

News story: Government launches new strategy to tackle serious and organised crime

In a speech this morning, Minister for Security and Economic Crime Ben Wallace said preventing criminals from laundering money made from operations such as drug trafficking and human trafficking is a key element of the government's new [Serious and Organised Crime Strategy](#).

The strategy also sets out how the government will build the UK's defences against serious and organised crime (SOC), track down the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

According to the National Crime Agency there are around 4,600 serious and organised crime groups in the UK. These criminals use violence and intimidation in communities to operate and they prey on the most vulnerable in society, from victims of modern slavery and human trafficking to young people suffering sexual exploitation and abuse.

The strategy is backed by funding of at least £48 million in 2019 to 2020 to further ramp up law enforcement capabilities to specifically tackle illicit finance.

Security and Economic Crime Minister, Ben Wallace, said:

Serious and organised crime is the deadliest and most damaging national security threat faced by the UK. It undermines our economy, damages our international reputation and has a corrosive effect on individuals and communities.

Many serious and organised criminals think they are above the law. This strategy is determined to challenge that assertion.

Our new strategic approach not only improves our government and law enforcement capabilities, but also ensures that working with the private sector, the public and international partners are integrated as part of our response.

And working together, implementing this new strategy, we will show them just how serious we are.

New measures in the SOC strategy include:

- additional investment in the multi-agency National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) which is now operational and includes officers from the NCA, HM Revenue and Customs, City of London Police, Serious Fraud Office, Financial Conduct Authority Crown Prosecution Service and the Home

Office

- piloting new approaches to preventing people engaging in serious and organised crime and building community resilience against it
- establishing a new national tasking framework for law enforcement
- improving engagement with the private sector, particularly the information and communications technology industry
- expanding our overseas capabilities, including establishing a new network of overseas policy specialists

The NECC will bring the full force of government, law enforcement, civil society, regulators and the private sector – particularly the technology and financial sectors – to bear against those engaged in this criminal activity.

Mr Wallace set out how the government will:

- use all the powers and tools available to target the most dangerous and determined criminals and deny them access to their money and assets
- work with communities, businesses and the vulnerable to build resilience against serious and organised crime
- stop the problem at the source, supporting those at risk of engaging in criminality and more closely managing offenders who are unwilling to cease their involvement in SOC
- align the collective efforts as one, cohesive system establishing a new national tasking framework for law enforcement, improving engagement with the private sector and expanding overseas capabilities

The Minister was joined by Lynne Owens, Director-General of the National Crime Agency (NCA) and Bob Wigley, Chair of UK Finance at the launch event at The Shard in central London.

Director-General of the National Crime Agency, Lynne Owens, said:

The threat from serious and organised crime is changing rapidly, increasing in both volume and complexity. It now affects more UK citizens, more often, than any other national security threat.

Tackling this ever-changing threat is a daunting task. This is why, as part of this strategy, we are introducing a new, revised operating model for law enforcement, which will allow us to drive more effective collaboration and prioritise tackling the issues that cause the most harm to the public.

We welcome the funding injection for next year across law enforcement tackling serious and organised crime and look forward to further commitment to provide the resources needed to deliver this whole-system approach.

Our ambition is to deliver a layered capability, from the local level through to the national, which will identify and exploit the best opportunities to tackle serious and organised crime and stop the harm it inflicts on the UK public.

Chair of UK Finance, Bob Wigley, said:

Stemming the flow of illicit finance that underpins serious and organised crime is an absolutely priority for the UK's banking and finance sector.

Banks already spend over £5 billion a year fighting economic crime, constantly developing new approaches and finding more effective methods, but there is more we can all do.

The new strategy launched today is exactly what is needed – providing the right legal and regulatory system, while ensuring effective collaboration by all the regulated sectors of the economy, because as a country we are only as strong as our weakest link.

The Serious and Organised Crime Strategy complements the Serious Violence Strategy launched in April which sets out the government's response to serious violence and increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide.

It also has links to other government strategies, including the UK's Strategy to Counter Terrorism, the UK Anti-Corruption Strategy, the National Cyber Security Strategy and the Modern Slavery Strategy.

The £48 million funding to enhance the response to illicit finance is in addition to the £21 million over the next 18 months to boost the law enforcement response to child sexual exploitation and abuse which the Home Secretary announced in September.

News story: HMRC to review High Income Child Benefit Charge penalty cases

HMRC has announced that it is reviewing cases where a 'Failure to Notify' penalty was issued for the tax years 2013 to 2014, 2014 to 2015, and 2015 to 2016, to customers who did not register for the [High Income Child Benefit Charge](#).

The department will review cases for these years and issue penalty refunds if it finds the customer had a reasonable excuse for not meeting their tax obligation.

A reasonable excuse is something that stopped someone from meeting a tax obligation which they took appropriate care to meet. Decisions on what constitutes a reasonable excuse are based on an objective assessment of individual circumstances.

Normally customers have to explain why they have a reasonable excuse, however following feedback HMRC is proactively reviewing these cases.

This will include families who made a claim for Child Benefit before High Income Child Benefit Charge was introduced, and where one partner's income subsequently increased to over £50,000 in or after the 2013 to 2014 tax year. This is because the higher earner in a household who pays the charge may not be the same person claiming Child Benefit on behalf of the household.

The review will not include anyone who received communications from HMRC about High Income Child Benefit Charge or claimed Child Benefit after the charge was introduced in 2012 to 2013.

Alongside this, HMRC is already writing to customers who might be liable to High Income Child Benefit Charge in 2016 to 2017 and 2017 to 2018, to help them meet their tax obligations in time to avoid paying a penalty.

An HMRC spokesperson said:

HMRC is listening to customers and stakeholders, and reviewing our approach to HICBC to ensure we are treating everyone fairly.

Customers do not need to ask for a penalty refund or contact HMRC. We will issue the refunds, where due, over the next six months.

[News story: DIT support helps green company expand UK operations](#)

The company's product saves three times more trees than normal recycled paper, making it more affordable for British companies to go carbon neutral.

The investment will help Paper Plus Europe expand their London office and presence in the UK market, creating seven new jobs, as they aim to add to the more than half a million trees they have saved in last two years.

Part of the funding will be used for the company's product development, which will tackle plastic waste caused by single-use plastic food packaging. The company's R&D operation will also benefit, helping to further develop their envoPAP food grade packaging that will be biodegradable and compostable.

Minister for Investment, Graham Stuart said:

I am delighted that the Department for International Trade, through its international network, has been able to assist Paper Plus in landing this considerable new investment from India, which will have huge long-term environmental benefits both in the UK and abroad.

As an international economic department, we are committed to helping UK companies with trailblazing green ideas to locate the investment they need to reach the next level, creating jobs and prosperity across the country, and helping to ensure we leave our environment in a better state than we inherited it.

Director, Paper Plus, Kaushal Shah said:

We at Paper Plus believe in making sustainability the new normal for consumers in the UK and over the world.

The expertise and advice of DIT have been a significant accelerator for our business.

The professional knowledge of our DIT advisors is phenomenal and it enhances the credibility of the UK as an excellent place to do business.

The news comes as the Minister met companies and industry experts at the Advanced Engineering 2018 trade show in Birmingham.

Advanced Engineering is one of the biggest trade shows of its kind in Europe, and more than 600 suppliers and thousands of visitors were in attendance.

The Department for International Trade's UK Pavilion – which housed more than 18 companies – demonstrated expertise across the advanced engineering technical spectrum.

The announcement is one of £10 million of investment deals with global partners that have created more than 50 highly specialised jobs in the UK's advanced engineering sector in recent weeks with assistance from the Department for International Trade.

- In late September, Belgian company Solvay invested in a new specialist centre for aircraft materials in Wrexham, creating 50 jobs.
- Another Belgian company – Sioen Industries – continued their investment in Lancashire-based technical textile manufacturer James Dewhurst in 2017 with a £1.7 million investment in state-of-the-art machinery. Alongside its sister company Veranneman Technical Textiles, the company has also committed itself to creating further jobs at the site in the future.

- Gloucestershire-based engineering company Renishaw have invested £2.7 million in new premises in Mexico, enabling the company to further establish its global footprint.

Further information

- Paper Plus specialise in producing carbon neutral, sustainable, sugarcane-based paper products, and estimates that it has saved a million trees in the last two years. One pallet of its envoPAP paper saves 24 trees compared to only seven with normal recycled paper.
 - There are over 100,000 advanced manufacturing companies in the UK, employing 2.7 million people, while manufacturing productivity is growing three times faster than the rest of the UK's economy as a whole. Research and development in the sector totals £13.5 billion every year.
 - DIT's [Export Strategy](#) – launched in August – sets out the ambitious target of increasing exports as a measure of GDP from 30% to 35%, transforming the UK into one of the G7's most prolific exports.
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[Find out more about investing in the UK](#)

News story: Winchman boards heaving fishing vessel in rough seas



The HM Coastguard search and rescue helicopter based at Sumburgh flew to the vessel and on arrival it took several minutes for the winchman to land as the seas rocked the vessel from side to side.

Once onboard the winchman quickly winches the crewman into the helicopter where he was taken to Lerwick for onward transfer to hospital by the ambulance service.

We have since heard from the casualty's family and they have told us he is making a good recovery – which we are delighted to hear!

[Rescue footage](#)

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