partners with specialist skills, expertise and technology, helping to tackle the full range of SOC threats, including those of a national security nature. As a UK-wide organisation, the NCA will ensure its activity in Scotland and Northern Ireland, where policing and criminal justice are largely devolved, takes into account their specific and differing legislative, financial and operational landscape, whilst also respecting the primacy of the respective local police forces and prosecution authorities.

1.3 The NCA's National Assessment Centre (NAC) will lead on understanding of the SOC threat to the United Kingdom, including at the border. Drawing on intelligence from across government, law enforcement, and international, and third sector partners, the NAC will deliver all source intelligence assessments that inform national security decision making and operational prioritisation. This includes production of the National Strategic Assessment (NSA), which offers a comprehensive, intelligence-led analysis of the SOC landscape and underpins the UK's response to the evolving threat.

2. The NCA Framework Document

2.1 This Framework Document sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of the Secretary of State for the Home Department ('the Home Secretary') and the Director General of the NCA ('the Director General') and the principles which will govern the relationship between the Home Office and the NCA. It further sets out the ways in which the NCA is to operate as set out in the Act. The purpose of the document is to set out the NCA's accountability, management, operational and financial arrangements and to explain how the relationship between the Home Secretary and the NCA is intended to function as a direct and open working relationship, in which both support and scrutiny can apply in equal measure. These principles will apply to NCA activity both in the UK and overseas.

2.2 The Framework Document is issued by the Home Secretary pursuant to the Act.[1] The Home Secretary and Director General will be under a statutory duty to have regard to this document in exercising their functions in relation to the NCA.[2] Nothing in this Framework Document will supersede or vary the duties and/or functions exercisable by the Secretary of State, the Director General or NCA officers which are set out in the Act and other relevant enactments.

1 Paragraph 2, Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
2 Section 4(2)(c) and paragraph 3, Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013

3. Status

3.1 The NCA is formed under Part 1 of the Act; the NCA became operational on 7th October 2013. The Director General and NCA officers will operate within the provisions of the Act and other relevant legislation. The NCA's functions are exercisable on behalf of the Crown. The NCA is classified as a Non-Ministerial Department (NMD), which means that it operates as a government department in its own right but does not have its own dedicated Minister.[3] Instead, it is headed by the Director General, who is accountable to the Home Secretary as sponsoring Minister, and through the Home Secretary to Parliament. This Framework Document sets out further detail on what NMD status means in practice for the NCA.

3 Classification of public bodies: Guidance for departments (Cabinet Office, April 2016)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Home Secretary

4.1 The Home Secretary is charged with safeguarding the public, preventing crime and protecting the UK's borders and national security. For the purposes of this document, mention of the Home Secretary also refers to Home Office Ministers, to whom they can delegate responsibility. The Home Secretary will have a legal duty to determine the 'strategic priorities' for the NCA and will consult the Director General and the NCA's strategic partners and any other persons whom the Home Secretary considers it is appropriate to consult.[4] The Home Secretary will hold the Director General to account for the discharge of the 'NCA functions' while also respecting the Director General's operational independence (as explained at paragraph 4.2b) and, where appropriate, the Home Secretary will account to Parliament. The Home Secretary will also select and appoint the Director General[5] after consultation with the Scottish Ministers and the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland and will designate the Director General with operational powers as required.[6]

NCA Director General

4.2 The NCA will be under the direction and control of the Director General. As the head of the NCA, the Director General will:

a. determine 'operational priorities' for the NCA,[7] in line with the 'strategic priorities' set by the Home Secretary (including having regard to the priorities set within the remit of the Border Security Command).
b. be responsible (including through a senior NCA officer acting on his or her behalf) for all decisions about which operations to conduct and how they should be conducted.[8] This would include, for example, decisions about whether to continue or stop a criminal investigation.
c. have direction and control over all NCA officers (including NCA specials and secondees).[9]
d. ensure that NCA officers operate within the legislative framework set out in the Act.[10]
e. account to the Home Secretary for the discharge of the NCA's functions, including through the provision of quarterly performance data to Home Office officials to help describe the impact the NCA is having to reduce SOC in the UK'.
f. provide information to the Home Secretary, if requested, about any aspect of the NCA's undertakings including resources.
g. be responsible for issuing an annual plan in accordance with the Act, setting out how the NCA will deliver the strategic and operational priorities, and an annual report at the end of the year on progress made.[11]
h. be responsible for providing the Home Secretary with good visibility of the NCA's corporate risks, so the Home Office and NCA can seek to mitigate them.
i. to inform the Home Secretary and relevant Home Office officials as early as possible, where NCA activity in the UK raises new and significant legal risks; is novel or contentious; has a potentially significant impact on another government department; or where NCA activity is assessed as likely to become the subject of significant Parliamentary or public controversy. This would include where any public disclosure would undermine public confidence with the nature of NCA activity or tactics. The Director General will also inform the Devolved Administrations where it is deemed such activity impacts upon devolved areas of responsibility.

4 Section 3, Crime and Courts Act 2013
5 Section 9 of and Schedule 5 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
6 Paragraph 7, Schedule 1 and Section 9(2), Crime and Courts Act 2013
7 Section 4(5), Crime and Courts Act 2013
8 Section 4(1), Crime and Courts Act 2013
9 Any reference to NCA officers (unless otherwise stated) includes NCA specials and secondees under the direction and control of the Director General. NCA specials are part-time, unpaid officers volunteering their time and specialist skills to the NCA
10 This includes, for example, obtaining the relevant authority from the Home Secretary or Scottish Ministers for the use of investigatory powers under Part 2 Chapter 1 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016
11 The Act requires the Director General to consult the NCA's 'strategic partners' and obtain the prior consent of the Secretary of State (and where relevant the Scottish Ministers, the Scottish Police Authority Board, the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Policing Board) before issuing the annual plan. Section 4 and Part 2, Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013 as amended

j. be responsible for the appointment of all NCA officers other than the Director General,[12] and for designating NCA officers with operational powers.[13]
k. as the NCA Accounting Officer, ensure the proper financial management of the NCA (see further detail in section 8); and its effective corporate governance in accordance with other good practice.
l. ensure agreement is obtained (in line with section 7 of the Framework Document) before NCA officers carry out activities in Northern Ireland or Scotland.
m. publish comments on His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports within 56 days of publication by the Home Secretary. These comments must include proposed responses to the recommendations and a copy of any document published must be sent to the Secretary of State and, at the same time to relevant Devolved Administrations where appropriate.[14]

Home Office officials

4.3 Home Office officials will support the relationship between the Home Secretary and the Director General.

Their responsibilities in relation to the NCA will include:

a. advising the Home Secretary (and where necessary, other government departments or Ministers) about how the NCA's functions are being discharged and other NCA matters.
b. advising the Home Secretary about his or her powers, duties and responsibilities in relation to the NCA and its officers.
c. advising the Director General about the policy, strategic and legislative framework relevant to the NCA.
d. advising the Home Secretary and Director General about the arrangements described in this Framework Document.
e. ensuring that arrangements are in place to keep NCA information provided to the Home Office secure, in accordance with the Government Security Classifications.
f. Ensuring sponsorship is in accordance with the Arm's length body sponsorship code of good practice.[15] Promoting and maintaining an effective working relationship between departments and public bodies, in turn facilitating accountable, efficient and effective services to the public.

Other government departments

4.4 While the Home Office is the primary department with oversight of the NCA's work, the NCA will also need to engage with other government departments. The Director General may negotiate partnership agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with other government departments where appropriate and will keep the Home Office informed (see also paragraph 7.1).

12 Paragraph 9, Schedule 1 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013. These appointments will be civil service appointments, and must be made in accordance with the regulations set out by the Civil Service Commission
13 Section 10, Crime and Courts Act 2013
14 Paragraph 4 of Schedule 6 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
15 Arm's length body sponsorship code of good practice - GOV.UK

5. Scrutiny by other public bodies

5.1 Whilst the Director General's principal accountability will be to the Home Secretary, the NCA will also be subject to scrutiny by the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Police Authority and Northern Ireland Assembly, the Northern Ireland Policing Board[16] and other public bodies and is expected to cooperate fully. The bodies which have a statutory role to inspect, scrutinise or regulate the functions or activities of the NCA include (but are not limited to) HMICFRS,[17] the National Audit Office (NAO), the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the Office of the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO). In Scotland this includes the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and in Northern Ireland the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice Northern Ireland.[18]

5.2 Whilst the Director General will remain accountable to the Home Secretary, the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Scottish Police Authority may, after consultation with the Home Secretary, require the Director General to submit a report on a 'relevant NCA matter' as the Board and or Authority may specify. After considering such a report, the Board may, having consulted again with the Home Secretary, instruct an inquiry to be held.[19]

6. Internal Governance

6.1 For these purposes, a "senior NCA officer" means an NCA officer who is at, or above Grade 3.[20] The Director General may arrange for any function of the Director General to be exercised by a senior NCA officer. This power to delegate is subject to exceptions, in particular the following:

a. the Director General's powers of direction may not be delegated (these powers may, however, be exercised in the Director General's absence by a senior NCA officer who has been designated for this purpose by the Director General);
b. the requirement for the Director General to keep a record of the names of the designated NCA officers exercising the powers and privileges of a Northern Ireland constable, the steps taken in relation to each officer, and to keep under review the need for such officers to undertake refresher training, may be exercised by a senior NCA officer at Grade 1 or above; and
c. the Director General's functions as Accounting Officer are exercised as set out in section 8.

6.2 The Director General will establish and chair a Board ('the Board'). The purpose of the Board is to support the Director General to ensure the long-term health and success of the NCA. The Board is advisory in that it provides guidance to the Agency on issues within its remit. It is also supervisory in that it scrutinises reporting from the Agency on performance, and challenges the Agency on the effectiveness of executive decisions and how well it is achieving its objectives. In line with government best practice as set out in the Cabinet Office's 'Corporate governance in central government departments; Code of Good Practice 2017' ('the 2017 Code'), the Board will advise on, and supervise, five main areas:

a. **Strategic Clarity:** long-term horizon scanning, and setting the vision and ensuring all activities contribute towards it;
b. **Commercial Sense:** ensuring sound financial management; scrutinising the allocation of financial and human resources; ensuring organisational design supports strategic objectives; setting the NCA's risk appetite and ensuring controls are in place to manage risk and to ensure value for money;

16 Section 33A of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015
17 Payment arrangements for HMICFRS inspections are set out in paragraph 8.17
18 Section 11, Crime and Courts Act 2013 and sections 46 and 47, Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002
19 Sections 59(6)-(10) and 60(18)-(2), Police Northern Ireland Act 2000 as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015
20 The NCA will publish information about the arrangements which will be put in place by the Director General to enable the delegation of a function conferred on the Director General by an 'enactment' to be exercised by a senior NCA Officer. For the purpose of this footnote, the expression 'enactment' means an Act of Parliament, an Act of the Scottish Parliament and an Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly

c. **Talent Management:** ensuring the NCA has the workforce to deliver to meet current and future needs;[21]
d. **Results focus:** shaping the NCA business plan; monitoring and steering performance against the plan; scrutinising performance; setting the NCA's values and standards; and
e. **Management Information:** ensuring clear, consistent, comparable performance information is used to drive improvements.

As part of its responsibility under sub-paragraph (b) above, the Board will ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control, through the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee in line with the 2017 Code. A Home Office official should attend the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee in line with best practice.

6.3 The Board's membership will consist of the Director General as Chair; up to ten senior operational leaders of the NCA; and no fewer than three senior non-executive members. Non-executive members' skills and experience will enable them to provide constructive challenge and advice to the executive leadership.[22] The members of the Board will be appointed by the Director General. Before appointing a non-executive member to the Board, the Director General must consult the Home Secretary.[23] These appointments will be made in line with the arrangements for appointing Non-Executive Board Members (NEBMs) to Enhanced Departmental Boards elsewhere in government, as set out at in HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office's Corporate governance in central government departments code of good practice. This will include providing evidence that NEBMs are experts from outside government, and that appointments are made on merit, with due regard to diversity.

6.4 Non-executive members will hold office in accordance with the terms of their respective appointment agreed with the NCA. A non-executive appointment will be for a term not exceeding three years. A person who has previously been, or currently is, a non-executive member of the Board may be appointed again as a non-executive member of the Board for a further term not exceeding three years, in accordance with the consultation requirements at paragraph 6.3, provided that the person does not hold office as a non-executive member for more than ten years in total.

6.5 The Chair may further invite others to attend Board meetings as observers or advisers to the Board. A senior Home Office official will normally attend Board meetings as an attendee; will receive the Board's papers, including quarterly financial reporting; and will receive records of Board meetings. Best endeavours should be made to provide these papers to all attendees in a timely manner prior to the Board to allow for effective scrutiny and oversight of the NCA.

6.6 The Director General, or a senior representative on his or her behalf, will attend the NCA Ministerial Oversight Board, chaired by the Home Secretary or a Home Office Minister on their behalf. The main purpose of the Oversight Board is to enable Home Office Ministers to hold the Director General to account for NCA performance, operational system leadership, progress against the NCA 'strategic priorities', which are set by the Home Secretary, and to receive assurance that the NCA is complying with the accountability arrangements set out in this Framework Document. The Oversight Board also provides a forum for the NCA to raise significant risks and requirements with the Home Office, including the in-year commitment of funding.

21 In line with the 2017 Code, the Board will establish a Nominations and Governance Committee
22 NCA non-executive board members will be subject to the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies (2019)
23 Appointments of NCA non-executive board members (NEBMs) are not public appointments and are not regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). These appointments will be made in line with the arrangements for appointing NEBMs to Enhanced Departmental Boards elsewhere in government, as set out at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609903/PU2077_code_of_practice_2017.pdf

7. Working in Partnership

Devolved Administrations: Working in Northern Ireland

7.1 The NCA will respect the devolution of powers, recognising the primacy of those in whose territories it operates. The NCA will have open and transparent working relationships with its key operational partners in order to maximise overall impact in disrupting criminal activity.

7.2 In Northern Ireland, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) retains primacy for operational policing. NCA officers may only carry out activities in Northern Ireland if they do so with the agreement of the Chief Constable (or a member of PSNI at the rank of Superintendent or above authorised to give such an agreement), or in relation to the conduct of a police officer.[24]

7.3 As well as the Act, the Crime and Courts Act (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime) (Northern Ireland) Order 2015 both extends and sets out further provisions relating to the NCA's operation in Northern Ireland. The NCA operates in Northern Ireland under a Northern Ireland General Authorisation (GA) signed by the NCA Director General and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice. The GA sets out conditions and requirements in relation to the exercise by a designated NCA officer of the powers and privileges of a constable in Northern Ireland. This includes a designated NCA officer having read and understood the code of ethics for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The Director General will, so far as practicable, ensure that the provisions of the code are reflected in the NCA disciplinary procedures applicable to NCA officers in relation to their exercise of functions in Northern Ireland.[25] A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the arrangements by which the NCA's functions are exercised in accordance with the legislative framework and in support of the PSNI. The MOU should also set out the arrangements through which the Chief Constable will contribute on an annual basis to the funding of the NCA.

7.4 There are statutory requirements placed on the NCA in respect of monitoring and oversight arrangements when operating in Northern Ireland and the adjacent UK waters. This includes oversight by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board),[26] the Northern Ireland Police Ombudsman, and review by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate for Northern Ireland.[27] The Department of Justice in Northern Ireland may also request inspections of NCA by HMICFRS and where it does so, it will retain responsibility for the cost of these inspections.

7.5 The Director General will engage with policing accountability structures in Northern Ireland. The Director General will attend sessions with the Assembly's Committee for Justice as appropriate. The Director General will establish strong relationships with the Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect of the NCA's activity in Northern Ireland and will attend sessions of the Northern Ireland Policing Board at their request, where practicable. Whilst the Director General will remain accountable to the Home Secretary, the Northern Ireland Policing Board may, after consultation with the Home Secretary, require the Director General to submit a report on a 'relevant NCA matter' as the Board may specify, and after considering such a report, the Board may, having consulted again with the Home Secretary, instruct an inquiry to be held.[28]

7.6 The NCA will be an active member of the Northern Ireland Organised Crime Task Force, the Paramilitary Crime Task Force and Joint Agency Task Force.

7.7 The Home Secretary recognises that there are particular concerns about the policing of counter terrorism in Northern Ireland. As a consequence, the Government has no plans to make an order under section 2 of the Act which would confer counter terrorism functions on the NCA in Northern Ireland.

24 Paragraph 6A, Schedule 1, and Paragraph 11, Schedule 5, to the Crime and Courts Act 2013, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015
25 For Northern Ireland these steps are enshrined within legislation: Section 52, (10) (A) and (10)(B), Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015
26 Section 33A, Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015
27 Section 11, Crime and Courts Act 2013 and Section 47, Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002
28 Sections 59(6)-(10) and 60(18)-(2), Police Northern Ireland Act 2000 as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015

Devolved Administrations: Working in Scotland

7.8 In Scotland, the chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland has primary responsibility for operational policing. The role of NCA officers is to complement the work of the chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland and other agencies, and in carrying out activities in relation to an offence NCA officers may only carry out activities in Scotland in relation to an offence they suspect has been committed (or is being committed) if they have the agreement of the Lord Advocate and in carrying out such activities, must comply with any direction (whether general or specific) given by the Lord Advocate or the procurator fiscal.[29]

7.9 Scottish Ministers and the Director General of the NCA have agreed a Scottish General Authorisation which sets out the conditions and requirements in relation to the exercise by a designated NCA officer of the powers and privileges of a constable in Scotland.[30] To support this there is an overarching MOU in place, outlining the relationship between the NCA and Police Scotland.

7.10 The NCA will be required to take such steps as the Director General considers necessary to ensure all NCA officers exercising functions in Scotland have read and understood the Code of Ethics for Policing in Scotland. The Director General will ensure that the provisions of the Code of Ethics are reflected in the NCA disciplinary procedures applicable to NCA officers in relation to their exercise of functions in Scotland.

7.11 The Director General remains ultimately accountable to the Home Secretary and the UK Parliament. For those activities carried out in Scotland (or in Scottish waters) the NCA is additionally subject to scrutiny by the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Police Authority and other statutory bodies.

7.12 In Scotland, this also includes the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS).

7.13 The Director General will engage with policing accountability structures in Scotland and will attend sessions with Committees of the Scottish Parliament where practicable. The Director General will establish a strong relationship with the Scottish Police Authority in respect of the NCA's activity in Scotland and will attend meetings when requested, where practicable.

7.14 The NCA will be an active member of Scotland's Serious Organised Crime Taskforce and Multi Agency Tasking and Delivery Board and ensure that it supports any media related activity.

7.15 The Home Secretary expects the NCA in Scotland to work with counter terrorism police, and agency networks to develop closer collaboration and sharing of capabilities, including at the border, in prisons, and on technical issues (including surveillance and ITI), Cyber and Digital Investigations, financial investigations, and through co-location of estates where possible.

7.16 Arrangements by which the NCA will recover appropriate costs for the provision of services in support of Police Scotland will be set out via a MOU on funding arrangements.

Border Security Command

7.17 The NCA will work closely with the Border Security Command to mutually enhance their respective systems' roles in protecting the public. While the Border Security Command leads the Border Security system, it will work in close partnership with the NCA to maximise the effectiveness of the NCA's operational leadership on organised immigration crime and wider SOC threats to border security. As part of this, the Director General NCA will have regard to the strategic priorities set by the Border Security Commander and agreed by the Home Secretary, when exercising the NCA's border security functions. Border Security System performance against those strategic priorities will be reported in the Border Security Commander's annual report.

29 Paragraph 6, Schedule 1, to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
30 Paragraph 11, Schedule 5, to the Crime and Courts Act 2013

Tasking and assistance

7.18 The Act provides for two-way voluntary tasking and assistance arrangements between the NCA, UK law enforcement partners and Island partners, in addition to any other form of cooperation arrangement that the NCA may formulate with UK law enforcement partners, HM Armed Forces and HM Coastguard.[31]

7.19 In the event that satisfactory voluntary arrangements cannot be made, or cannot be made in time, the Act provides that the Director General may issue a direction to a chief officer of an England and Wales police force or the chief constable of the British Transport Police (with the latter subject to the consent of the Secretary of State for Transport),[32] or the Director of the Serious Fraud Office. There are similar reciprocal directed assistance arrangements which apply between the NCA and a number of partners (subject to consent requirements) to provide assistance by way of, for example, the provision of equipment, NCA officers, constables or members of staff.[33]

7.20 Where consent is required prior to issuing a direction, the appropriate consent will be sought and obtained in writing unless the operation is time critical, in which case verbal consent may be sought and obtained. The Director General will inform the Home Secretary in writing each time they issue a direction under the Act. The Director General will further inform the appropriate Police and Crime Commissioner or relevant oversight body of the police force or law enforcement partner in writing and as soon as feasible of any formal tasking or assistance arrangements that are made. The Director General will explain why they considered it appropriate for the partner to perform the task or provide the assistance.

7.21 The Director General will ensure the NCA's annual report[34] includes details of any use by the NCA or UK law enforcement partners of the directed tasking and assistance powers in Part 1 of the Act.

7.22 The NCA's directed tasking and assistance arrangements in regard to an England and Wales police force will as a matter of policy also extend to Border Force officers or other Home Office officials who carry out border, immigration and customs related functions which are under the direction and control of the Home Secretary. These arrangements will be the subject of a separate protocol between the Home Secretary and the Director General.

8. Financial management

8.1 The NCA, the Home Office, HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office have agreed that:

a. in general, the NCA will have the ability to determine its own approach on corporate and financial matters without recourse to the Home Office or other departments, subject to the points below.
b. the NCA will have its own estimate and where additional funding is agreed, this will be funded by a reduction in the overall Home Office Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL).
c. there will be joint NCA – Home Office Mid-Year Reviews of in-year NCA spend and NCA should provide the Home Office with regular financial reporting to support these reviews.
d. the Home Office will negotiate the NCA's budget with HM Treasury, in consultation with the NCA Director General, as part of the annual Main and Supplementary Estimates processes, and at Spending Reviews.
e. the Director General will be responsible for ensuring that NCA capital investments represent value for money and are affordable, in discussion with the Home Office. The Director General will seek approval from the Home Secretary for Capital investment above an agreed threshold. For additional funding awarded by the Home Secretary to support his or her

31 Section 5 and paragraphs 2 (co-operation), 8 and 9 (voluntary assistance), Schedule 3 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
32 Section 5(5) and (9), Crime and Courts Act 2013
33 Paragraph 10-18, schedule 3 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013
34 See the definition of this term in Part 2, Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013

delivery priorities, the Home Secretary, will agree performance metrics to monitor performance of these delivery priorities, in consultation with the NCA.

f. the NCA will comply with 'Managing Public Money' and other relevant guidance as appropriate.
g. the NCA is required to remain within the limits as set out in the Delegated Authority Letter.

8.2 The NCA will consult the Home Office on all significant discussions with HM Treasury and/or Cabinet Office, including (but not limited to) those which could have wider financial repercussions for the Home Office. If the Director General is seeking HM Treasury approval for expenditure which "sets precedents, is novel, contentious or could cause repercussions elsewhere in the public sector,"[35] they will immediately inform Home Office Ministers.

8.3 The Director General will be appointed as the Principal Accounting Officer ('PAO') for the NCA. As the PAO, the Director General will be personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds for which he or she has charge; for ensuring propriety, regularity, value for money and feasibility in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the NCA. In addition, the Director General will ensure that the NCA is managed on the basis of the standards, in terms of governance, decision-making and financial management that are set out in Managing Public Money. The Director General may delegate the day-to-day administration of his or her Accounting Officer responsibilities to a senior NCA officer (as defined in paragraph 6.1 above) as set out in 'Managing Public Money'.

The PAO's accountabilities include:

a. signing the accounts and ensuring that proper records are kept relating to the accounts and that the accounts are properly prepared and presented in accordance with any directions issued by the Secretary of State or by HM Treasury;
b. preparing and signing a Governance Statement covering corporate governance, risk management and oversight of any local responsibilities, for inclusion in the annual report and accounts;
c. ensuring that effective procedures for handling complaints are established and made widely known within the NCA;
d. acting in accordance with the terms of this document, Managing Public Money and other instructions and guidance issued from time to time by the Home Office, HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office; and
e. giving evidence when summoned before the Public Accounts Committee on the NCA's stewardship of public funds.

External Audit

8.4 The Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) will audit the NCA's annual accounts and lay them before Parliament, together with their report. The C&AG will:

a. consult the NCA on whom (the National Audit Office (NAO) or a commercial auditor) shall undertake the audit(s) on his or her behalf, though the final decision rests with the C&AG;
b. have a right to obtain relevant documents and information including by virtue of section 25(8) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, that are held by another person in receipt of payments or grants from the NCA;
c. if asked, provide government departments and other relevant bodies with Regulatory Compliance Reports relating to the NCA and other similar reports which departments may request at the commencement of the audit and which will be compatible with the independent auditor's role.

8.5 The C&AG may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the NCA has used its resources in discharging its functions. For the purpose of these

35 Managing Public Money (May 2021), section 2.3.4

examinations, the C&AG will have a right to obtain documents and information as provided for under Section 8 of the National Audit Act 1983. In addition, the NCA will provide, in conditions to grants and contracts, for the C&AG to exercise such access to documents held by grant recipients and contractors and sub-contractors as may be required for these examinations; and will use its best endeavours to secure access for the C&AG to any other documents or information required by the C&AG which are held by other bodies.

Internal Audit

8.6 The NCA will establish and maintain arrangements for internal audit and will consider the use of shared services in accordance with the Treasury's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).[36] In particular the NCA will:

a. share its audit strategy, periodic audit plans and annual audit report, including the opinion of the NCA's Head of Internal Audit on risk management, control and governance, with the Home Office; and
b. keep a written record of any fraud and theft suffered by the NCA; produce an annual report on fraud and theft to be shared with the Home Office; and notify the HM Treasury of any unusual or major incidents as soon as possible.

8.7 The internal audit service will have a right of access to all documents, including in any cases where services are contracted out.

Government funding

8.8 The NCA will seek agreement from Parliament to spend or commit resources through the Estimates process. The NCA's resource funding request will be put to Parliament, for the prospective financial year. The Supply and Appropriation Act 2025 will provide the legal authority for public expenditure within the ambit of each request. Any adjustments between the Home Office and NCA baseline will be settled through the standard Supplementary Estimates process (once annually). During the year, HM Treasury will expect the NCA to operate within the control totals framework for Resource, Capital, Annual Managed Expenditure (AME) (including movement in the provision for police pensions) and for its Net Cash Requirement. HM Treasury will monitor the NCA's in-year budget spend through its monthly Online System for Central Accounting and Reporting (OSCAR) returns. The AME pension budget will sit with the NCA, but the AME control total can be revised through the standard Supplementary Estimates process with the Home Office, in the form of a budget cover transfer.

8.9 Requests for budget exchange into the following financial year will be coordinated by the Home Office in the discussions with HM Treasury.

8.10 Any income received from the Devolved Administrations will be shown as income and within the Estimate.

8.11 The NCA will participate in the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme, under which a proportion of the assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 are paid to law enforcement bodies.[37] [38]The Home Office coordinates the process, assessing and distributing the amounts on a quarterly basis in arrears.

Pay and Pensions

8.12 Pay for NCA officers below the grade of NCA Deputy Director will be covered by a single pay remit approved by the Home Secretary.

8.13 For grades below NCA Deputy Director, the NCA Remuneration Review Body will provide independent recommendations to the Home Secretary on the pay and allowances of NCA

36 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-internal-audit-standards
37 Paragraph 25, Part 8, Schedule 5 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013 provides the Director General must pay to the Commissioners any money received by way of proceeds of forfeitures by the Director General in the exercise of any power of the Commissioners or by the Director General or any other NCA officer in the exercise of a customs power
38 All sums received by the NCA in the course of, or in connection with, the exercise of its asset recovery functions under Parts 2, 4, 5 and 6 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 will be paid to the Secretary of State

officers designated with operational powers.[39] For NCA officers who are not designated with operational powers, pay setting arrangements will take account of the annual Civil Service Pay Guidance issued by HM Treasury. The NCA will be responsible for funding the NCA-related costs of the Remuneration Review Body via the Office of Manpower Economics.

8.14 The terms and conditions of NCA officers at or above the grade of NCA Deputy Director grade will be set by Cabinet Office, alongside those of other senior civil servants, in line with the recommendations of the Senior Salaries Review Body.

8.15 The Director General will be able to designate certain NCA posts as eligible for the Police Pension Scheme.[40] The process for designating such posts will be agreed with HM Treasury and Cabinet Office.

Fees and Charges

8.16 The Act provides for the NCA raising fees and charging for services. Annual income projections will be reflected in the NCA estimate and the NCA will ensure that each fee is in line with full cost recovery principles in accordance with Managing Public Money. The Director General must ensure that any funds received as a result of such charges or fees are paid into the Consolidated Fund unless the Director General has obtained the prior approval of HM Treasury to retain such funds.[41]

Sponsorship and Donations

8.17 Any other income, assets or other benefits-in-kind which the NCA may receive through gifts, bequests or donations from third parties will be treated in accordance with HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual and Cabinet Office guidance.

Payment for HMICFRS inspections

8.18 The Home Office will pay HMICFRS for any relevant inspection as set out in its annual inspection programme. Arrangements by which the Home Office could recover appropriate costs from the NCA for annual inspections will be set out via a Memorandum of Understanding. The Home Office will cover the cost of any additional inspections of the NCA by HMICFRS which are requested by the Home Secretary in-year. The Department of Justice in Northern Ireland will retain responsibility for the cost of inspections requested by them. The amount payable towards inspections should be reviewed on a regular basis to maintain the quality of inspection.

Transition arrangements

8.19 In the event of any change to the NCA's functions, the NCA will work with the Home Office to put in place arrangements to ensure an orderly transition, in accordance with the principles set out in Managing Public Money (Annex 7). In particular, the Home Office will need to ensure that relevant assets and liabilities are transferred to any successor bodies, or in the event that Part 1 of the Act is repealed and no successor body is created, that they are reverted to the Home Secretary.

39 National Crime Agency (Remuneration Review Body) Regulations 2013
40 Section 11, Police Pensions Act 1976
41 HM Treasury has approved the NCA to charge for the Witness Intermediary Scheme; for Crime Operations Support; and training courses relating to the Proceeds of Crime and relating to CEOP. For each service, and category of service, income will be retained on the basis that the NCA will only charge on a full cost recovery basis, and there is no planned cross-subsidisation between services or categories

9. Transparency and information

9.1 In accordance with section 6 of the Act, the Director General is under a duty to publish information about the exercise of NCA functions and other matters relating to the NCA in accordance with the requirements set out in the Annex.

9.2 The Director General will appoint an NCA Director to act as the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

Public Information handling and complaints

9.3 The NCA will receive and handle information, comments, suggestions and complaints from members of the public in accordance with clear procedures which will be published on the NCA's website.

10. Arrangements for changing the Framework Document

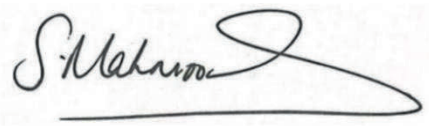
10.1 The Framework Document and its operation will be reviewed by the Home Office in consultation with the Director General and the Devolved Administrations at least every three years, in line with HM Treasury guidance. There may be exceptional reasons that render this inappropriate, which will need to be agreed with HM Treasury and the Home Office Permanent Secretary. It may be appropriate to update the Framework Document sooner if there are significant changes to the law enforcement system. The Framework Document will also be checked to ensure its effectiveness following the appointment of a new Director General or Home Secretary.

10.2 The Home Secretary or Director General may propose changes to this Framework Document at any time, and these will be subject to agreement by the Home Secretary in accordance with the consultation requirements set out in the Act, including the Devolved Administrations.

11. Interpretation

11.1 The terms used in this Framework Document have the same meaning as set out in Part 1 of the Act and, where relevant, any orders made under the Act.[42]

Signed by:



Home Secretary

November 2026



Director General

November 2026

42 For example, the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (National Crime Agency and Proceeds of Crime)(Northern Ireland) Order 2015

NCA Framework Document Annex: NCA Publication Requirements

A. Introduction

To ensure the National Crime Agency ('NCA') is an open and transparent agency, the Director General ('DG') has a statutory duty[43] to make arrangements for publishing information and to publish such information about the exercise of the NCA's functions and other matters relating to the NCA. This Annex imposes on the DG requirements in relation to the performance of the duty to publish, with which the DG must comply.[44]

B. Publication requirements

The DG will publish NCA information about the exercise of the NCA functions and other matters relating to the NCA where the material falls within one or more of the following categories:

- The threat from serious and organised crime
- General information about the NCA; who leads it, what it does and how it does it
- NCA priorities and performance
- NCA spending
- Summary records of NCA Board meetings

C. Exemptions

The DG may edit, redact or decline to publish any information the publication of which he or she reasonably considers would prejudice or jeopardise, or would be likely to prejudice or jeopardise:

- the discharge of the NCA's functions;[45]
- national security;
- the health and safety of any person;
- the commercial interests of the NCA or any person; or
- may jeopardise diplomatic/international relations with foreign governments.

The DG may also decline to publish information under these arrangements if he or she considers that publication of the information is contrary to any enactment or court order, is intended for future publication, is legally professional privileged information, where disclosure would be a breach of confidence or where the information is held only in court documents.

43 Section 6 Crime and Courts Act 2013
44 Section 6 (2) & (3) Crime and Courts Act 2013
45 Section 1 Crime and Courts Act 2013

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