

Human Trafficking

Briefing for prospective police and crime commissioners



Philip Ishola, Director of the Counter Human Trafficking Bureau gives an overview of what PCCs need to know about Human Trafficking.

Background

Human trafficking is international organised crime, with the exploitation of human beings for profit at its heart. It is an abuse of basic rights, with criminals preying on vulnerable people to for financial gain. In most cases, victims are brought to the UK from abroad, but we know that trafficking also occurs within the UK and that children in particular are increasingly vulnerable to falling victim to exploitation.

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (the 'Palermo Protocol') describes trafficking as: *"the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."*

UK Coalition Strategy

Human Trafficking is of high priority within the UK Coalition Government with its priorities set out in the [Human Trafficking: The Government's Strategy](#) launched on 19th July 2011.

The strategy sets out the key priority areas as international action to stop trafficking happening in the first place; a stronger border at home to stop victims being brought into the UK; tougher law enforcement action to tackle the criminal gangs that orchestrate the crime; and improved identification and care for the victims of trafficking.

The role of the Police as contributors across the whole strategy and leading on particular work strands is substantive. These are set out in the strategy and are being delivered by local constabularies, Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP), the UK Human Trafficking Centre, Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and The Association of Chief Police Officers.

In the strategy the UK Government also undertook to review legislation to ensure the effective prosecution of traffickers. An internal review was conducted between September and December 2011, which considered the effectiveness of existing Human Trafficking legislation in relation to the range of other complementary activities underway to deter and disrupt traffickers. [Report on the Internal Review of Human Trafficking Legislation May 2012](#)

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Police and Crime Commissioners

PCC's strategic role in delivering community safety, reducing crime and enhancing the delivery of criminal justice will all impact directly and indirectly on human trafficking. This activity contributes to formulating a coordinated and consistent approach in delivering the UK Trafficking Strategy and in responding to the responsibilities as required under the Council of Europe Convention Against the Trafficking in Human Beings.

Taking the Human Trafficking Agenda Forward

UK Coalition Government

Following the UK's decision to opt into the EU Directive on trafficking in human beings, the Government has decided that the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) will be the national rapporteur equivalent mechanism for the UK. Although the EU Directive provisions will take effect from April 2013, the Government has committed to producing a first report later this year. The report will provide an initial assessment and analysis of human trafficking trends.

Metropolitan Police Human Exploitation and Organised Crime Command

The command - SCD9, Human Exploitation and Organised Crime - brought together the fields of clubs and vice, human trafficking and immigration crime.

SCD9 are responsible for investigating the trafficking of adults for sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude where there is a clear link to an organised criminal network. It also absorbed Operation Maxim, which tackled and disrupted organised immigration crime in London, including human smuggling, human trafficking and counterfeit immigration documentation and Operation Swale, a joint ACPO/MPS/UKBA unit, focusing on those who profit from smuggling and exploiting migrants to the UK, and foreign criminals who cause harm to innocent people as a consequence of their illegal activities.

UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC)

The UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) is a multi-agency organisation led by SOCA. Its role is to provide a central point of expertise and coordination in relation to the UK's response to the trafficking of human beings (THB).

The Centre seeks to facilitate a coordinated, cooperative and collaborative way of working within the UK and internationally. Its work to combat THB and provide victim-centric support covers three key inter-linked areas:

- [Prevention](#)
- [Protection](#)
- [Prosecution](#)

This work involves a wide group of stakeholders and partners, who together deliver a diverse set of programmes designed to prevent and

reduce the harms caused by THB. The UKHTC's partners include police forces, the UK Border Agency, HM Revenue & Customs, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) and many charitable and voluntary expert groups.

The UK Human Trafficking Centre has produced an [assessment](#) to give an indication of the nature and scale of human trafficking during 2011. This is the first time an attempt has been made to describe the full extent of human trafficking in the UK. The assessment explores the number of potential victims, their country or origin, exploitation types, recruitment techniques and transport methods.

Information received by the centre suggests that 2,077 potential victims of human trafficking were identified in the UK, and the two most prevalent exploitation types were sexual and labour.

UK National Referral Mechanism [NRM]

The [National Referral Mechanism](#) (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support. To be referred to the NRM, potential victims of trafficking must first be referred to one of the UK's two competent authorities.

In the UK the two Competent Authorities are:

- The UKHTC, which deals with referrals from the police, local authorities, and NGOs.
- The UK Border Agency, which deals with referrals identified as part of the immigration process, for example where trafficking may be an issue as part of an asylum claim.

London Safeguarding Children Board

The London Safeguarding Children Board has launched a new set of [guidance](#) to help agencies identify and support children who have been trafficked.

The guidelines aim to support social workers, teachers, police, health workers and other professionals who may come into contact with suspected victims of trafficking, and have been piloted extensively in a number of local authorities across London and the UK.

The main findings from the pilot are:

- Once a child is identified as being a victim of trafficking, immediate action must be taken before they go missing.
- Awareness needs to be raised among the public and professionals who can sometimes underestimate the scale of the issue.
- Multiple interviews with various agencies can be traumatic for young victims of trafficking – a single multi-agency assessment is preferred.
- Teams of agencies need to work more closely together and be more proactive in sharing information quickly with organisations in

neighbouring areas as well as the voluntary sector.

Information Resources

Home Office

[Home Office Occasional Paper 103 March 2012. An evidence assessment of the routes of human trafficking into the UK.](#)

UK National Referral Mechanism [UKBA]

[Full Guidance for Competent Authorities](#)
[Chapter 9 - Index - Identifying victims of trafficking](#)

Anti Trafficking Legal Project

[archive of old or withdrawn policies on trafficking policies WHICH ARE NO LONGER IN FORCE for reference purposes.](#)



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