



# Northern Ireland Report

NCA Summary

October 2023 – March 2024

Statistics and visuals in this report reflect all activity undertaken by the NCA and is assessed to have had an impact in Northern Ireland. In line with NCA Strategy (Upstream, Overseas and Online), not all activity included has been undertaken within Northern Ireland, some will have been assessed as having a broader UK impact, that includes Northern Ireland.

## About the NCA

- The NCA was **established in October 2013**. It is an intelligence led law enforcement agency responsible for gathering intelligence, investigating high end serious and organised crime, and leading the operational system.
- Around **6000 NCA officers work** in overt and covert sites **across the UK**, with NCA officers in Northern Ireland based alongside the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in **Belfast**. NCA Officers can be designated with the powers of a Police Constable, as well as those of Immigration Enforcement and HM Revenue & Customs officers. In addition to the powers granted under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (England & Wales) 1984 (PACE), NCA Officers operating in Northern Ireland have additional powers, as they relate to the legislation and orders within the jurisdiction.
- Additionally **we have 145 International Liaison Officers (ILOs) posted in 48 locations overseas** covering over 100 countries.

## NCA in NI

- The ambition for Northern Ireland is to take action nationally and internationally to **protect its communities** from serious and organised crime (SOC). We deliver this by working in partnership with PSNI, under the auspices of the Northern Ireland General Authorisation, as agreed by the Director General NCA and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice in 2016, taking action in Northern Ireland against SOC to **Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare**.
- A summary of our compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) within Northern Ireland is at Slide 5.

## Joint Working

- We work alongside PSNI to **identify High Value Targets and tactical vulnerabilities**.
- Intelligence and investigative opportunities are **jointly developed through collaborative arrangements** with the use of **niche NCA capabilities** being considered as part of this response.
- This work ensures that operations undertaken by the NCA are in **line with the new operational strategy** and further **strengthen our relationship with PSNI**.



# NCA Strategy 2023-2028

## 1. Degrading the most harmful organised crime groups by:

- going **upstream** to disrupt those at the top of the criminal chain, those who enable their activities, and those who launder the money they make
- taking action **overseas**, tackling the threat at source and en route to the UK
- increasingly focusing on **online** crime to combat a critical enabler of the organised crime business model, reflecting the fact that more crime takes place online or is enabled by technology

## 2. Leading the UK's operational response by:

- improving how the threat is understood and used to prioritise across the system
- strengthening multi-agency 4P (Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare) plans to reduce the harm from each threat
- improving performance measurement across the system
- bolstering the national services and capabilities provided by the Agency to system partners
- strengthening the system response to new and emerging threats

## 3. Transforming the Agency's capabilities by:

- unlocking the value of data to drive operational effect
- delivering a new approach to capability development
- improving the Agency's situational awareness
- strengthening the foundational capabilities as they relate to data technology and estates

## 4. Growing a highly skilled workforce by:

- better understanding the skills the Agency needs to transform workforce planning
- creating career pathways that improve officer experience
- becoming a more attractive employer through reformed pay and benefits
- improving the Agency's learning offer to meet future challenges
- establishing a more diverse workforce and inclusive culture
- embedding smarter working into the Agency's ethos

# NCA Strategy – Impact for Northern Ireland

## Protecting the Public

Our approach as a National Agency to protecting the public in Northern Ireland from Serious Organised Crime (SOC) is twofold:

1. To take action outside of Northern Ireland, upstream (of senior criminals and their enablers), overseas (in Europe and wider), and online to best protect the public from SOC before it impacts and harms Northern Irish communities utilising niche organisational capabilities. These capabilities such as major investigations, the NCA International Liaison Officer network, our corporate relationship with Social Media companies and industry, or enhanced cyber capabilities, are system capabilities established to support wider UK law enforcement partners.
2. To work collaboratively with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPSNI) to take action in Northern Ireland to protect Northern Irish communities from SOC, pulling through niche NCA capabilities to support frontline use in Northern Ireland.

## NCA Northern Ireland

The NCA presence in Northern Ireland consists of officers who are involved in Investigations, Intelligence and Enabling Capabilities. The current NCA operating model within Northern Ireland is predicated on the general premise the NCA will support PSNI, where requested, with its niche capabilities. More specifically the NCA is in collaboration with PSNI within the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) to target paramilitary groupings currently on ceasefire. The PCTF is comprised of officers from NCA, PSNI and HMRC and is co-located within the PSNI estate.

The NCA operates under the auspices of the Northern Ireland General Authorisation, which was agreed between the DG NCA and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice in 2016. The DG is also accountable for NCA activity in (or in relation to) Northern Ireland to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and less directly to the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice and Secretary of State for NI (SoSNI). Twice a year we produce a report and the NCA DG appears in front of the NIPB, alongside the Chief Constable PSNI (CC PSNI). The next hearing is in June 2024.

## Working Together

We work closely with PSNI in areas including criminal investigations into paramilitary related SOC, the use of civil recovery powers against such criminals, abuse of the Common Travel Area (CTA), the pursuit of Northern Irish fugitives overseas and the provision of a range of major crime investigative support and specialist capabilities.

After the restoration of the NI Executive (NIE) in early February, the NCA has undertaken a number of engagements with a range of stakeholders to provide an understanding of the SOC landscape in Northern Ireland. This has included members of the NI Policing Board (NIPB) visiting NCA at the PCTF premises, engaging with the Department of Justice (DoJ) as one of their key partners on the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) and working closely with the Joint Agency Task Force (JATF) on cross border matters.



# NCA and Human Rights

## Statutory Underpinning and Ethics

All NCA Officers operating/working in Northern Ireland are required to undertake Northern Ireland Ethics training and must adhere to a range of other relevant standards of conduct and practice, including the NCA's Code of Ethics, NCA values, Civil Service Code and have due regard to PSNI's code of ethics. Additionally, all officers undergo annual training in First Aid and Officer Safety. This training is comprehensive and ensures their activities, for example in relation to their use of force, complies with ECHR. Annual e-learning on a range of topics which may be relevant from a human rights perspective are mandatory requirements for all our officers.

We work closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to produce Overseas Security and Justice Assessments (OSJAs) which review the potential impact on human rights and international humanitarian law prior to providing any justice or security assistance overseas. When sharing intelligence internationally, either in relation to an NCA matter or on behalf of PSNI, we adhere to the 'Principles', which ensure that the passing and receipt of intelligence is consistent with the UK's Human rights obligations. The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) oversee and report on these 'Principles'.

## Covert Surveillance

The NCA undertakes covert surveillance in accordance with the Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) and the Police Act 1997 as do other law enforcement agencies across the UK. Applications are made and authorised internally by an NCA Senior Manager independent to the investigation and must supply detailed evidence that the application complies with UK legislation and guidelines, specifically the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) which brings into direct force the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Reference to HRA/ECHR is contained within NCA policies and operating procedures to minimise, and where possible remove, the risk of non-compliance.

Directed Surveillance in Northern Ireland does not require additional authorisation, but just as with other covert techniques, the Agency must liaise with the PSNI before any surveillance is conducted in Northern Ireland. Oversight and governance of the Agency's use of covert investigating powers is through the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO), who carried out five annual inspections in 2022-23 covering specialist areas of compliance with legislation and guidance. Through these reviews, IPCO found the NCA to be acting lawfully and for the correct statutory purposes. NIPBs Human Rights Advisor (HRA) has viewed the 2023 IPCO reports as they relate to the NCA, providing an additional layer of confidence. Moving forward NCA will make arrangements for NIPBs HRA to continue this dialogue and view salient material going forward. Further to this position, the NCA and PSNI have reviewed existing MOUs and the delivery of NCA capabilities to ensure all aspects of human rights, community impact and environmental factors are properly considered prior to the use of covert tactics.

## Specific Human Rights issues encountered during this reporting period

No specific issues encountered during this reporting period and there have been no instances referred to the Police Ombudsman NI (PONI)

# NCA impact in Northern Ireland – Disruptions

## Impact Measurement

As part of the NCA five year strategy we continue to operate at the high end of high harm of serious and organised crime.

This strategy commits us to focus on activity that will degrade the most harmful organised crime groups. The success of this strategy is principally measured using 'pursue' disruptions that are NCA led, and assessed as having a major or moderate impact on P1/ P2 investigations (a prioritisation framework of four descending levels (1-4)). These are referred in the following data slide as the operational tilt.

Another crucial component of the NCA strategy is how we support delivery in the devolved administrations and ensure that we work collaboratively, supporting PSNI to tackle the most significant threats facing the public. One way in which this will be measured is through our delivery of support disruptions.

### Disruptions Definition

A disruption has been achieved when an agency takes **action** in response to a threat which has an **impact**.

It is a measure of impact, and not a measure of activity or effort and should only be recorded when the agency can clearly articulate the threat, the action taken and the resulting impact.

Disruptions may impact upon an Organised Crime Group (OCG) or individual, resulting in them being unable to operate at their usual level of criminality. A disruption may also relate to a specific threat, resulting in a reduced threat level.

There are two roles agencies can take in a disruption. A **lead disruption** is recorded by the agency achieving the impact and are likely tasked with responding to the OCG, individual or threat. A **support disruption** is recorded by an agency that has provided some form of resource or capability to assist another agency in achieving a lead disruption.

### Disruptions Impact Assessment

The impact of each disruption is categorised under one of the below three criteria:

**Major Impact** – A significant and/or long term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability.

**Moderate Impact** – A noticeable and/or medium term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability.

**Minor Impact** – A minimal and/or short term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability.

## NCA impact in Northern Ireland – October 2023 to March 2024

### Disruptions

In the six month period of **October 2023 to March 2024** there were 86 NCA disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland. An increase of ten on the previous six month period. This consisted of 65 lead and 21 support disruptions.

When considering all NCA disruptions in the last financial year there has been an increase of **10** in comparison to 2022/23. This growth has been seen largely in lead disruptions with an increase of 13 this year. Reflecting an improving picture on impact is that there has been growth in those disruptions of major and moderate impact with the NCA as a lead or support capacity.

	2022/23			2023/24			Change
	Lead	Support	Total	Lead	Support	Total	
Major Impact	14	0	14	19	2	21	+7
Moderate Impact	48	9	57	57	12	69	+12
Minor Impact	45	36	81	44	28	72	-9
Total	107	45	152	120	42	162	+10

### Disruptions by Threat

The table shows how NCA disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland are distributed across threats impacted.

The totals are those achieved in between **October 2023 and March 2024** based on their level of impact.

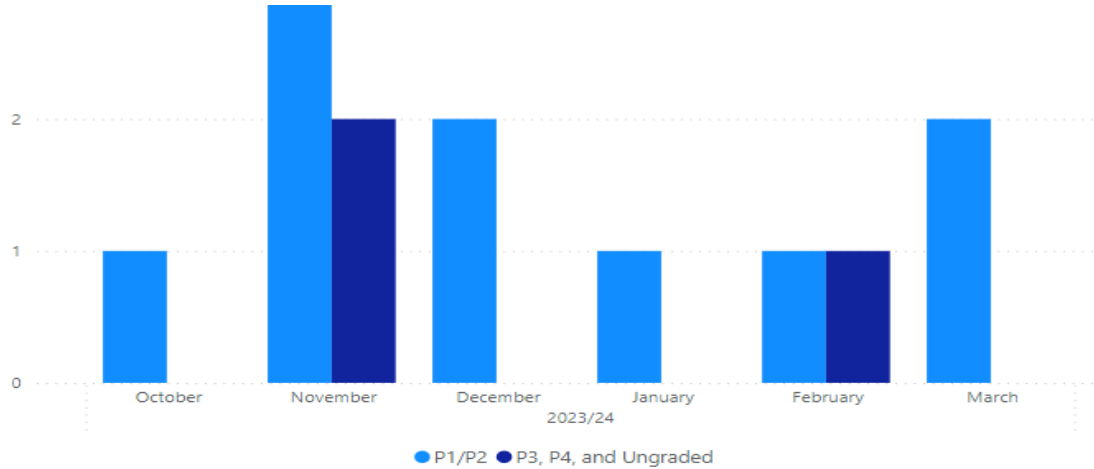
**Denoted in brackets is the number of tilt disruptions within overall totals.**

Threat	Major Impact	Moderate Impact	Minor Impact	Total
Drugs	5 (3)	4 (1)	5	14 (4)
Firearms	2	5 (1)		7 (1)
Organised Acquisitive Crime				
Child Sexual Abuse	2 (1)	16	9	27 (1)
Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking		1	3	4
Organised Immigration Crime				
Cyber		3	4	7
Fraud	2 (1)	2 (1)	2	6 (2)
Money Laundering		2 (2)	5	7 (2)
Borders		1		
Cross Cutting	1		2	3
No Threat Specified			4	4
Non-National Control Strategy	1	2	3	7
Total	13	36	37	86 (10)

## NCA impact in Northern Ireland – October 2023 to March 2024

Tilt Disruptions

### Major/Moderate Lead Pursue Disruptions impacting Northern Ireland

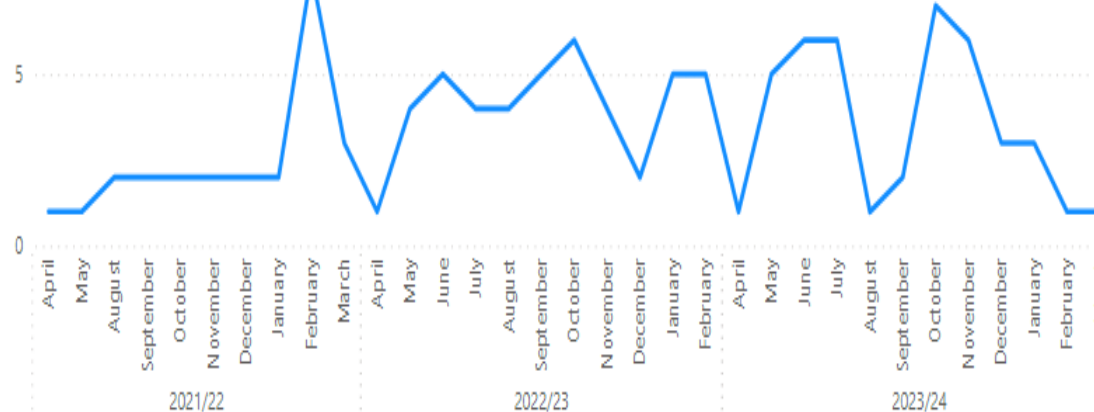


- The chart shows NCA lead major or moderate pursue disruptions (by month), which had impact in Northern Ireland. It separates those which are recorded on a P1 or P2 investigation and therefore 'tilt disruptions'.
- The NCA has delivered a total of **10** tilt disruptions in Northern Ireland between October 2023 and March 2024.
- In 2023/24 NCA achieved **17** tilt disruptions overall, seven in the first half and ten in the second, indicating an increase.
- Examples of some of the disruptions delivered by the NCA are at slide nine. Wider NCA activity is from slide ten onwards.

Support Disruptions

### NCA Support Disruptions in Northern Ireland

year on year comparison



- In 2023/24 the NCA has continued to collaborate successfully with PSNI, delivering **42** support disruptions (with 21 in each six month period).
- While the total is three less than 2022/23, it is **17** more than the 2021/22 total indicating longer term growth.
- Examples of these disruptions and further support provided by the NCA can be found from slide nine onwards.



## NCA Impact: Cases of note

### Money Laundering

A suspect was arrested in December in County Armagh on suspicion of money laundering following the seizure of around £100K cash, seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA).

### Firearms

A suspect has pleaded guilty to possession of prohibited weapons and selling firearms within the United Kingdom and will be arraigned in April 2024.

This is a result of investigation into the importation of firearms to the UK from Spain, at Londonderry Crown Court in January.

### Money Laundering



NCA officers in the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) obtained an order to seize a holiday home (pictured) This is suspected to be purchased with the proceeds of fraud and money laundering and owned by a persons whose family are believed to be senior members of South East Antrim UDA.

This is part of a civil recovery investigation under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA).

### Drugs

In November, a Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) investigation into the supply of controlled drugs by South East Antrim UDA resulted in five suspects pleading not guilty to Conspiracy to Supply Class A Drugs.

A further suspect has been charged with Possession with Intent to Supply Class A and B drugs. The trial is set to commence in September 2024.

### Drugs

In December, the Joint Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce (JMLIT) Operations Group provided support to a PSNI investigation into the supply of Cocaine into Northern Ireland from Spain.

The Organised Crime Group are suspected of importing the drugs, valued in excess of £100,000 per month, through a variety of methods including postal couriers and haulage companies. It is suspected the proceeds are laundered through a variety of means including the purchases of jewellery and real estate. JMLIT intelligence provided new lines of enquiry which the case team are proactively investigating.

### Money Laundering

NCA ACE Team, working with partners, realised substantial assets held by a defendant in a variety of crypto-currencies. This included payments made towards the Confiscation Order valuing over six million pounds – linked to the largest crypto transaction a company have realised in the UK. This followed convictions of all suspects in an international investigation into the importation and manufacture of tonnes of illicit steroids into Northern Ireland and other countries.

### Other

The NCA's Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) has been supporting PSNI with a significant, high profile medical investigation into the actions of a Neurologist in Northern Ireland. Following fitness to practice complaints, a number of statutory and governing body tribunals and misconduct hearings took place. More than 3500 of his patients have been recalled by the Department of Health (DoH). PSNI are considering if there is any criminality and have sought MCIS support. Meetings have been attended by National SIO Adviser, Crime Investigation Support Officer, Forensic Medical Advice Team, National Interview Adviser, National Vulnerable Witness Adviser, Forensic Clinical Psychologist and Behavioural Investigative Adviser. Resulting from these was sharing of learning from other similar UK based investigations and assistance offered on structuring of such a large scale investigation.

### Fraud

Working closely with the Joint Agency Task Force (JATF), NCA were granted a Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) recovery order in mid-February on a plot of land in Blackwatertown, County Armagh. The land has been subject to a Property Freezing Order by the NCA since mid-2023, is alleged to have been purchased for £100K, using proceeds of fraud and money laundering.

### Other

An offender linked to the Warrenpoint area was sentenced to 12 years in prison after pleading guilty to more than 40 offences. The charges were related to a range of offences including drugs, possession of criminal property, conspiracy to Murder and possession of a firearm. This adds to previous arrests and convictions linked to Operation VENETIC.

## NCA wider support to Northern Ireland

### Drugs

- The NCA's work internationally to disrupt the drugs trade continues. The last period has seen the largest ever drugs seizure in the UK (over five tonnes at Southampton docks and the largest ever on the Atlantic (over 10 tonnes), both enabled by NCA intelligence. A proportion of these drugs would have flowed to the UK including Northern Ireland.
- During the reporting period, PSNI have been fully engaged with the bi-weekly National SIOs Forum and the monthly Project HOUSEBUILDER co-ordination meeting, the NCA-led whole system operational response to the threat from nitazenes/xylazine.
- Senior Investigation Officers from PSNI have also received operational briefings on the threat posed by nitazenes/xylazines and the NCA led response including the operational requirement and the assistance available to them to ensure robust and consistent investigations across the UK ensuring that all lines of enquiry are being pursued at pace.
- In addition, PIP4 National Investigator advice and specialist support is being actively provided to forces across the UK to support this. Briefings have also been provided on the early warning system developed in collaboration with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)

### Firearms

In November, NCA circulated a firearms alert, including to PSNI, in respect of identified trends in recovered firearms. This alert detailed key characteristics of the weapon and provided a reporting mechanism should any officer encounter such a weapon during the course of their duties.

Under Project SERGEANCY the NCA has written to all identified retailers of top-venting blank-firing imitation firearms to request sales of these items in a given time frame. Of these retailers, a number were identified as being situated in Northern Ireland. The National Firearms Targeting Centre will shortly disseminate packages informing PSNI of purchases of these items for consideration and action as deemed appropriate.

Under Project INTERKNOW, the response to the threat of 3D printed firearms, NCA has offered support relating to any case in Northern Ireland where required.

### Child Sexual Abuse

- PSNI continues to be fully engaged in the strategic governance arrangements to tackle child sexual abuse (CSA), including regular submission of management information to the Online CSA Pursue Threat Board. PSNI is also engaged in the NCA chaired working groups' developing online CSA risk assessment tools and to develop prioritisation. There is ongoing discussion with PSNI about how we can support them operationally.

The CSA Referrals Bureau (CSA RB) is the central point within the NCA for receipt of industry referrals relating to online child sexual abuse, predominantly via the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) who provide a centralised mechanism for public and electronic service providers to report suspected sharing of indecent images of children (IIOC) and other forms of CSA offending. They send all referrals relating to UK suspects to the CSA RB. In **Q3 & Q4 2023-24**, the CSA RB made **137** disseminations to PSNI. In Q3, PSNI reported **21** arrests, **5** suspects attended voluntary interviews, **46** children were safeguarded in relation to all CSA workstreams, and **20** victims were identified from indecent images of children and notified to the NCA Victim Identification Team.

- The CEOP Education Team trained a professional from Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care Trust on the new 'Understanding Online Child Sexual Abuse' course.

## NCA wider support to Northern Ireland

### UKFIU

- UKFIU continues to conduct work that directly impacts Northern Ireland, assisting PSNI by disseminating high-risk Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) and requests for Defence Against Money Laundering (DAMLs) directly. UKFIU make all other Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) relating to Northern Ireland available to accredited financial investigators and intelligence officers. Engagement continues with a range of stakeholders in Northern Ireland including Danske Bank and the Northern Ireland Court and Tribunal Service (NICTS).
- During this period, 133 DAMLs out of an overall total of 28,957 were referred to PSNI, resulting in assets of almost £1k being denied and restraints of almost £130k. More than 65 SARS were fast-tracked to PSNI including those relating to vulnerable persons, suspected child exploitation and suspected Human Trafficking. The UKFIU also issued 1 international request on behalf of PSNI in relation to Theft; 26 counter terrorism (CT) related SARs were shared or disseminated to PSNI including those related to terrorist financing (TF).

### Money Laundering

- As part of Project ECHIDNA, the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) coordinated and delivered multi-agency training for Companies House staff in Belfast ahead of the introduction of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act. Over a 2 day period, NECC's High End Money Laundering and Expert Laundering Evidence Teams alongside HMRC, FCA and OPBAS successfully delivered multiple presentations to Companies House staff. The content of presentations included overview of the partner agencies, their use of Companies House data and included interactive sessions about criminal techniques involving UK corporations. Overall feedback from Companies House was very positive and the interactive sessions and follow up discussions highlighted as being particularly valuable.

### Fraud

- HENHOUSE III was a national fraud intensification coordinated by the NECC, with activity taking place during February. All UK police forces, including PSNI, and Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) were represented.
- PSNI were invited to bid for funding to deliver the intensification locally. NECC provided funding of £7k to PSNI to facilitate their HENHOUSE III activity, enabling them to make two arrests and hold five voluntary interviews relating to complex fraud matters.
- Nationally, HENHOUSE III resulted in 442 arrests. There were also 211 voluntary interviews; 283 cease and desist notices; £18.9m in assets denied (cash seizures, Account Freezing Orders, restraint).

## NCA wider support to Northern Ireland

### Cybercrime

- In February, the NCA led and coordinated an international operation that infiltrated and took down Lockbit, the biggest ransomware strain, accounting for over 25% of global attacks, with two organisations victimised in Northern Ireland.
- Regular and consistent ad-hoc support is provided via NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit (NCCU) in relation to operational requirements, for deconfliction checks as well as support and advice to on-going cyber dependent and cyber related enquiries taking place within PSNI's jurisdiction.
- Within this reporting period this has included providing assistance to the PSNI investigation into the unintentional leak of PSNI staffing data; providing support via the G7 team in respect of preservation requests to international partners as well as international assistance requests under the Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) Treaty framework and shared intelligence regarding an attempted purchase of a Firearm on the Dark Web.
- In addition, NCCU advised on the Northern Ireland Cyber Incident Response Plan (NICIRP) exercise, which was carried out with cross government partners at Stormont, Belfast.

### MSHT

- The MSHT & OIC Illicit Finance Team delivered a 'Lunch & Learn' event to the JMLIT Sexual Exploitation Cell (PS and PSNI are members). Aiming to upskill partners, improve detection and/or investigation of MSHT. It included briefings from two investigations and from an NGO on their work supporting victims from their initial encounter and throughout the safeguarding process.
- In December, AIDANT intensification focusing on potential exploitation within the Common Travel Area (CTA) was carried out. Its aim was to improve understanding of the modern slavery (MS) threat via the CTA and raise awareness of the CTA as a potential border vulnerability for MS offending. Thirteen forces, including PSNI participated. PSNI carried out several prevent activities, including raising awareness of the MSHT threat at Belfast International Airport, and deploying to Belfast Seaport screening and speaking to passengers regarding MSHT. Over 10,000 passengers were checked on arrival within the CTA, resulting in 2 NRM safeguarding responses, a number of cash seizures and the identification of a number of Immigration offenders using the CTA routing - many at John Lennon Airport, Liverpool. A total of 38 disruptions (4 moderate and 31 minor) were achieved.
- PSNI participated in further AIDANT intensification in March, this time focused on labour exploitation within the adult social care sector. Results are not yet available.

### JICC

- The NCA international liaison officers (ILOs) across the network continue to support a range of activity and requests in support of PSNI. Crimes we have supported include Drugs, Cyber offences and CSAE. Of particular note, the support our ILO Washington DC has provided to PSNI, which led to the guilty plea in March 2024 of a man in Northern Ireland for manslaughter. The investigation, which had been ongoing since 2018 included 59 charges of blackmail and 70 counts of inciting children to engage in sexual activity.
- During the period October 2023 – February 2024, PSNI have made 22 arrests and had 8 surrenders under Extradition Part 1 and have received 15, made 10 arrests and had 10 surrenders under Extradition Part 3.

## NCA wider support to Northern Ireland

### MCIS

- Between 01/10/23 - 31/03/24 the NCA's Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) provided advice and support to PSNI on 29 cases, and deployed officers on 31 occasions. Cases included murder, sexual offences, suspicious/unexplained deaths and missing persons.
- Large scale CSA investigations Operation SUPERVISIONARY and Operation PARROTY relate to separate but similar long running cases with international impact. MCIS and wider NCA functions have provided extensive support over a long period and within this reporting period have assisted through the deployment of National Family Liaison Adviser, National SIO Adviser, Crime Investigation Support Officer, Digital Media Adviser and International Liaison Officer network.
- The NCA's Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) has been supporting PSNI in relation to the murder of a 21 year old female in Ballymena in June 2023. PSNI requested support from MCIS in relation to interviewing the suspect. Strategic and operational support was provided to the investigation team through a range of NCA's specialist capabilities including Forensic Clinical Psychologist and Crime Investigation Support Officer.

### UKPPS

- The NCA Central Services Unit provides, as a part of the UK Protected Persons Service (UKPPS), operational support to the PSNI Protected Persons Unit which is aligned to the UKPPS. In Q3 UKPPS provided 9 new instances of support to PSNI, and 2 days of training to 2 officers. In Q4 there were 8 new instances of support to PSNI, and 12 days of training to 3 officers.

### UKNCO

- The UK National Central Office (UKNCO) for Counterfeit Currency continue to provide support for a number of counterfeit currency seizures, submitted by the PSNI. During Q3 and Q4, 13 requests have been processed and analysed, with 4 expert witness statements (1 relating to Bank of England £20 notes; 2 RBS £50 notes and one relating to Euro notes - €10 & €20) provided to support Police prosecutions/investigations.
- The only sterling (GBP) banknotes in circulation are now polymer in respect of all UK issuing banks. A number of banks no longer issue £50 notes. Ulster Bank, Bank of Scotland and Royal Bank of Scotland are the only banks issuing polymer £50 notes. Retailers are now advised not to accept paper notes and to refer customers to banks to deposit / exchange their paper notes. This will reduce the threat to retailers and the public from counterfeits of the older paper design notes.