

Turks and Caicos Governor's update on national response to gang related violence

Good Day Turks and Caicos,

This is your Governor speaking from the National Emergency Operations Room in Providenciales.

Following my address to the House of Assembly, and as promised, I now provide an update on the support we have received, and we are to receive, as we face down gang related violence.

What I'm about to say captures work that myself and the Premier have been engaged on together, over the last week, in close collaboration with the Commissioner, who has driven the operation and worked tirelessly to deliver.

There is, I should say, a daily – including weekend – National Emergency Operations Group that myself, the Premier or his Office, the Police Commissioner, Chambers, National Security Secretariat and OT Policing Advisor attend.

The Premier and I met at 8:30 am this morning to review progress. Without predicting the immediate future, because matters can change, I can say the situation over recent days has been significantly more stable. Indeed matters have been unusually quiet.

We don't rest on our laurels and know that those that would do us harm are both taking stock of recent Policing reinforcements, while licking their wounds following more than one confrontation with our Tactical Unit. Our Officers remain proactive. Some gang members may be seeking to leave the Territory. If you are aware of this, CRIMESTOPPERS want to know: +1 800 8477. +1 800 8477.

It is true to say that this calm is down to courageous work by our Police and that has included sustained pressure – including a significant arrest, weapon and drug recoveries, and the unfortunate fatal shooting of a young man who – it seems – chose to fire on our Tactical Unit.

I have said before that if you are confronted by our Tactical Firearms Officers, or Response Teams, it really would be best to lie down and place your hands out in front of you. If you fire on our Officers – or others – their rules of engagement mean they will return fire to save life; theirs or others. They are far better trained than you are, and they will prevail.

Every death is unfortunate. So I repeat the advice; this isn't a movie or a video game – if you are confronted – drop to the floor – hands outstretched. You are young and you think yourself invincible – but you are not.

Beyond local Police bravery, and skill, I also have little doubt that the arrival of the Royal Bahamas Police Force, and the US's Customs and Border Protection Aircraft, along with Drugs Enforcement Agency, has had an immediate deterrent effect.

If it hasn't, it should have. If the gangs have gone to ground, they will be found. If gang members have moved overseas, we have international partners – including the UK's National Crime Agency and regional governments – who are solidly in support of helping us track them. If our short term measures are being effective, I promise our long term measures have to be determinative.

The US maritime surveillance support has been operational for some days and nights, protecting our borders and UK Border Force experts arrive on Sunday. As you have heard from the Commissioner, Royal Bahamas Police Officers have been sworn in as local Constables.

I will leave it to the Commissioner, in his regular updates, to talk to operational deployments but I hope you feel reassured by their rapid arrival. That the Bahamas, TCI and the UK expedited the legal work and planning – at break-neck pace – so four days after the announcement to the House of Assembly, they had arrived, happened because all three parties were seized of the need. The day after the Bahamian Officers arrived, they were operational.

All I need to say now, is they've already made a difference. Some are directly inducted into our 'Tactical Firearms Unit', making one large joint Team. Some are deployed as Response Units. Their dogs, able to attack or to search, were active at the airport yesterday, supporting our Customs Officers search for guns and drugs.

I, the Premier and Commissioner, and the people of the TCI, are extremely grateful for what can only be described as very generous support from our steadfast neighbour. Bahamas, you have been your brother's keeper.

Jamaica's kind offer is on the table and our Commissioner, and theirs, are involved in detailed discussions today. Miami Dade Police have made similar offers.

With that immediate support in place – which is appropriate and proportionate to our immediate needs – I want to now say something about the next phases of support, and also the longer term.

We have now shown that this situation can be 'policed', by Police Officers (our own supported by Bahamas) and so I do not want to put British Troops onto the 'so called' streets. I have done this myself, albeit many decades ago, and while it is immediately popular, that popularity quickly wains. Soldiers are not trained to Police. It is why I have purposefully held back the local Regiment. Police are trained across a wide-spectrum of skill, and that includes mounting intelligence led arrest operations against gangsters. We need the right tool for the right problem.

The situation may of course change, and if it did my position would change. You will have heard the Commissioner say the situation is constantly under

review and you can take it that the Commissioner, Premier and myself all judge we presently have what we need.

As a result we have requested precise UK military support. A Royal Fleet Auxiliary is making headway towards us and will bring her Wildcat Helicopter. The UK Foreign Office is paying and this airframe provides outstanding day and night surveillance providing top cover for Policing Operations and the ability to track fast boats. This is a strategic offer that the military can provide.

Separately we have had the UK's National Crime Agency arrive. They have worked with our Intelligence Branch helping further draw together the information we have on the gangs, developed from the new intelligence unit that recently became active supported by UK specialist trainers.

The National Crime Agency have a regional and global reach, are extremely well connected to US agencies and other Caribbean Governments so given that we are, unfortunately, now involved in a trans-regional, drug-driven, anti-gang operation, their support will be invaluable.

They, for instance, have been highly instrumental in advising us in terms of the one strategic asset that is vital for any trans-national and local operation against the drug and gun crime 'industry' – 'lawful intercept'. That, Judge authorised capability, will come on line once transparent, world class legislation is passed.

Given the Bahamas deployment, the Commissioner's judgement is that we don't immediately need more Tactical Firearms officers on the Island, to reinforce our own, beyond the ones we presently have. The Bahamas have sent sufficient and are the Force best placed – because of proximity, regional and cultural understanding – to immediately help.

However, following the Premier's and my request, UK policing are finalising a contingency plan for additional specialist Firearms police support to deploy forward if we need them.

It's good strategy to not deploy all your available force, but have a reserve, and that's what we presently have. Such Officers would also deploy if, for instance, we were to be hit by another Hurricane this season and if that were the case I would not want all our Policing 'eggs', deployed forward, in one basket.

The FCD0 are also preparing and funding a further deployment of detectives, firearms trainers and other specialists to support our local police. In addition, the deployment of 24 UK-funded detectives, with integrated leadership, that will fall under local command, continues at pace. The first leadership elements of this will arrive very soon.

While armed officers provide the ability to suppress and arrest, it is this team of detectives that should provide the heart of any anti-gang operation.

Couple this with: a) intelligence now being provided through sources on the ground; b) future intelligence provided by those monitoring

telecommunications; c) intelligence collected from the aerial surveillance platform the UK are procuring, and; d) wash all this against intelligence provided across the region; and we will have built a Policing machine that can outmatch any gang. TCI will not be the safe haven gangsters thought it was.

Crime sits within of course a much wider societal picture and relying on the Police to continually suppress and arrest is no proper national strategy. If no other factor was taken into account, a projected 10 times growth in population – between 1980 and 2040 – in less than one lifetime – giving us one of the fastest growing populations in the Caribbean – was always going to bring very significant challenges.

That's before we take into account: our proximity to increasingly unstable neighbours, a region awash with guns and drugs where every Caribbean Island faces challenges, and where criminals seemingly are able to move easily throughout the region.

But beyond our geography and region there are problems we must 'own', that we can do something about. I believe the present Government is tackling these head on. How to regularise irregular shanty settlements; how to provide for a more equitable society; how to generate sustainable long term growth; how to make early interventions in our schools; how – through the Population and Status Commission – to both ensure our future immigration policy is rock-solidly fit for purpose, while also working out how we manage the issue of those who have lived, and will live their lives here, but cannot properly assimilate.

There is much more than that but the good news is, that this has all started. The National Security Secretariat provides for coherence across Government and their Permanent Secretary will give some insight into the work they are doing, on behalf of the Government, in coming weeks.

Finally I want to say this. Just at the moment I could not be more proud to be your Governor. From my first day I knew I could never be 'you', but I did promise I would do my best to support 'you' and commit to 'you'.

Much of what I normally say is about the extraordinary talent and potential we have in these Islands. Much of what I have just said is about external support. Just at the moment you deserve every bit of external support you have received, and you will receive, because you have been steadfast and resilient during five years of extraordinary pressure.

As a small Island community you defy the laws of gravity. Normally a disaster knocks such a community backwards to the point it can never quite get back to where it was. Not you.

In five years you have absorbed three hurricanes, two at Category 5 and one, a few weeks ago, at Category 3. We absorbed a global pandemic that stretched the Territories health system, a system totally unprepared set against our economy that was and is completely reliant on international travel.

We are presently absorbing an upswing in gang related murder that is alien to TCI but almost endemic to the region, at levels that almost no UK Police Force could tackle alone, and which has brought the problems of the region, in terms of drugs, gangs and guns, to our literal doorstep.

But look where we are and where we will be.

It was very hard for many in TCI, but there is almost no other nation who came out of the pandemic stronger than they went into it, or who dealt with it in the systematic and consistent way we did. No debt, visitor numbers up, globally high vaccination rates, brand enhanced, Tourist industry describing us as the best in the world.

God indeed saved us from the worst of Hurricane FIONA; yet seasoned veterans of Hurricanes had to notice how much better the Territories response was, and also how quickly we could bring in phased, outside support. That wasn't accidental but because lessons had been applied, local capability in say the Regiment built, and Government command and control had practiced over and over again.

We know how to manage and learn from crisis and we will do the same on crime. Crisis properly illuminates issues that cannot be ignored not just by us but by others. Three weeks ago, while we had great support from OPBAT on our borders, we were in this fight against crime broadly alone with very useful UK support.

Now we are very clearly in a fight but with a full range of partners, helping us, because they really do know that in this interconnected region we are all in this together. We are not recipients of charity, we are working with partners that know we are stronger together.

The UK support now flowing in – some of it long planned but now being realised: a big detective effort; access to intelligence; maritime surveillance support and the UK's equivalent of the FBI – the National Crime Agency – thoroughly engaged – does change the game.

And that is before we tip our hat to our friends in the Bahamas who are literally shoulder-to shoulder with our brave Tactical and Response officers, to Jamaica who stands ready, particularly in terms of intelligence, and to multiple US agencies, some who are here right here, right now, defending our borders.

The greatest crime would be to not seize the opportunity this crisis presents. The Premier and I can assure you, we do not intend to miss that. As the pandemic hit us, as the Hurricanes hit us, we will emerge stronger, because that is in the nature of these resilient by nature, Turks and Caicos Islands, and their indomitable residents, of which I am proud to be just one.

Governor Nigel Dakin delivers the speech to the media.

The golden 50: Knowsley becomes the 50th local authority to join our LLC Register

Our Local Land Charges (LLC) delivery is going from strength to strength. Today, Wednesday 12 October, Knowsley becomes the 50th local authority to join the national LLC Register, giving citizens and businesses instant access to LLC search results.

- Knowsley is the 50th local authority to join the service. Anyone requiring LLC searches in the Knowsley Council area will now need to obtain them from HM Land Registry or a search provider rather than going directly to the council.
- Through continuous improvement we have dramatically increased the pace of local authority data transfer to the register, with 38 of the 50 local authority data migrations occurring since April 2021.
- The register now holds over 2.5 million charges, allowing nearly 366,000 automated searches to be conducted. Customers are getting results on average nine days faster which amounts to a total reduction in waiting time of more than 2,000 years. Buyers of official searches have saved more than £860,000 and have the added benefit of a state-backed guarantee.

Gathering pace and meeting ambitions

We have gained a tremendous amount of knowledge from digitising, transforming, and transferring local authority data to the register. This learning has ramped up our delivery capacity, with 38 of the 50 local authority data migrations taking place in the past 19 months. As we continue to refine our processes and apply lessons learned from each migration, this rate of migration will only increase.

By 2023, a third of local authority areas will have joined the service, rising to two thirds the following year. When the project is complete, property buyers, developers, innovators, and policymakers will receive the same level of access, irrespective of their postcode.

Mark Kelso, LLC Programme Director, said:

I am delighted that people buying property in Knowsley will now have 24/7 instant access to digital LLC search results. This is the 50th local authority to join the service and demonstrates how we are accelerating our delivery pace. This is a credit to the team at Knowsley and the investment in our delivery teams and partners.

We continue to collaborate with local authorities across England and Wales to ensure property buyers can obtain the information they need quickly, making the conveyancing process simpler and faster for everyone. As the register continues to grow, more and more people will benefit from this modern service.

A little about Knowsley

The Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council area borders the City of Liverpool to the west, Sefton to the north-west and St Helens to the east. Knowsley's 150,000 residential population now have instant access to high quality, standardised, digital LLC data.

Knowsley is home to Knowsley Safari – the UK's number one Safari Park according to Trip Advisor. Once a former RAF airfield, the 550-acre space is now home to more than 700 animals. The park attracts more than 600,000 visitors a year.

Maximising local benefits

An ambitious homes delivery programme is already well underway in Knowsley. 37 housing developments are currently under construction with an expected 10,000 new properties to be built by 2028. LLC data will feed into these vital development and investment decisions and support more than 3,700 businesses based in the region.

Knowsley is the second local authority in its regional cluster to join the register alongside Liverpool. This presents an exciting opportunity for LLC data to be used between authorities to support local economic investments.

LLC data feeds into more than just development and investment decisions. Knowsley is home St Mary's Church and a wealth of other listed buildings dating back to the 1700s in Vicarage Place. Accessible LLC data helps protect this local heritage.

Successful collaboration

Vicky Tupou, LLC Delivery Manager for Knowsley, said:

Knowsley were a fantastic, upbeat, and enthusiastic LLC team especially given they were completing much of the work at the weekends or evenings. Almost 25,000 records were digitised and transformed.

Being home to two big premiership teams you can imagine football was a hot topic in our weekly meetings. It was a pleasure working with Knowsley and we look forward to supporting and collaborating with other authorities to deliver the register.

James Duncan, Knowsley Council's Executive Director for Resources, said:

I'm delighted to be supporting the delivery of a national register by HM Land Registry for local land charge searches that meets the needs of everyone, particularly those whose preferred method of working is online. The new service is quick and easy to use. The Council will continue to provide its own service for CON29R requests to customers in the usual way.

HM Land Registry is working in partnership with local authorities across England and Wales to migrate their local land charges data to a central, digital register. Once migrated, anyone will be able to get instant online search results via GOV.UK using the [Search for Local Land Charges](#) service.

Business customers can use their existing portal and Business Gateway channels or their usual search providers to access local land charges data for those local authorities which have migrated.

Customers will need to continue to submit CON29 enquiries to their local authority.

For more information, read about the [Local Land Charges Programme](#).

Paperless trade for UK businesses to boost growth

- The Bill will make digital documentation legally recognised, reduce admin costs and make it easier for British firms to buy and sell internationally
- Processing times for electronic documents cut to 20 seconds and carbon emissions reduced by at least ten per cent

British businesses will be able to trade easier, faster and cheaper around the world thanks to new plans to remove needless paperwork and bureaucracy.

The Electronic Trade Documents Bill, expected to be introduced in Parliament today, will boost the UK's international trade, already worth more than [£1.4 trillion](#), and will reduce the estimated 28.5 billion paper trade documents printed and flown around the world daily.

Business-to-business documents such as bills of lading – a contract between

parties involved in shipping goods – and bills of exchange – used to help importers and exporters complete transactions – currently have to be paper-based due to longstanding laws.

Under the Electronic Trade Documents Bill, digital trade documents will be put on the same legal footing as their paper-based equivalents to give UK business more choice and flexibility in how they trade.

The Bill will modernise old legislation such as the Bills of Exchange Act 1882 and the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1924.

Removing the legal obstacle to electronic versions of trade documents will significantly lower administration costs and is expected to provide a £1.14 billion boost to UK business over a ten-year period. It will reduce trade contract processing times from between seven and ten days to as little as 20 seconds, according to [Trade Finance Global](#).

Digital Secretary Michelle Donelan said:

Our digital-first plans will make it easier for the country's firms to buy and sell around the world – driving growth, supercharging our economy, cutting carbon and boosting productivity.

We want to support businesses by cutting red tape and allowing them to sell their goods and products globally without burdensome bureaucracy.

The UK was central to establishing the international trade system in the nineteenth century and we are once again leading the world to boost global trade in the twenty-first century.

The Digital Container Shipping Association [estimates](#) that if 50 per cent of the container shipping industry adopted electronic bills of lading, the collective global savings would be around £3.6 billion (\$4 billion) per year. The International Chamber of Commerce estimates that small and medium businesses could see a 13 per cent increase in international business if trade is digitised.

Elsewhere the World Economic Forum (WEF) has found that digitising trade documents could potentially reduce global carbon emissions from logistics by as much as 12 per cent. Electronic trade documents also increase security and compliance by making it easier to trace records – for instance, through the use of blockchain and distributed ledger technology.

International trade still relies to a large extent on a special category of trade document which is dependent on being physically possessed by a person, and transferred over to another person.

The UK is a world leader in digital trade but currently the law does not recognise the possibility of possessing electronic documents, which prevents industries going fully paperless. This is costly and inefficient.

This Bill will allow businesses to choose to use electronic trade documents but does not force them to do so – allowing them to use practices and processes which work for them. It will set a vital precedent for all sectors and industries using English law as a basis for international contracts, including across the Commonwealth.

Commonly used documents in the UK for the trade in or transport of goods which the Bill will enable to become electronic include:

- a bill of exchange
- a promissory note
- a bill of lading
- a ship's delivery order
- a warehouse receipt
- a mate's receipt
- a marine insurance policy
- a cargo insurance certificate

The new rules will require trade documents in electronic form to meet certain criteria designed to replicate the key features of paper trade documents. This includes ensuring only one person, or parties acting jointly, can exercise exclusive control over it at any time, and removing the previous holder's ability to exercise control over it once it has been transferred on.

The Bill will have its second reading when parliamentary time allows.

Chris Southworth, Secretary General, ICC United Kingdom said:

The publication of the Bill is a game changer with huge economic gains to be made for trade if companies digitalise systems and remove paper. Trade plays a huge role in the global economy so digitalisation is vital to establishing a more sustainable system.

Real time transactional data will enable us to gather far richer, more insightful information to help us track and monitor the flow of sustainable goods and finance across the system. This is simply not possible if information is held on paper documents

***ENDS

***Notes to Editors:

The Bill was developed by the Law Commission for England & Wales and the government has consulted with the Territorial Offices and Devolved Administrations to ensure that it works for the whole of the UK. Reform in this area is a G7 commitment made under DCMS Secretary of State's Digital Track of the UK G7 Presidency.

DCMS is backing the country's powerhouse sectors to grow the economy and make a difference where people live.

The digital sector contributes approximately £138 billion to the economy. There are 1,822,000 jobs in the sector – 250,000 more than in 2019 before the pandemic.

Exports of services by the digital sector were worth £56 billion in 2020, which is around a fifth of the UK's total service exports.

[Gulf Cooperation Council trade negotiations update](#)



The first round of negotiations for a [Free Trade Agreement](#) (FTA) between the United Kingdom (UK) and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) took place between 22 August and 29 September 2022. The negotiations were conducted virtually.

In this round of negotiations, the UK and GCC discussed their objectives for the FTA and exchanged technical information. Technical discussions were held across 29 policy areas over 33 sessions. In total, more than 100 UK negotiators from across government took part in this round of negotiations.

An FTA will be a substantial economic opportunity, and a significant moment in the UK – GCC relationship. Government analysis shows that, in the long-run, a deal with the GCC is expected to increase trade by at least 16 percent, add at least £1.6 billion a year to the UK economy and contribute an additional £600 million or more to UK workers' annual wages.

Both sides have committed to secure an ambitious, comprehensive and modern agreement fit for the 21st century.

The government remains clear that any deal will be in the best interests of the British people and the UK economy. We will not compromise on our high environmental and labour protections, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and we will maintain our right to regulate in the public interest. We are also clear that during these negotiations, the NHS and the services it provides is not on the table.

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[TRA announces interim conclusions on welded tubes reconsideration](#)

News story

The TRA announces its interim conclusions in a reconsideration of a trade remedy measure on welded tubes and pipes from China, Belarus and Russia.



The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) proposes to change its original decision to re-include galvanised tubes in goods covered by the measure, as it has since been established that this product is produced within the UK. The [rationale for this](#) is explained in a report on the TRA's [public file](#).

Galvanised tubes (non-threaded WTP plated or coated with zinc) are used for a range of purposes including construction uses such as scaffolding poles. If implemented, the change would mean that imports of this product would be subject to a tariff imposed at the border, along with other types of welded tubes and pipes covered by this measure.

The TRA's intended recommendation is being published on the public file on 12 October and will be available for 14 days to allow interested parties to consider the findings. The TRA will then make its final recommendation to the Secretary of State for International Trade.

Original investigation of the measure

In August 2021, the TRA recommended to the Secretary of State for International Trade that the UK continue to apply the anti-dumping duties to

imports from China and Belarus but not to imports from Russia. This was because the TRA's analysis found that if the measures were removed, producers in Belarus and China would be likely to dump these products in the future and cause harm to UK industry, but that Russian producers would not. The TRA also recommended that the description of goods to which the anti-dumping should be applied be changed to exclude one of the four types of product covered by the measure, as it was not manufactured within the UK. This recommendation was accepted by the Secretary of State for International Trade.

A domestic steel producer subsequently requested that the TRA reconsider its recommendation and provided new data for TRA to consider as part of its investigation. Reconsiderations are an established part of the UK's tax regime, with many different arms of the Government incorporating them as part of their standard operating procedures. They are one of the main ways businesses can continue to make their case once a decision that affects them has been made.

The TRA's reconsideration covered the same remit as the original transition review. It considered, within the rules set in the UK's regulatory framework and the underlying World Trade Organization obligations, whether its original recommendation was correct. As part of this process, the TRA reviewed all relevant material, including additional information provided by interested parties.

Background information

- The Trade Remedies Authority is the UK body that investigates whether new trade remedy measures are needed to counter unfair import practices and unforeseen surges of imports. Read more about the TRA's mission in its [Business Plan](#).
- The TRA is an arm's length body of the Department of International Trade (DIT) launched on 1 June 2021. Before its launch, it operated as the Trade Remedies Investigations Directorate (TRID) of DIT.
- Trade remedy investigations were carried out by the EU Commission on the UK's behalf until the UK left the EU. Forty-four EU trade remedy measures of interest to UK producers were carried across into UK law when the UK left the EU and the TRA is currently reviewing each one to assess whether it is suitable for UK needs.
- The Welded Tubes and Pipes measure was the first of these measures to be reviewed and the TRA's review completed in August 2021.
- UK industries concerned about imports have also been able to submit applications for a new trade remedy measure since January 2021. These applications are considered by the TRA to see if there are grounds for an investigation.

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