

NCA Performance Report: Northern Ireland

Q3-Q4 2025/26 (October 2025 – March 2026)



SECTION ONE

NCA Overview



About the NCA

- The NCA was established in October 2013. It is an intelligence-led law enforcement agency responsible for gathering intelligence, investigating serious and organised crime (SOC) and leading the operational system for SOC.
- Around 6,000 NCA officers work in overt and covert sites across the UK, including in Northern Ireland.
- NCA officers can be designated with the powers of a Police Constable as well as those of Immigration Enforcement and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) officers.
- Internationally, the NCA has 162 International Liaison Officers (ILOs) posted in 56 locations overseas covering over 100 countries.

Protecting the Public

The NCA has a twofold approach as a national agency protecting the public in Northern Ireland from SOC:

1. To take action in Northern Ireland through our own investigations and by deploying specialised NCA capabilities in support of the PSNI and the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPSNI) to disrupt SOC.
2. To take action outside of Northern Ireland - upstream (against senior criminals and their enablers), overseas (in Europe and wider), and online - to best protect the public from SOC before it impacts Northern Irish communities. We run major investigations against the most serious international criminals. And we support law enforcement partners, including PSNI, with system capabilities such as the NCA International Liaison Officer network, our corporate relationship with social media companies and other industry sectors, and enhanced cyber capabilities.

The NCA in Northern Ireland

The NCA operates under the General Authorisation of the Department of Justice as agreed by the NCA Director General and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice in 2016 (updated in 2021), alongside taking account of the PSNI Policing Plan.

The NCA works closely with the PSNI on a range of issues noted throughout this report. One specific element of that cooperation is within the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) which targets paramilitary groupings. The PCTF is comprised of officers from NCA, the PSNI, and HMRC, who are co-located within the PSNI estate.

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). The NCA produce this report bi-annually and the NCA DG appears in front of the NIPB, alongside the Chief Constable PSNI (CC PSNI).

Working Together

The NCA works alongside the PSNI and partners to identify high value targets and tactical vulnerabilities. Intelligence and investigative opportunities are jointly developed through collaborative arrangements with partners (e.g. PSNI, HMRC, Border Force), with the use of specialised NCA capabilities considered as part of this response.

- The NCA work closely with the PSNI and partners 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.

Police Reform

- In January 2026 the Home Office published a White Paper on Police Reform which envisages the creation of a National Policing Service that incorporates the NCA, CTP and other bodies. The impact on the NCA's work in Northern Ireland is a critical focus, and following the White Paper announcement, the NCA Director General has held bilateral calls with the Chair of Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Chief Constable of the PSNI to discuss the context and next steps in Northern Ireland.
- We expect increased engagement with Northern Ireland Executive, policing partners, and the Home Office as we progress to the next phases.

The 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.

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.

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.

4. Growing a highly skilled workforce

By:

- better understanding the skills that 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.

Human Rights and the NCA

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 additional standards of conduct and practice, including the NCA's Code of Ethics, NCA Values, Civil Service Code, alongside having due regard to the PSNI's Code of Ethics.
- Additionally, all operational 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, comply with the European Convention on Human Rights (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.
- The NCA works 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 human rights 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 the PSNI, the NCA also adheres to a set of HMG '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 ECHR. Reference to HRA/ECHR is contained within NCA policies and operating procedures to minimise, and where possible remove, the risk of non-compliance.
- Oversight and governance of the Agency's use of covert investigating powers is through the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO), who carried out annual inspections in 2025-26 covering specialist areas of compliance with legislation and guidance. For Directed Surveillance in Northern Ireland, as with other covert techniques, the Agency must liaise with the PSNI before any surveillance is conducted in Northern Ireland. Through these reviews, IPCO found the NCA to be acting lawfully and for the correct statutory purposes.
- The NCA gave the NIPB's Human Rights Advisor confidential access to these classified reviews, so that extra assurance could be provided to the NIPB. We look forward to continuing that relationship with the new Advisor.
- Further to this position, the NCA and the 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).
- In January 2026, the NCA established roles for three Ethics Councillors. They are independent and act on behalf of the Director General. Their key responsibilities include:
 1. Listening to officers' ethical concerns and support working them through for the benefit of the officers concerned and the wider agency.
 2. Raise awareness of ethical issues and encourage discussion in teams and relevant NCA bodies.
 3. Provide thematic reporting on issues raised and the health of ethical thinking in the NCA to the Director General and via the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee into Agency governance.

Measuring NCA Impact in Northern Ireland through Disruptions

High Impact Disruptions

- Disruptions are used to assess impact, providing a common currency across UK Law Enforcement to measure performance against SOC. The NCA achieves a disruption when proactive or reactive activity results in evidenced impact, such as an arrest, seizure, or the safeguarding of a child. Disruptions are assessed as having either minor, moderate, or major impact, and cover activity that pursues, prevents, protects, or prepares for crime (4Ps).
- As part of the NCA's five-year Strategy (2023-28), the NCA prioritises activity that will degrade the most harmful organised crime groups. To track progress against this Strategy, the NCA targets high impact disruptions which are defined as meeting all of the following conditions:
 1. 'Pursue' disruptions which are typically related to criminal justice outcomes like arrests or to seizures;
 2. A lead disruption. This is where a disruption was led by the NCA, whether at a NCA branch or nationally, and the achieved impact is attributed to the NCA;
 3. Assessed as having a major or moderate impact. This is defined as a 'significant and/or long-term' (major) or 'noticeable and/or medium-term' (moderate) disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or on a vulnerability;
 4. Linked to a high priority investigation – graded as P1-2 on a prioritisation framework of four descending levels (1-4).
- These disruptions are, therefore, a measure of impact not a measure of activity or effort and are only recorded when the NCA can clearly articulate the threat, the action taken, and the resulting impact.
- This report refers throughout to a three-year average. This ensures the comparison-period covers the NCA's strategic pivot which involved prioritising high impact disruptions targeting the greatest threats and highest harms, rather than volume. This period will also ensure current reporting is seen in the context of longer-term trends.

Direct & Indirect Impact

- The NCA's Strategy recognises the critical role of the NCA as a system leader in tackling SOC through providing specialist capabilities, including within devolved administrations. This ensures that we work collaboratively, supporting partners to tackle the most significant threats facing the public.
- One way in which the NCA tracks this is through support disruptions which is where the NCA has provided some form of resource or capability to assist another agency in achieving a lead disruption. Therefore, this report covers both NCA 'support' and 'lead' disruptions to show the breadth of NCA impact and activity.
- In line with the NCA's mission to tackle SOC upstream, online, and overseas, the NCA operates across all regions of the UK and overseas. This means the impact on a given devolved administration is both direct (activity which takes place within Northern Ireland with an identifiable impact on Northern Ireland) and indirect (activity which takes place outside of Northern Ireland which has an identifiable impact on Northern Ireland).

SECTION TWO

NCA Performance

October 2025 – March 2026



NCA Impact in Northern Ireland

This bi-annual NCA performance report documents key trends in operational performance across all threats, identifying the areas of activity with greatest impact on Northern Ireland.

The analysis and insights in this report are produced for the purposes of the Northern Ireland Policing Board to review NCA performance within Northern Ireland.

Key Highlights

- There have been 148 NCA disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland either directly or indirectly in the six-month period covering Q3-Q4 2025/26.
- This is 17 above the 3-year average for disruptions (131). Of these, 115 relate to disruptions where the NCA was the lead agency and 33 in support.
- The greatest difference with national trends is the high proportion of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) disruptions (25% in NI compared to 15% nationally). This increase in CSA disruptions is mainly driven by Prepare disruptions (+8) compared to the 3-year average. This included working with foreign and domestic law enforcement agencies, educators, and social media companies, all with the aim of raising awareness of the CSA threat and what they can do to protect children, and their organisations, from exploitation by sexually motivated offenders.
- The NCA has achieved 8 high impact disruptions with a direct or indirect impact on Northern Ireland in Q3-4 2025/26. This is 1 below the 3-year average for high impact disruption for Northern Ireland.
- 5 of the high impact disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland are against the Illicit Finance threat with 2 high impact disruptions targeting Fraud and 1 targeting Organised Immigration Crime (OIC). These disruptions include targeting money laundering activity that is exploiting the border with Ireland, and a successful prevention of illegal migration into Northern Ireland via Dublin. Together they have achieved 4 arrests, cash seizures totalling over £400,000 and Account Freezing Orders totalling over £500,000.

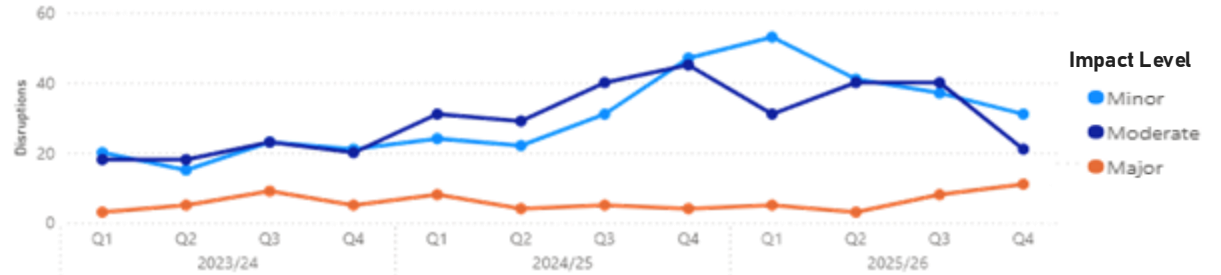
NCA Disruptions with an Impact on Northern Ireland

Disruptions

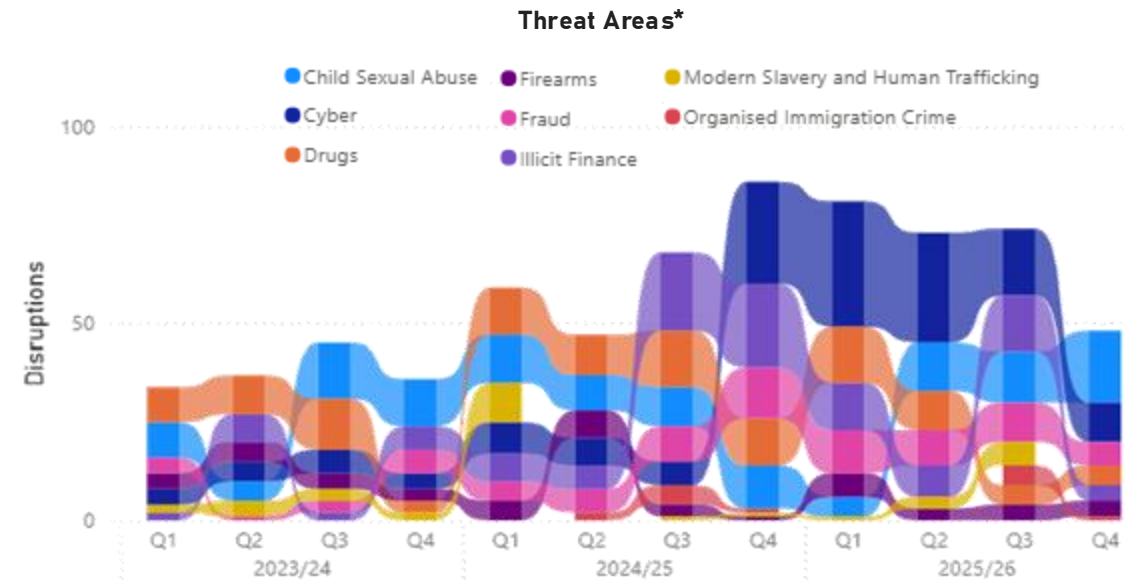
- In the six-month period of October 2025 – March 2026 there were 148 NCA disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland. This consisted of 115 lead and 33 support disruptions.
- This is an increase of 17 compared to the 3-year average, primarily in NCA-led disruptions assessed as having minor or moderate impact. This distribution and trend is consistent with the national trend for NCA disruptive activity.
- The increase in disruptions is mostly driven by increases in CSA (+9) and Other (+8) when compared to the 3-year average, with 'Other' focusing on disruptions against Cross-Cutting threats, such as the COM as well as disruptions by International specialist capabilities.

Disruptions by Threat*

- During this period, disruptions against most threats reflected the 3-year averages except for Drugs which saw a decline of 9 from the 3-year average (19). Drug disruptions account for 7% of all disruptions for Northern Ireland, contrasting with the national distribution where Drugs make up 38% of overall disruptions. Part of this is due to NCA experiencing high demand from Border Referrals nationally, which typically do not impact on Northern Ireland (see slide 11 for more).
- Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) disruptions (31) now makes up the largest proportion of disruptions (25%), contrasting with the national distribution (15%) for CSA-related disruptions. The volume of CSA disruptions impacting Northern Ireland is an increase compared to the 3-year average (21). This is mostly Protect, Prepare, and Prevent (3P) activity against the Grooming/Blackmail/Extortion sub-threat with an indirect impact, such as engagement with social media companies. Although this increase is a change over the 3-year average, 3P activity continues to align with the Agency's strategic objectives through national impact initiatives and does not indicate a material change in disruptive activity in Northern Ireland compared to nationally.
- There were 8 high impact disruptions impacting Northern Ireland this reporting period, with 5 against Illicit Finance, 2 against Fraud and 1 against OIC. This is a decrease of 1 compared to the 3-year average. Operational successes are highlighted in slides 12 onwards.



Disruption counts broken down by impact-level over the last 3-three-years



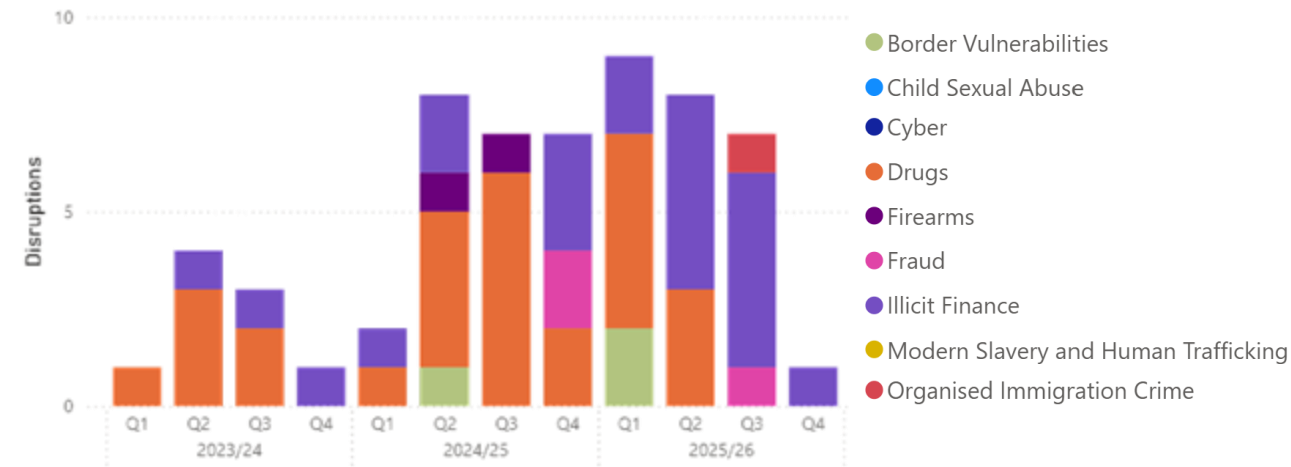
Disruptions by threat area over the last 3-three-years

*NB: Only disruptions attributed to above threat areas are included in this section

NCA Northern Ireland Investigations

The NCA's Investigations team in Northern Ireland leads operational activity to tackle serious and organised crime, working in close partnership with the PSNI and other partners. The insights below reflect activity of this team which has had an impact on Northern Ireland. This does not represent all branch operations or all NCA activity with a direct impact on Northern Ireland, but rather highlights performance of the branch within Northern Ireland.

- The NCA's Investigations team in Northern Ireland achieved 8 disruptions with an impact on Northern Ireland in Q3 and Q4. Of these, 6 were against Illicit Finance, 1 Fraud, and 1 OIC. While this is a decrease of 1 on the 3-year average, Illicit Finance disruptions are 2 above the 3-year average with the proportion for Illicit Finance (75%) being significantly higher than for the NCA nationally (16%).
- Of the disruptions achieved by the Investigations team in Northern Ireland, 7 disruptions were assessed as achieving a high impact, an increase of 2 on the 3-year average for the Investigations team. These are primarily targeting Illicit Finance (5) with key operational successes covered on slide 16.
- 3 new investigations were tasked to the NCA's Northern Ireland Investigations team and 9 were closed within this reporting period.

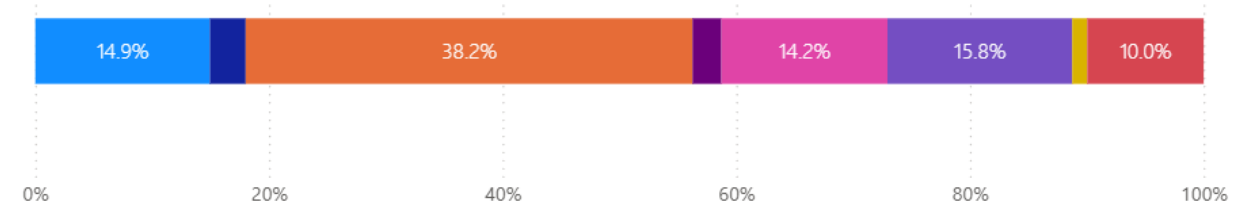


Total disruptions recorded by NCA Investigations Team in Northern Ireland with recorded impact on Northern Ireland

NCA Support to PSNI

- The NCA nationally has provided support to the PSNI in 20 disruptions, slightly below the 3-year average (21).
- Within this reporting period, 8 of these support disruptions were from the NCA's National Extradition Unit (NEU) aiding the extradition of suspected criminals from Northern Ireland. In addition, to facilitating 8 requested persons being extradited to Northern Ireland.
- 7 support disruptions were also reported by the NCA's UK Financial Intelligence Unit (UKFIU) which is covered in more detail under UKFIU's update on slide 18.

NCA Disruption Distribution Nationally – Q3-4 2025/26



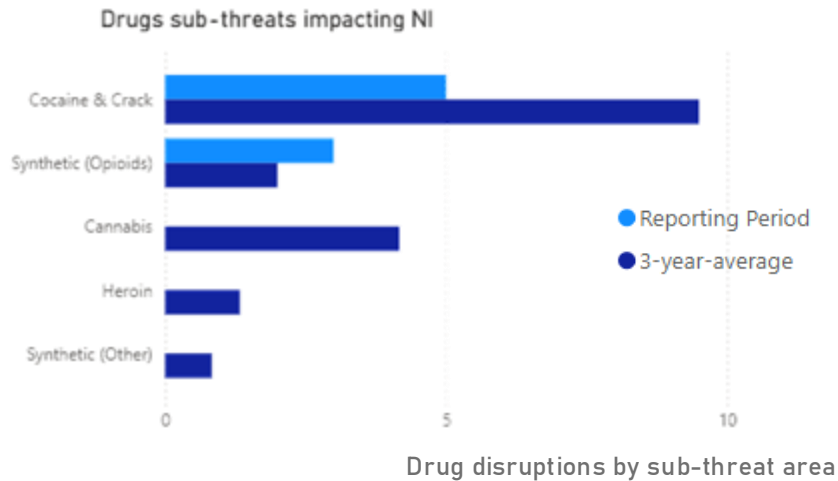
Proportion of disruptions attributed against each NCA priority threat area

NCA Disruptions with an Impact on Northern Ireland

Disrupting and dismantling the organised crime groups and networks that traffic and supply illicit commodities, including drugs and firearms, is one of the NCA's strategic priorities. This slide provides a breakdown of disruptions which have targeted the drugs threat and the relationship with border disruptions.

Drugs Disruptions

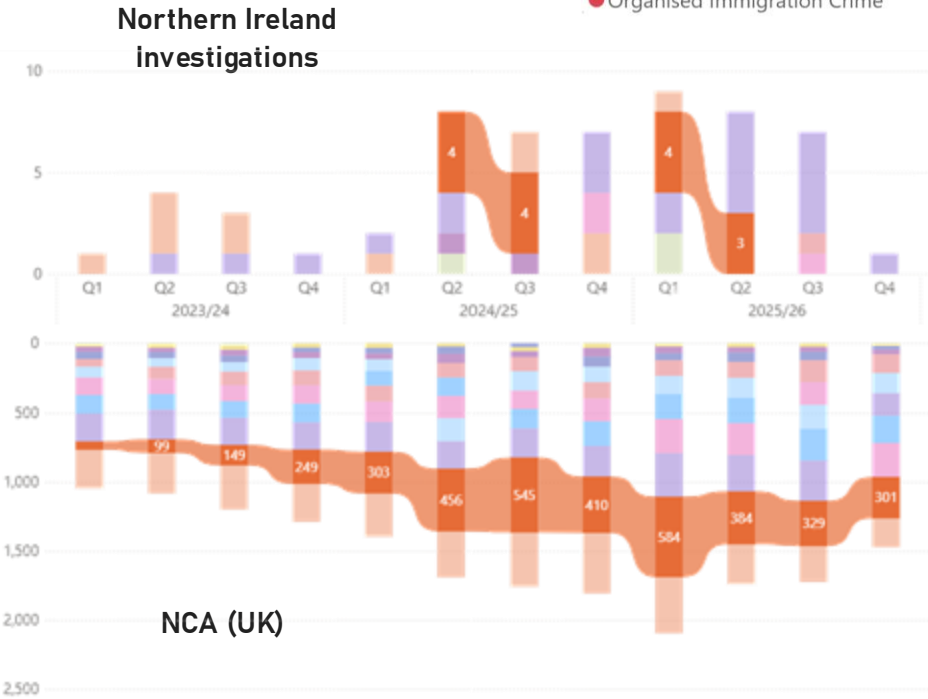
- Drugs-related disruptions have seen a drop of 9 disruptions compared with the 3-year average. However, the sub-threats have remained primarily focused on cocaine & crack cocaine (5).
- The overall decrease in Drug disruptions is mainly driven by a decrease in disruptions linked to border referrals which record an impact on Northern Ireland. These typically result in cannabis seizures at ports of entry and none were recorded for this reporting period as having an impact on Northern Ireland.



Border referrals

- Following a seizure at the border (sometimes on NCA intelligence), Border Force make referrals to the NCA for investigation. The NCA may adopt referrals or decide to pass referrals to another law enforcement agency whenever appropriate.
- Within this reporting period, there were 5 referrals relating to detections at Northern Irish ports/airports. Of these, 1 referral met the criteria for adoption by the NCA, with 4 being rejected. The adopted referral was related to cash-based money laundering in the air freight mode.
- In addition, over the same period there was 1 referral made at another UK airport with links to Northern Ireland. The referral met the criteria for adoption by the NCA and related to synthetic drugs in the fast parcel mode.
- None of these border referrals were taken on by the NI Branch as noted in the ribbon chart.

Disruptions linked to border referrals



Disruptions attributed against each threat area, presenting the NCA's Investigations team in Northern Ireland against the NCA as-a-whole, since FY 2023/24. Highlighted in the ribbon are border referral disruptions relating to the drugs threat

SECTION THREE

**Operational Updates and
NCA Wider Support to
Northern Ireland**

October 2025 – March 2026



Drugs

- As the NCA's 2026 National Strategic Assessment notes, the threat and harm from drugs continues to increase across the UK.
- The synthetic opioid market continues to evolve, and there was a decline in the number of recorded nitazene-related Drug Related Deaths (DRD) in the UK from 434 in 2024 to 311 in 2025. In Northern Ireland, 13 nitazene deaths have been reported since June 2023, but this number may increase as test results relating to 2025 are finalised and submitted. NCA continues to support PSNI on the response to synthetic opioids through NCA Project HOUSEBUILDER working closely to ensure consistency of reporting and the promulgation of best practice.
- Also noted in the NCA's National Strategic Assessment is the rise in detections of domestic drug laboratories across the UK. Within the reporting period, there has been engagement with Europol and also the establishment of a national project to tackle this issue which provided a CPD day in March 2026 to UK police forces, including PSNI. This national project will identify existing capability gaps across the system and develop a national means of monitoring and collating instances of illicit drug production, with a view to improving detection and response.
- During the reporting period (01 Oct 2025-31 Mar 2026), the NCA directly supported the seizure of over 97 tonnes Class A drugs overseas, with 189 tonnes seized throughout the full FY.

Fraud

- Over 70% of fraud in the UK involves an overseas component. The NCA works with overseas partners on behalf of UK law enforcement to target the highest harm OCGs at the earliest opportunity. The overseas threat is driven in part by the ease of committing fraud online. Our work to tackle cyber and financial enablers will also undercut criminals targeting the UK. Such activity helps prevent citizens of the UK becoming victims of fraud, including in Northern Ireland.
- Operation ATLANTIC is an ongoing initiative by the NCA, working alongside the United States Secret Service, Canadian Law Enforcement and Regulators, aimed at identifying and contacting individuals who may have been affected by cryptoasset fraud. Law enforcement is working alongside Virtual Asset Service Providers operating in the UK to reach potential victims by telephone and email, explaining the risks involved and what steps can be taken to reduce or prevent further harm. The operation focuses on identifying people who may have lost – or are at risk of losing – cryptoassets through a method known as “approval phishing”. This technique is frequently used in online investment fraud, sometimes referred to as “pig butchering”, where victims are manipulated into sending increasingly larger sums of money to scammers. Thus far, more than \$12 million has been frozen and 20,000 victims identified. 86 UK victims were identified during the Op ATLANTIC sprint, of these there were two confirmed victims in Northern Ireland.
- In February 2026, the NCA's National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) and City of London Police coordinated operational activity on fraud with 100% representation nationally across UK police forces and ROCUs including PSNI under Operation HENHOUSE. In NI this resulted in the identification of 40 victims of investment and romance fraud and two arrests, as well as supporting PROTECT activities, during the intensification period. We believe that this is an ongoing operation and that the number of arrests may have gone up since.
- Within this reporting period, an NCA team is undertaking disruptive activity against a fraud enabler. Hundreds of accounts (including those of two Northern Ireland residents) were identified as potential victims of fraud and the NCA team responsible for the identification, notified the financial institution, mitigating the risks.

Firearms

- In Northern Ireland the firearms threat is shaped primarily by a residual national security context and a much greater availability of original lethal purpose firearms. This threat picture is very different to England and Wales where the threat is driven overwhelmingly by organised criminal markets with most criminals lacking the funds or contacts to obtain a viable firearm. Whilst we do not currently produce a threat picture specifically for NI and instead report on the national UK picture, the in the reporting period NI saw 15 firearm discharges (186 UK average), 0 reported injuries or homicides (8 UK average), and 27 incidents where a firearm was used as a threat (258 UK average).
- In October 2025, the NCA produced and disseminated an updated Joint Agency Alert to all UK police forces (including the PSNI) outlining the threat from 3D Printed Firearms, models seen in the UK and new models published online, indicative items which may be found at a scene, forensic considerations, and intelligence/reporting requirements. A second Alert was also included on the emergence of the Harlot .22 3D printed handgun. These alerts are designed to raise awareness of the threat and provide practical advice to all police/law enforcement officers thereby supporting those officers in undertaking their duties.
- Two alerts were developed for the attention of law enforcement detailing the risks of gas powered noxious and traumatic (GNaT) firearms and upgrade kits. The NCA identified more than 120 such weapons recovered in criminal circumstances and when examined have been classified as especially dangerous air weapons and prohibited firearms as defined by Sect 5 (1) of the Firearms Act 1968. These alerts were disseminated to Northern Ireland to highlight the threat that these novel firearm systems present and their continued use in crime.
- The NCA continues to target the threat of diversion from the lawful to the unlawful supply of firearms and firearm component parts in the UK. Within this reporting period, 10 importers from Northern Ireland were checked to establish whether they held firearms/shotgun certificates consistent with the items purchased. All 10 items of interest were triaged further and, after additional research, were referred via partners as intelligence reports to police and other enforcement agencies. Whilst these parts are not illegal themselves, they are indicative of possession of, or interest in, firearms that the named individual did not have authority to hold.

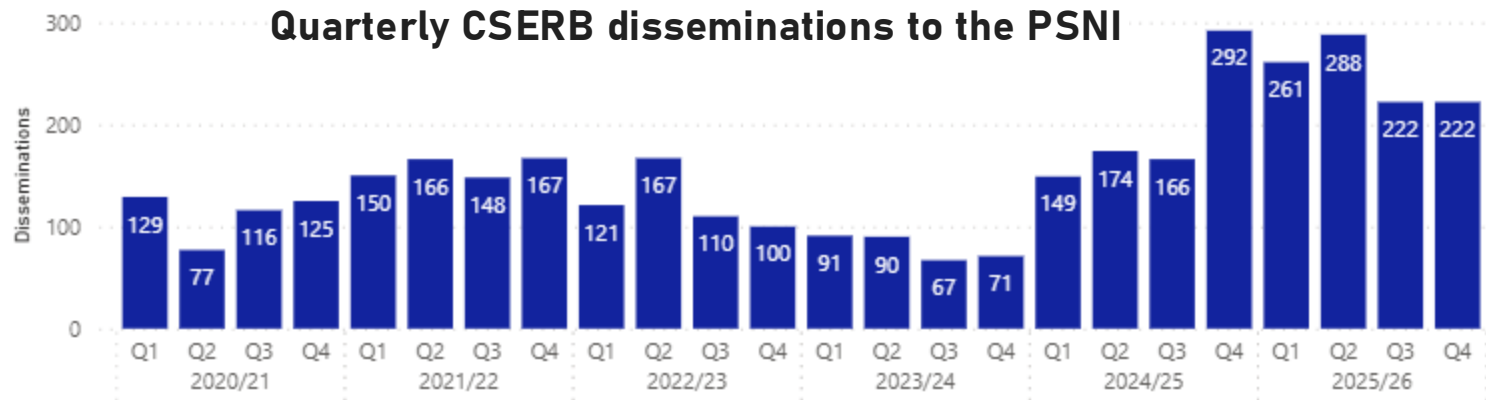
Cyber

- The NCA provides timely Protect notifications which enable businesses to take sufficient action against imminent cyber-attacks, often preventing full scale attacks before they occur, saving businesses considerable time and money by helping them avoid costly disruptions, data loss, and recovery efforts. As the central coordination point at the start of an incident, the NCA ensures a rapid, organised, and effective response.
- The NCA also has a delisting project which aims to raise the barrier to entry into cybercrime. The delisting technique, involves removing the visibility of cybercrime tools (e.g. DDoS-as-a-service tools) being used on Google and YouTube, with the potential for wider application. Many low-level criminals or those on cusp of criminality rely on search engines to find these services. Delisting also reduces impulse crimes. Without that ease of access, many impulsive low-skill attackers may give up rather than put in an extra effort. This project removed a major gateway for less-experienced individuals, making it harder for casual offender to get started. It also reduced the visibility of cybercrime services online by working with industry partners to remove harmful content.
- The PSNI continues to work closely with the NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit (NCCU) and wider partners to progress cyber related investigations and strengthen the response to cyber enabled crime. During the FY25/26, this collaboration has supported a range of investigations, including those involving ransomware, online services used to facilitate cybercrime, and cryptocurrency enabled offending. The NCCU has provided specialist support across these cases including technical advice, intelligence development, and assistance with complex financial tracing.
- International engagement remains a key component of this activity, with support provided through established liaison networks and legal cooperation frameworks to progress enquires and support victim focused outcomes.

Child Sexual Abuse

- As outlined in the National Strategic Assessment, the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) threat continues to increase in scale, complexity, and severity. In broad terms, the volume of offences reported to police continues to grow, with the severity and complexity of offending causing physical and psychological harm to victims.
- The NCA's Child Sexual Exploitation Referrals Bureau (CSERB) is the central point within the UK that receives referrals from industry of information relating to online child sexual abuse with a UK nexus, predominantly received via the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). NCMEC provides 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.
- In the reporting period there were 444 disseminations by CSERB to the PSNI. CSERB completes a daily download for all actionable reports, which are deconflicted, enriched, and triaged, to identify any aggravating factors. Any reports containing an offence that has a Northern Ireland nexus are disseminated to the PSNI accordingly. CSERB referrals have led to increasing numbers of arrests and safeguards across the UK. In relation to Northern Ireland over the past 3 years, we have seen a growth in the number of industry referrals that the NCA has received and disseminated to PSNI. This is in line with the growth that we have seen nationally.
- NCA CSERB disseminations are leading to record high safeguards and arrests nationally. Across the UK, in Q3 (Oct-Dec 2025) there was a monthly average of 922 average arrests/voluntary attendances and 1,219 children safeguarded. For Northern Ireland specifically, there were 18 arrests/voluntary attendances and 31 children safeguarded in Q3.
- In partnership with NPCC, a system-wide CSA Intensification exercise took place over one week in January 2026. This joint effort aimed to spotlight the scale, severity and complexity of CSA and demonstrated the UK's proactive response. Media briefings in February 2026 reported 252 arrests, 407 safeguards, 130 warrants executed and 35 sentencings occurred nationwide. Alongside additional prevention and public facing activity, this reflects the sustained, efforts across policing every single week. PSNI supported intensification efforts and reported 4safeguards and 3 warrants executed.

- Raising awareness of the emerging threat posed by the 'COM', which are sadistic and violent online communities dedicated to inflicting harm and committing serious criminal acts, is essential and the NCA issued a number of briefings and alerts to address this. An alert for safeguarding partnerships went to all 153 Local Authorities and around 2,000 leaders in Children's Services including in Northern Ireland. An Industry Alert was issued to over 100 stakeholders in the technology and finance sector; this has received positive feedback from platforms such as Roblox and Discord with indications that it will be used to inform internal policies and practice.
- The second phase of the Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion (FMSE) campaign - a type of online blackmail where someone is forced into paying money after being threatened with the release of intimate images - aimed at boys aged 15-17 was launched in February 2026. Mid-campaign results indicate a reach to the target audience of 12M+ impressions on Snapchat and 3M+ impressions on Instagram.
- The NCA CSA Industry Team facilitated a briefing with Snapchat to over 650 officers across NCA, ROCUs and NPCC, including PSNI; this focused on use of Crime Overseas Production Orders (COPO), providing officers with knowledge on how to exploit Snapchat data and utilise COPO to gather evidence.
- Operation Beaconport is a national police operation led by the NCA and delivered in partnership with the Child Sexual Exploitation Taskforce -including the Tackling Organised Exploitation Programme - and police forces, to review cases where police forces (across England and Wales) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) made the decision to close investigations (NFA) of group based child sexual abuse and exploitation between 1 January 2010 and 31 March 2025.
- NFA cases are currently being collated by forces and are being submitted to Operation Beaconport. It is expected to take several months for all cases to be identified and referred into Operation Beaconport. The Beaconport Team are meeting with PSNI to assess the situation.



Illicit Finance & Asset Denial

- The NCA continues to utilise Civil Recovery and Tax powers under Parts 5 & 6 of POCA 2002 in Northern Ireland, under the auspices of both the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) and the cross-border Joint Agency Task Force (JATF). These powers are used to disrupt and recover the criminally acquired assets of individuals and organisations who are engaged in serious crime, including fraud, drug trafficking, illegal money lending, money laundering, excise duty evasion and tax evasion. The total value of the assets under investigation is approximately £6.65 million.
- In January 2026, as part of an ongoing PCTF civil recovery investigation, a Disclosure Order was granted by the High Court. The defendant is suspected of being engaged in the supply of controlled drugs and associated money laundering and the value of the assets under investigation is approximately £300,000.
- In January 2026, in a separate PCTF civil recovery investigation into assets valued at approximately £40,000.00, a Disclosure Order was granted by the High Court. The defendant is believed to be engaged in money laundering and fraud offences.
- There are currently 6 further PCTF civil recovery investigations ongoing concerning assets totalling approximately £6.3 million for offences including Money Laundering, supply of controlled drugs, Fraud, and Organised Immigration Crime.
- Op MACHINIZE is a NCA coordinated strategic response to the abuse of cash-intensive businesses on the UK high street to launder criminal proceeds. Following the success of MACHINIZE 1 in March 2025, the second phase (MACHINIZE 2) which ran from 1st-31st October 2025, built on this momentum and focused on money laundering through a wider range of cash-intensive high street entities including barbershops, vape shops, nail bars, and mini markets. Knowing that Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) groups use these businesses to launder funds and exploit migrant labour, MACHINIZE 2 also aimed to disrupt illegal working and the grey economy linked to OIC.
- All UK Police Forces, including the PSNI, participated in MACHINIZE 2, resulting in this being the largest intensification of its kind. This collective action resulted in: 2,734 premises visited and raided; 924 individuals arrested; over £10.7m of suspected criminal proceeds seized; over £2.7m worth of illicit commodities destroyed; 716 Civil Penalty Notice referrals for employing illegal workers and right to rent; 515 referrals to Companies House to consider removing businesses from the register.
- Of these results, the PSNI achieved: overall over 60 premises visited in partnership with HMRC and 6 by the PSNI as lead; over £425,000 in cash seized; over £41,600 worth of drugs seized; over £18,000 worth of counterfeit goods seized; 20,000 cigarettes seized; over £110,000 of suspected criminal finances frozen; 6 searches conducted by PSNI under warrant, leading to 1 arrest made and 2 Community Resolution Notices issued.

Cases of Note: Illicit Finance

- In October 2025, the principal subject in an NCA investigation and another male were arrested after handing over criminally derived cash resulting in the seizure of approximately £65,000. As part of related investigations and in conjunction with HMRC, in November 2025, a notice was served on a financial company withdrawing their registration to operate as a Money Service Bureau.
- Under the same investigation, in December 2025 a UK national pled guilty to offences of Possession of Criminal Property and driving offences. The subject received a 14-month custodial sentence. A search of the subject's vehicle had previously revealed £394,000 in cash. Then in January 2026, an Account Freezing Order (AFO) for the sum of £50,000 was granted in respect to one of the principal subjects of the same investigation. The first period of the AFO is six months which will be reviewed by the court as the investigation continues.
- In November 2025, the NCA arrested a manager of a vape shop which was being used for money laundering purposes. A search of the premises identified EUR 270,000 and £300,000 in cash. A further principal subject was arrested by PSNI colleagues who seized £100,000 from a vehicle. One subject was charged and remanded into custody (subsequently released on High Court bail). Trading by the vape shop is suspended and the investigation remains ongoing.

Organised Immigration Crime

- The NCA continues to devote substantial resources to the Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) Threat and it remains the top priority. The NCA is well placed to target the OIC threat by disrupting and dismantling OIC networks. Much of the criminality involved in OIC lies outside the UK, so we have increased the number of officers working overseas. Disrupting people smuggling will prevent OCGs from profiting from vulnerable communities around the world. Further, this will protect the UK's border security and improve UK public confidence in law enforcement and illegal migration. During the 2025/2026 financial year, NCA led on nearly 400 disruptions against OIC networks and was involved in 300 arrests (both in the UK and overseas) for OIC-related offences. In 2025, working with international partners, we seized 533 boats and engines. Had this equipment reached the beaches of France then up to 33,000 more migrants could have attempted to cross the channel."
- NCA is working in close partnership with policing in a dedicated OIC Domestic Taskforce to deliver a multi-agency national response to tackle OIC. This forum brings together multiple government and law enforcement agencies to ensure coherence in tackling the OIC threat effectively. PSNI works closely alongside the OIC Domestic Taskforce and partners in support of the collective response to OIC. To support this effort, the NCA invited PSNI to join the multi-agency 'Pursue Board' for OIC. PSNI has senior representation at the monthly 'Pursue Board' which aims to drive the operational response to the threat across the UK.
- The Border Security, Asylum and Immigration (BSAI) Act received Royal Assent on 2 December 2025. The Act introduces a number of important new measures that enhance investigatory powers for UK law enforcement agencies to pursue, disrupt and deter OIC. Additionally, the Act brings in other measures focused on wider SOC at the border, including new offences relating to articles for use in serious crime and strengthening existing Serious Crime Prevention Orders (SCPO). The new offences and powers are an important development as they will allow action to be taken prior to a facilitation event taking place.
- OCGs continue to attempt to exploit the Common Travel Area (CTA) and the border between the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI). The NCA will continue to liaise with both An Garda Síochána and the PSNI to disrupt OCGs and safeguard their victims. To demonstrate the value of debriefing migrants arriving illegally into the UK via the Common Travel Area, NCA (in agreement with the Home Office Joint Debriefing Team, the Assisting Offender Team and with support from NPCC) led two debriefing deployments to Northern Ireland in November 2025. Eight people were debriefed over 2.5 days leading to the identification of an Afghan national facilitating a family of 4 via train from Dublin into Grand Central Station by HO ICE and NCA teams (see Case of Note).
- In NI, as well as the rest of the UK, SOC offenders use high street businesses, including barber shops, minimarkets, nail bars, and vape shops, to support criminality, distribute illicit goods, engage in illegal working, or launder funds. These practices undermine legitimate businesses, damage consumer confidence, and harm local investment, and Op MACHINIZE has been one of the nationwide responses from the NCA and our partners to counter this threat. The poly-criminality and the "pull-factor" of the grey economy covers numerous threats, including OIC, and is covered in more detail (see Illicit Finance).

Cases of Note: OIC

- **In November 2025**, NCA officers deployed at Belfast Grand Central Train Station identified a suspected OIC facilitator in the company of an Afghan family. The family had entered Ireland concealed within an HGV and had then taken a train to Belfast. The suspected facilitator was arrested in connection with OIC offences and an investigation instigated. Then in December, the NCA's International Liaison Officer in Dublin requested AGS support regarding a high-risk missing child who was successfully located safe and well in the care of their elder adult brother. In January 2026, a principal subject of this investigation was arrested on suspicion of facilitating the illegal entry of non-UK nationals. A PACE warrant was executed at the subject's address along with a secondary address. A number of items including digital devices, financial documents and passports, were seized. The subject was interviewed and bailed pending further enquiries.

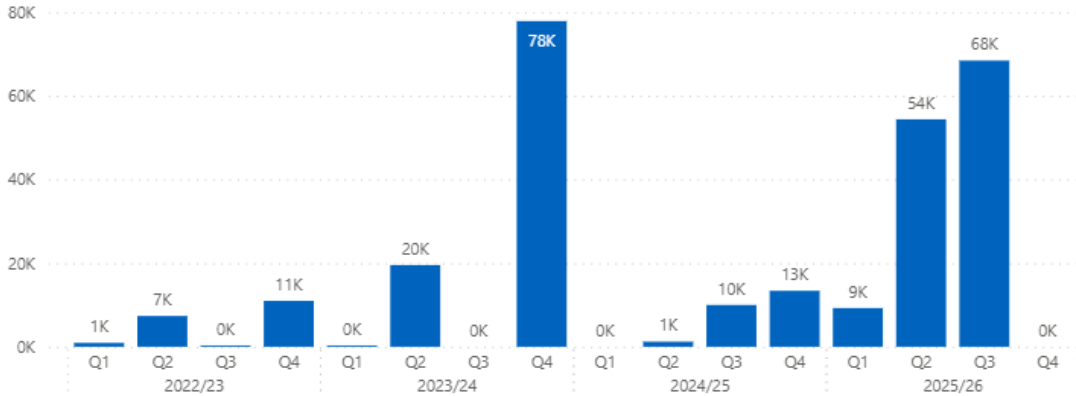
UK Financial Intelligence Unit

- The NCA's UK Financial Intelligence Unit (UKFIU) continues to conduct work that directly impacts Northern Ireland and assists the PSNI by disseminating high-risk Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) and requests for Defence Against Money Laundering (DAMLs), alongside making all other SARs relating to Northern Ireland available to accredited financial investigators and intelligence officers.
- During this reporting period, the UKFIU disseminated 41 counter terrorism-related SARs to the PSNI and received 7 search requests from the PSNI relating to terrorist financing. The UKFIU also actioned 4 international requests on behalf of PSNI relating to drugs (2), fraud, and money laundering.
- During this reporting period, the UKFIU also identified the following for fast-tracking to PSNI: 3 SARs relating to vulnerable persons; 3 SARs relating to child exploitation; and 1 SAR relating to modern slavery human trafficking..

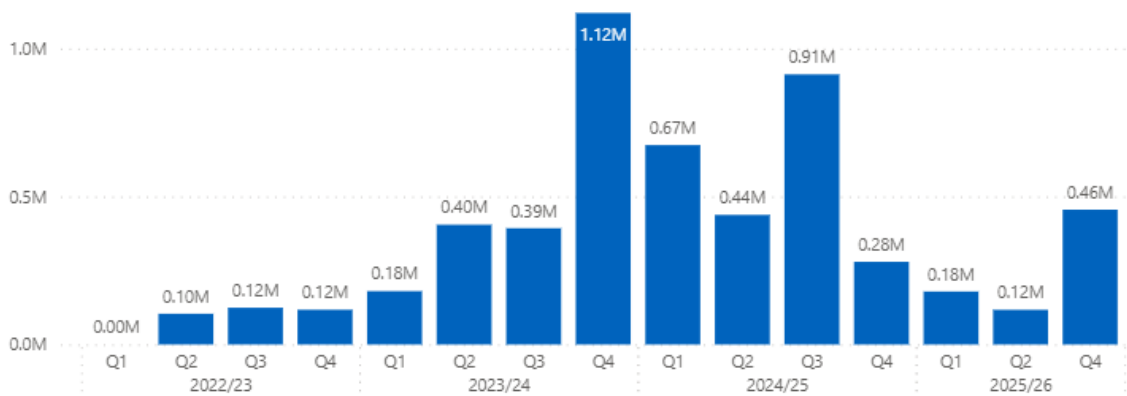
- Between 1 October 2025 and 31 March 2026, 296 requests for a DAMLs were received under POCA 2002 for which the main subject was located within Northern Ireland and potentially of relevance to PSNI and NCA CRT Belfast. This led to 24 DAMLs being refused, £855,839 worth of assets being restrained and a total of £68,445 worth of assets being denied.

- The cited DAML figures are out of a total 20,316 DAML requests handled by the UKFIU within this reporting period. 296 represents the total number of DAMLs received for which the main subject was located within Northern Ireland, a proportion of which would have been allocated to the PSNI and the NCA's Belfast Branch for immediate review and recommendation. However, some would have been allocated to other investigating agencies where this was appropriate, for example HMRC. Any DAMLs that were allocated to another agency would have been made available on the SARs systems to the PSNI after an initial period.
- The NCA's Reporter Engagement Team led or supported a range of stakeholder engagement workshops and events, including: the PEFF (Payment Services, EMLs & FinTechs) Working Group; the NI Court Service; a joint Banking SARs Working Group; an Insolvency Practitioner's Association Roadshow in Belfast; the AMLSF; the BSA Fin-Crime Panel – Building Society working group; a meeting for Northern Ireland candidates to join the Legal Sector Working Group.
- The NCA's SARs Exploitation team also delivered a SARs awareness session and a session for Financial Investigators, Financial Intelligence Officers and SARs researchers in PSNI, delivered a How To develop SARs session to staff in PSNI, and provided assistance to PSNI staff around high harm frauds including courier fraud, investment fraud and romance scams, this included a Bringing SARs to Life session.

Assets denied as a result of Northern Ireland-related DAMLs



Assets restrained as a result of Northern Ireland-related DAMLs



Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- During this reporting period, the NCA achieved two major disruptions through capacity and capability building. In the Prepare space, to improve coordination and tasking of MSHT investigations across the system, the NCA, working with NPCC partners including NI representatives developed a framework to enable joint, multi-agency cooperation focusing on the most appropriate capabilities and powers across complex national, regional and local investigations for more efficient tasking, safeguarding, and enforcement. This is managed through the NCA chaired Modern Slavery Intelligence & Investigations Group (MSIIG), where PSNI are participants.
- In the Protect space, NCA work with Ofcom focusing specifically on online enablers of exploitation especially Adult Services Websites (ASWs) has strengthened Ofcom's policy and regulatory response to online enabled forms of exploitation across all 4 nations.

International

- Limited International Biometric data is currently available at force level whilst the NCA builds a technical solution to collect, extract and analyse it. This piece of work is part of NCA International's Technology and Transformation project for 2026/2027 and will be given priority.
- NCA ILOs have facilitated a number of enquiries on behalf of PSNI and NCA Northern Ireland in Spain in the past twelve months. These primarily relate to Organised Crime Groups involved in the supply of controlled drugs through and/or from Spain to the UK and Ireland.
- NCA ILOs in Spain have also requested and received support from PSNI for Intelligence research and operational support on behalf of the Spanish National Police.

Anti-Kidnap & Extortion

- The Anti Kidnap & Extortion Unit (AKEU) provides strategic and tactical advice to police forces, law enforcement, government agencies, and commercial enterprises across the world in live kidnap matters. The AKEU is responsible for deploying incremental, operational support and coordinating NCA assets to aid the investigation of crimes in action.
- Over this period there have been 14 referrals for kidnapping, 2 for blackmail, and 18 for Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion to the NCA's AKEU from the PSNI. There were no referrals for Product Contamination during this period.

Protected Persons

- 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 this reporting period, the Central Services Unit provided 8 new instances of operational support to the PSNI. 5 of these instances have been provided by Identity Team (IDD), and 3 by the Relocations Team.

Counterfeit Currency

- The NCA's The NCA's UK National Central Office (UKNCO) for Counterfeit Currency have provided support to the PSNI in relation to **114** submissions of counterfeit currency processed during this reporting period.
- Of these they have secured **34** expert witness statement requests to support criminal prosecutions in Northern Ireland.

National Investigative Capabilities

National Investigative Capabilities deliver niche capabilities and specialist resources to UK law enforcement partners including the PSNI. They do this by providing strategic, operational and tactical advice, guidance and support in relation to major crime investigations.

Missing Persons

- The NCA's UK Missing Persons Unit (UKMPU) is the UK national and international point of contact for all missing persons and unidentified remains cases. The team provides investigative support and advice to UK and international law enforcement in cases involving missing persons and unidentified remains.
- During this period, the UKMPU received 34 new missing persons reports and no unidentified remains cases relating to Northern Ireland.

Major Crime Investigative Support

- The NCA's Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) provide specialist advice and guidance to investigations across Northern Ireland. Although focussing on homicide, series/serious sexual offences and other major crimes, our specialists can assist all crime types and investigations.
- Having a unique combination of skills, we also provide tactical and practical support through specialist advice including: behavioural science in respect of unknown offenders; and forensic psychology in relation to known offenders; identification of external expertise across a range of disciplines; and sharing of learning and best practice from a wide range of investigations from across the UK.
- Between October and March 2026, MCIS supported 56 new or on-going major crime investigations in Northern Ireland, resulting in 59 deployments
- These investigations range in crime type and include murder, rape, child protection, missing persons and acquisitive crime. We deployed a range of specialist resources including, National SIO Advisers, Crime Investigation Specialist Officers, Behavioural Investigative Advisers, Forensic Clinical Psychologist, Interview, Digital, Search and Forensic Medical Advisers.
- MCIS also assisted in identifying and sourcing experts (for court) in a number of investigations. Additionally, MCIS specialists regularly support investigator development courses and Continued Personal development (CPD) events with the PSNI and within this reporting period have delivered training to Senior Investigating Officers.

Serious Crime Analysis

- The NCA's Serious Crime Analysis Section (SCAS) works to identify the potential serial killers and serial rapists at the earliest stage of their offending.
- SCAS received 9 actionable submissions from the PSNI relating to case files received for SCAS criteria offences.
- 1 case was indexed onto the SCAS database, utilising the victim accounts and the offender/ suspect details.
- 2 cases were proactively analysed to consider potentially linked cases and/or potential suspect details; 1 of these included a line of enquiry providing details of potentially linked cases and/or potential suspect details.