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2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery

October 2020



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Modern Slavery Unit
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
SW1P 4DF

2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery

October 2020

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Home Secretary Foreword

Slavery is a despicable crime, no one can argue that it is anything other than abhorrent and yet, this despicable abuse of people persists, with unspeakably cruel and inhuman exploitation still taking place in the UK today.

Modern slavery is a pernicious crime that targets the most vulnerable and preys on the weak. It is estimated that there are tens of millions of victims of modern slavery across the world and last year alone, over 10,000 potential victims of modern slavery were identified in the UK. Slavery has resulted in victims of human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude often hidden in plain sight in our communities.

The unacceptable truth is that too many victims continue to endure unthinkable horrors at the hands of ruthless criminals. The appalling allegations of labour exploitation in high street fashion retail factories in Leicester and other parts of the country this year demonstrated how the abuse of people through this abhorrent crime continues to grow in front of the very authorities who should be eradicating this abuse.

This Government is acting at every level to tackle modern slavery, ensuring that victims are supported to rebuild their lives, and the criminals and perpetrators of slavery face justice for their crimes and activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified our work to ensure that victims continue to have access to essential support. Changes have been introduced to address vulnerabilities and we have worked in collaboration with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the police, and the

National Crime Agency (NCA) to protect workers and raise awareness of the threat of modern slavery during the pandemic.

This Annual Report sets out the further world-leading action of the UK Government, Scottish Government, and Northern Ireland Executive over the last year to tackle the scourge of modern slavery.

- Under the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Programme, investment continues with an additional £2 million to continue to support the police. This will increase modern slavery prosecutions and strengthen our ability to target organised immigration crime through stronger active law enforcement investigations.
- In March this year, the UK Government published the world's first Government Modern Slavery Statement. This outlines the steps undertaken to drive responsible practices and prevent risks in Government supply chains.
- Through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Transformation Programme, we will be able to better support and identify victims, including through the national roll-out of Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) to ensure the individual needs of children are met.

The fight against modern slavery is far from over and we will continue to work with law enforcement, civil society, businesses, governments, and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to tackle this outrage in every way we can – at home and abroad.

My message is clear: I will not tolerate the despicable exploitation and abuse of innocent people through modern slavery, and I will not stop until this terrible crime is finally consigned to the history books.



Priti Patel

Home Secretary

Executive Summary

0.1 Modern slavery is a complex, harmful, and largely hidden crime. Improving evidence about the scale and nature of modern slavery is a priority for the UK Government.

0.2 Over the last year, there has been significant progress made across the UK to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. All UK jurisdictions have responded to the pandemic ensuring that victims of modern slavery are protected and those exploiting the vulnerable are brought to justice.

0.5 This report details activity led and delivered by the UK Government since the last [annual report](#) published in Autumn 2019 under the following themes:

- **Pursue:** Prosecuting and disrupting individuals and groups responsible for modern slavery.
- **Prevent:** Preventing people from engaging in modern slavery, either as victims or offenders.
- **Protect:** Protecting vulnerable people from exploitation and increasing safeguards and resilience against this crime.
- **Victim identification and support:** Reducing the harm caused by modern slavery through improved victim identification and enhanced support.
- **International response to modern slavery and upstream prevention.**

Highlights of activity in the past year include:

Pursue

- There has been a continued uplift in operational activity over the last year to tackle modern slavery, involving a range of law enforcement agencies. Monthly operational data shows that, in June 2020, there were 1,845 active law enforcement investigations, compared with 1,479 in June 2019. This has been complemented by increased training for frontline police officers on the signs of modern slavery and improved operational intelligence on the nature of modern slavery.
- In 2019, the number of prosecutions and conviction rate increased with the number of completed “flagged modern slavery prosecutions” increasing from 294 to 349, and the conviction rate increasing to 71.9% in 2019, an increase from 65% in the previous year.
- The Home Office has invested an additional £2 million to continue to support the law enforcement activity this year (2020/21) under the new Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Programme. This investment will enable the police to continue to drive forward work to help raise awareness of modern slavery with national helplines supporting a range of vulnerable victims, increase modern slavery prosecutions and includes a new focus to build capability to respond to organised

immigration crime.

- The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) continued to make progress using its powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to investigate serious cases of labour exploitation. In 2019/20, the GLAA conducted over 200 operations across a range of sectors.

Prevent

- In Autumn 2019, following the UK Government's investment of £10 million, the Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre was launched to transform our understanding of modern slavery by bringing together academics, businesses and charities to drive forward new studies, share knowledge and improve collaboration both at home and overseas, to further strengthen our response to modern slavery. The Centre has now launched two research calls: one looking into the current support system for victims and survivors of modern slavery, and another rapid response call on the impact of COVID-19 on modern slavery and is currently consulting on its research priorities going forward.
- Communication campaigns, such as the 'Hidden in Plain Sight' campaign targeting frontline professions who were more likely to encounter victims of modern slavery, have increased awareness and understanding of this complex crime, directly leading to over 1,000 referrals to the Modern Slavery Helpline through calls and online referrals on the website.

Protect

- On 26 March 2020, the UK became the first country in the world to publish a Modern Slavery [supply chain] Statement outlining the steps it has taken to drive responsible practices and prevent risks of modern slavery in Government supply chains.
- On 22nd September, the Home Office published the Government response to the Transparency in Supply Chains consultation,

which committed to an ambitious package of measures to strengthen the transparency legislation in the Modern Slavery Act.

- including extending the reporting requirement to large public bodies – another global first.
- The Home Office is developing a new Government digital reporting service for modern slavery statements. The new service will make it easier for investors, consumers, and civil society to scrutinise action that businesses are taking and encourage progress in efforts to eliminate modern slavery from private and public sector supply chains. This service will launch in early 2021.

Victim identification and support

- The UK Government, Scottish Government, and the Northern Ireland Executive continue to provide specialist support and advocacy services for victims of modern slavery, to assist them in rebuilding their lives and to reintegrate into local communities.
- The Home Office is embarking on an ambitious NRM Transformation Programme to build on our world leading efforts to identify vulnerable victims and provide the support that they need to rebuild their lives. This will ensure that victims are safeguarded and supported based on their individual recovery need, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable and making good use of existing access to mainstream services.
- As part of the NRM Transformation Programme, the Home Office is working to improve support for child victims. Throughout England and Wales, we are continuing the national roll-out of Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs), an independent source of advice for trafficked children and, across the whole of the UK, we are seeking to pilot a devolved model of decision making for child victims.
- Following an open procurement exercise, the Home Office announced on 29 June 2020 the new Modern Slavery Victim Care

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-modern-slavery-statement>

Contract (MSVCC) had been awarded to The Salvation Army. This five-year contract will provide support to adult victims of modern slavery and their dependents in England and Wales.

- The Home Office published statutory guidance under section 49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, consolidating existing guidance and setting out detailed support for victims for the first time.

International

- The UK's international efforts to fight slavery are supported by an Overseas Development Assistance commitment of over £200 million including the Home Office's £11 million Modern Slavery Innovation Fund to test innovative approaches to build the evidence base on what works.
- In November 2019, the UK Government appointed Jennifer Townson as the Migration and Modern Slavery International Envoy. The Envoy is based in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)² and represents the UK in a range of bilateral and multilateral discussions.

0.6 This Annual Report has been agreed by representatives of the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government, and the Welsh Government.

² As of 1 September 2020, the Department of International Development (DfID) and the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) merged to become the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In this report, where work has taken place before the 1st September 2020, DfID and FCO are referenced as two separate entities. When referring to current or future work, the department is referenced as FCDO.

Chapter 1: Assessment of the Prevalence of Modern Slavery UK

1.1 This chapter gives a brief overview of 2019 statistics relating to the potential scale of modern slavery, and reviews recent work on estimating the prevalence of modern slavery in the UK.

1.2 Estimating the prevalence of modern slavery.

1.3 Improving evidence about the scale and nature of modern slavery is a priority for the UK Government. Traditional means of measuring crime (victimisation surveys or police records) are less effective at measuring the prevalence of this complex and largely hidden crime whose victims are often too traumatised to report their exploitation or may not self-identify as victims.

1.4 The sources of data provided in this report cannot provide a complete assessment of the actual prevalence of modern slavery in the UK, but instead can give an approximation for how the reporting of modern slavery may be shifting over time.

1.5 The number of NRM referrals provides a good indication of the scale of known victims in the UK but is not a good estimate of overall prevalence. In 2019, 10,627 potential victims were referred to the NRM (91% were sent to police forces in England, 5% to Police Scotland, 3% to Welsh police forces and <1% to the Police Service of Northern Ireland), a 52% increase from the 6,986 referrals in 2018. This continues the year-on-year increase of NRM referrals since its inception in 2009. This is likely to be due to greater awareness of the NRM process, though higher incidence of modern slavery cannot be ruled out.

1.6 In March 2020, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published a [report](#), which highlighted the challenges in producing an accurate measure of the prevalence of modern slavery, given the hidden nature of this crime, lack of a definitive source of data and difficulties in establishing a suitable method to accurately quantify the number of victims of modern slavery in the UK. Instead, the ONS report brought together many sources of data relating to modern slavery as monitoring indicators, including NRM, Duty to Notify and police recorded crime data from the Home Office. The ONS report also reviewed existing estimates of prevalence and highlighted issues of reproducibility and reliability as issues impacting these estimates.

1.7 Since the publication of the ONS report, the Centre for Social Justice, in their report titled '[It still happens here: Fighting UK slavery in the 2020s](#)', estimated that there could be at least 100,000 victims of modern slavery in the UK in 2017. This was based on data collected by the National Data Analytic Solutions partnership, using a new technique that analysed crime reports and intelligence records of West Midlands Police. While this new method is promising, there are uncertainties that arise from scaling up the results from a single police force to the rest of the UK using population estimates. However, this new methodology is welcomed and will help guide future work to create a more robust estimate of the prevalence of modern slavery in the UK.

Chapter 2: The UK's Response

PURSUE³

2a.01 Pursue actions encompass the UK's law enforcement response to modern slavery to disrupt and prosecute those responsible.

Police Recorded Crime

2a.02 In the year to March 2020, there were 7,779 modern slavery crimes recorded by the police, a 59% increase from 4,897 in the year to March 2019.

2a.03 The force recording most modern slavery crimes was the Metropolitan Police, accounting for 30% (2,334) of all crimes. This was followed by West Midlands Police (6%; 484) and West Yorkshire Police (6%; 457).

2a.04 These figures exclude Greater Manchester Police, who were unable to supply data due to the implementation of a new IT system.

2a.05 In the year to March 2020, the PSNI recorded 41 offences, compared to 38 in the year to March 2019.

2a.06 In the year to March 2020, Police Scotland recorded 236 crimes of human trafficking or exploitation, compared to 112 in the year to March 2019.

Prosecutions, Convictions and Sentencing in England and Wales

2a.07 In the last year, there has been an increase in case referrals to the CPS, including cases referred for early investigative advice, which have resulted in charge. This performance is encouraging given the overall decline in case volumes. In total, 322 defendants investigated for modern slavery offences were referred by the police and a legal decision was provided during

2019, of which 239 defendants were charged by the CPS. This represents 74.2% of all legal decisions which resulted in a charge. This data is presented in Tables A1 and A2 in the Annex. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CPS and the National Police Chiefs Council introduced an interim charging protocol in April 2020, which aims to prioritise and focus demand, so that only the most serious cases are put into the courts system immediately.

2a.08 Table A3 in the Annex shows that during 2019, the number of completed "flagged modern slavery prosecutions" increased from 294 to 349; this includes defendants prosecuted for a Modern Slavery Act offence as well as cases of conspiracy to commit an offence or other serious criminal offences. The conviction rate also increased to 71.9% in 2019, an increase from 65% in the previous year.

2a.09 There has been an increase in cases referred for early investigative advice. Prosecutors can help strengthen cases where a pro-active investigation by the police has commenced, to remove the burden from vulnerable victims in proving a case, but also in bringing evidence-led prosecutions. Referral for early advice can also assist in bringing weak cases to an early conclusion, thereby conserving policing resource.

2a.10 Bringing evidence-led prosecutions has been successful in county lines cases where children and vulnerable victims have not provided testimony. These cases have resulted in significant sentences and prosecutors have successfully obtained Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders.

2a.11 Prosecutors are receiving enhanced training to build robust cases and identify those in the criminal justice system who may be subject to criminal exploitation. Face to face training has been delivered to prosecutors dealing with high

³ The Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive use a different strategic framework to organise their work. For ease, this report groups each jurisdiction's actions under the 'four Ps' structure.

volume drug crime in Youth Courts and a training package on non-prosecution principles, including the section 45 defence under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, has been circulated to all CPS Area legal leads to deliver to all CPS prosecutors. A video podcast (filmed by the Director of Public Prosecutions) and training in non-punishment of suspects and defendants forms part of the training modules for newly recruited prosecutors.

2a.12 The CPS has taken steps to raise awareness of the criminalisation of victims of trafficking. CPS has also contributed to guidance and training for the police (including force solicitors), Magistrates (including those who sit in the youth court), Youth Offender teams, the Law Society and the Bar.

2a.13 There is widespread recognition of the expertise of CPS prosecutors in supporting authorities overseas in strengthening their rule of law and their investigative and prosecution functions. The CPS has helped to build the capability of partners in source countries by sharing the UK's experience and expertise based on our domestic approach to tackling modern slavery.

2a.14 The CPS is currently participating in 18 live joint investigations on modern slavery, involving 8 EU member states. Joint Investigation Teams (JIT) are an effective way of investigating and prosecuting cases where traffickers operate across jurisdictions to recruit, transport and exploit their victims in different countries. Investigation and prosecution strategies can be agreed in advance and evidence and unused material can be shared within the JIT, reducing the need for mutual legal assistance and in turn reducing delay in investigation and prosecution.

2a.15 The number of individuals prosecuted and convicted in England and Wales between 2013 and 2019, where modern slavery or related legislation was classified as the principal offence is routinely published by the Ministry of Justice. In 2019, 68 defendants were proceeded against under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 on a 'principal offence' basis. The number of prosecutions peaked in 2017 at 132 and has since decreased, convictions however, peaked in 2019. It is important to note that arrests and prosecutions commenced in a specific year may not result in convictions until subsequent years

due to the time it takes to investigate, gather evidence and prosecute at court.

2a.16 In 2019 on an all offence basis, there were 256 modern slavery offence prosecutions and 72 offences convicted, this means that modern slavery was often a non-principal offence (accompanied by a more severe offence) or a second count of the offence (more than one modern slavery offence per defendant). The most common offences to appear alongside a modern slavery prosecution in the last three years were: exploitation of prostitution, money laundering, and production, supply and possession with intent to supply a Class A drug.

2a.17 Since the Modern Slavery Act came into effect in 2015, of the 74 offenders sentenced where modern slavery was the principal offence, 62 (84%) received an immediate custodial sentence. Of all offenders sentenced to immediate custody for this offence, the average custodial sentence length was 61 months.

Prosecutions in Scotland

2a.18 In Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) has maintained its structure of a national lead prosecutor for human trafficking supported by local lead prosecutors in each of the Sheriffdoms throughout Scotland. The national lead prosecutor is a senior member of Crown Counsel with extensive experience of prosecuting serious crimes in the High Court of Justiciary. All decisions in terms of the Lord Advocate's Instructions on Prosecution of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation are made by the national lead prosecutor to ensure consistency and expertise in decision-making.

2a.19 Tables A4 and A5 in the Annex show the outlined number of individuals prosecuted and convicted of human trafficking offences in

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888344/HO-code-tool-principal-offence-2019.xlsx

⁵ When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences, the principal offence is the one for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same penalty is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

⁶ Defendants who appear before both courts may also be convicted at the Crown Court for a different offence to that for which they are counted as having been originally proceeded against at magistrates' court.

Scotland, broken down by the date the police report was received by COPFS.

2a.20 In line with the commitments signed by the Lord Advocate and heads of other prosecuting authorities in 2016, COPFS has maintained its good relationships with the CPS and PPSNI hosting both agencies at a meeting of specialist human trafficking prosecutors and police officers in September 2019 at Crown Office in Edinburgh. The group will meet again in 2020 using video-conferencing technology.

Prosecutions in Northern Ireland

2a.21 In Northern Ireland, the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) has a specialised team of prosecutors for human trafficking and modern slavery offences. PPS continues to engage closely with police in all modern slavery cases at an early stage of investigation and to collaborate closely with prosecutors across the UK to share best practice. Tables A6 and A7 in the Annex show the number of individuals prosecuted for trafficking in persons offences in Northern Ireland.⁷⁸⁹

7 The figures are presented on an all offence basis, that is, the total number of modern slavery offences that all defendant are proceeded against or convicted of (principal offences plus non-principal offences).

8 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888343/HO-code-tool-all-offence-2019.xlsx

9 Taken from the MoJ's experimental statistics: Combinations of offences – prosecutions and convictions https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888665/experimental-statistics-combinations-of-offences-csv.zip

UK-Wide Law Enforcement Action to Tackle Modern Slavery

2a.22 Modern slavery remains one of the highest priority serious and organised crime threats for the NCA.

2a.23 Adult Service Websites (ASWs) continue to be a prevalent enabler of sexual exploitation, where traffickers advertise victims online. The NCA Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) is working to raise standards on these websites, empowering companies to identify modern slavery and exploitation on their platforms and report it to law enforcement. Project AIDANT activity (see box below) focussed on sexual exploitation and ASWs in the past year has sought to design and test innovative methodologies for industry reporting; and also, UK law enforcement's response to modern slavery manifesting on these platforms. Work is ongoing, alongside the Home Office and other law enforcement partners, to enhance existing understanding, explore demand elements of sexual exploitation and work with industry appropriately to holistically tackle this issue.

2a.24 The NCA MSHT Tactical Advice team provides support to investigations to help identify successful avenues to prosecution and to safeguard potential victims. In the financial year 2019/2020 the MSHT Tactical Advice team provided 695 instances of tactical advice, deploying officers 36 times leading to 72 disruptions.

Project AIDANT

Project AIDANT, the series of NCA-led operational intensifications, continued to bring together resources from the NCA, Border Force, Immigration Enforcement, HMRC, the GLAA and UK police forces to deliver intensified operational activity focused on specific thematic areas.

Between 2017 and 2019 the NCA coordinated UK law enforcement agencies to deliver 18 phases of Project AIDANT operational activity across the UK – and some cases with international partners - tackling different manifestations of the threat with varying operational focuses. During this time, Project AIDANT resulted in over 770 arrests, and safeguarding over 1,220 potential victims. In May 2020, an evaluation of the AIDANT phases 1 -15 (February 2017 – January 2019) was produced for the purpose of highlighting key learning points, good news stories and recommendations for future activity, all of which were fed into the planning of Project AIDANT in 2020.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the following Project AIDANT phases took place:

- Labour Exploitation
- Child Exploitation
- Sexual Exploitation
- Ports and Borders
- Adult Service Websites

The latest series of intensifications focussed on the food packaging and processing, the shellfish industry and the textiles and garment sector and involved the police and other law enforcement partners engaging in intelligence development activity across these sectors in order to identify the extent of exploitation and safeguard potential victims in these sectors, whilst raise public awareness.

International Law Enforcement Collaboration to Tackle Modern Slavery

2a.25 The European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) tackling Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) group is a multilateral platform designed to drive operational, preventative and strategic activity against THB. The annual Operational Action Plan (OAP) coordinates member participation in pan-European operational activity and seeks to develop and enhance understanding of related criminal enablers. The NCA coordinates the UK's participation in EMPACT Action Days which normally mainly focus on child trafficking, labour exploitation and sexual exploitation. This participation will usually be incorporated into the NCA Project AIDANT schedule which delivers weeks of intensified operational and prevent activity.

Case Study: Operation Synopsis

Operation Synopsis was a complex Police Scotland-led investigation, which commenced in September 2014 involving the Metropolitan Police Service and Slovakian Police. The investigation related to the trafficking of a number of Slovakian females aged approximately 18-25 years of age, who were trafficked from Slovakia to the UK for the purposes of sham marriages.

A number of the trafficked females had also been sexually exploited as prostitutes. Fourteen Potential Victims of Trafficking (PVoT) were identified and supported as a result of the operation. The females recruited were generally vulnerable individuals from impoverished backgrounds; they had poor levels of education and were tricked into coming to the UK with the promise of legitimate employment or some form of financial reward.

The females were trafficked by bus from the south east of Slovakia through Europe to seaports in the south of England before onward travel to Glasgow. The main principle was assisted by a number of Slovakian nationals, both in Slovakia and Glasgow, many of whom were direct or extended family members. The majority of PVoT resided briefly with the main principle or his family members prior to being sold.

A fee of anywhere from £3000 to £8000 was paid to the traffickers for each female exploited. Following the 'marriage', the females were expected to reside with the purchaser or they would be re-trafficked or forced into prostitution.

In October 2019, four members of the crime group were convicted of a number of offences and sentenced to a total of 36 years in prison. Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention Orders (TEPOs) were also obtained in respect of all accused.

2a.26 Police Scotland are currently participating in a Joint Investigation Team with International Law Enforcement regarding a nationwide Serious and Organised Crime Group involved in human trafficking throughout Europe. This ongoing investigation is one of the most complex human trafficking investigations undertaken by Police Scotland. A dedicated enquiry team is working with partners across the UK and Europe to identify and safeguard potential victims and bring those responsible to justice.

2a.27 During the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 Police Scotland experienced a considerable increase in the number of Vietnamese potential victims of trafficking being referred through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This rose from 81 referrals in 2018-2019 to 232 in 2019-2020, an increase of 186%. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions Police Scotland created a dedicated enquiry team in response to this increase (Operation FILIBEG). The scope of this team is to build a comprehensive intelligence picture of the potential victims' experiences and the networks of criminals who exploit them. The team will work with national and international law enforcement agencies, third sector partners and the potential victims themselves to improve understanding of this complex issue and to direct Police Scotland's efforts to bring those involved in human trafficking and exploitation to justice.

2a.28 Given the significant rise in referrals of Vietnamese potential victims and following approval by the Chief Constable in March 2020, arrangements are at an advanced stage for the secondment of two officers from the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security to Police Scotland for a period of six months. Initially delayed by COVID-19, it is anticipated that the secondment will commence in autumn 2020 and is supported by UK Border Force International and the NCA.

Police Response

Police Response – England and Wales

2a.29 Work by the police to safeguard more victims of modern slavery continued in 2019/20. The Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit (MSPTU) led by National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for modern slavery focussed on increasing prosecutions, mainstreaming best

practice and promoting consistent standards across policing. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network worked closely with the Programme to ensure that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were briefed on good practice and to encourage partnership working.

2a.30 Over £11 million in grant funding has been allocated by the Home Office through the Police Transformation Fund over the three years of the programme to March 2020, with the aim of building capability in the police response to modern slavery across England and Wales. Over the life of the programme there has been an increase in the number of modern slavery police investigations, crimes recorded and police referrals to the Crown Prosecution Service. In 2020/21 the Home Office invested an additional £2 million to continue to support the police response to modern slavery up until March 2021 and the remit of the programme has been widened to include Organised Immigration Crime (OIC). The Unit is now known as the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime (MSOIC) Unit.

2a.31 The MSOIC 2020/21 programme will continue to support forces to enhance their response to modern slavery and to increase the standard of investigations. Improvements to the development of intelligence and the sharing of information will continue. The inclusion of OIC within the Programme will allow policing to consider and address the links between modern slavery and OIC. Safeguarding of victims will be an ongoing focus with an emphasis on vulnerable victims of OIC including children and women.

2a.32 During the year 2019/20 the MSPTU built upon the work undertaken in 2017 – 2019 by continuing to identify best practice, share learning and provide dedicated, specialist advice to policing via the funded network of Regional Modern Slavery Coordinators.

2a.33 In this year alone, police investigations have increased 83%, police referrals of victims into the NRM has increased 32% and police referrals to the CPS in connection with Modern Slavery offences has increased 45%.

Some of the key achievements of the MSPTU included:

- Collecting, connecting and sharing intelligence -
- Developing and disseminating investigative guidance and best practice
- Developing and delivering training
- Supporting force level capability and effectiveness
- Supporting national policy, co-ordination and consistency

The MSPTU's [annual report](#) for 2019/20 provides more information on the progress made in the last year.¹⁰

2a.34 Good progress has been made to deliver the objectives under the new MSOIC programme including, rolling out training to help raise awareness of modern slavery with national helplines supporting a range of vulnerable victims during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, launching the NCA's National Targeting Centre. The unit has also continued to support the work of the SCA by raising awareness of the NRM in forces to enhance identification and strengthen victim support.

Police Response – Scotland

2a.35 Police Scotland continues to raise awareness of human trafficking, including through the delivery of training to UK and international partners and provision of training materials to organisations to enable them to raise awareness through their networks. Prior to COVID-19, over 60 general and bespoke training sessions were delivered over the past year to organisations including Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, universities, NHS, Local Authorities, retail sector, religious institutions, Europol, Eurojust, Child Protection and Care Sector.

2a.36 In September 2019 Police Scotland hosted a National Human Trafficking Conference at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan, including a keynote address by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. Over 200 delegates from all over the UK representing human trafficking practitioners and investigators, third sector and criminal justice partners, international law enforcement and human trafficking researchers attended. The 2020 Human Trafficking Conference has been postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions, however, plans are being made to host this conference in 2021.

2a.37 Police Scotland also participated in a Short Life Working Group comprising stakeholders within the Trafficking and Exploitation Action Area 1 implementation group to develop First Responder guidance. This is designed to augment existing guidance on the completion of the NRM process to improve understanding of the nature and quality of the information required. Development of the guidance is currently progressing.

2a.38 In November 2019, Police Scotland introduced a new human trafficking call type to its call recording system. This has allowed more accurate recording of, and distinguishing between, human trafficking and other incidents.

Police Response – Northern Ireland

2a.39 At a strategic level, the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) contributed to the Department's Modern Slavery Strategy 2019/20, published in April 2019. The strategy contains commitments for 2019/20 and 2020/21 and is monitored through the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Subgroup of the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF), which brings together the main statutory bodies to drive action against trafficking and modern slavery.

2a.40 During 2019/20 the PSNI's dedicated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) has:

- Conducted 8 warrant searches and 75 safeguarding visits/non-warrant operations;
- Made 22 arrests for modern slavery/human trafficking and/or related offences;

¹⁰ MSPTU Annual Report 2019/20 -<https://policingslavery.co.uk/media/2563/ms-annual-report-2020.pdf>

- Charged 4 persons with modern slavery/ human trafficking and/or related offences and secured 2 convictions for human trafficking under the bespoke Northern Ireland Human Trafficking legislation

2a.41 The PSNI's MSHTU has been in place since 2015. The capacity of the team has been enhanced significantly in terms of Detective resources, to account for the increasing number and types of cases reported and investigated. The PSNI's approach to human trafficking is entirely victim centred: to identify, locate and recover any potential victims of trafficking and offer the potential victims police help and support in line with current legislation. The MSHTU have created a 'Protect and Prevent' Officer function within the team, whose role is to review the implementation of the PSNI MSHTU Control Strategy; awareness raising and training internally and to replicate the work of Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) for NI working with partners.

2a.42 In 2019/20 the MSHTU created a secondment opportunity for two uniform officers to provide additional support to this specialised team within Serious Crime Branch. The uniformed officers work alongside the MSHTU throughout the 12-month secondment to provide the PSNI with additional capability to meet the current and ever-increasing demand of modern slavery incidents. The purpose of this role is to develop the necessary skills required to conduct investigations allocated within the MSHTU and bring those skills back to District upon successful completion of the secondment.

Police and Crime Commissioner Activity

2a.43 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), as the elected strategic leaders for the local delivery of policing and community safety, are ideally placed to initiate and coordinate action to tackle modern slavery and exploitation. In January 2016, the PCC for West Yorkshire and national lead for modern slavery, Mark Burns-Williamson OBE, launched the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN). The network brings together all PCCs across England and Wales with strategic leaders from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Home Office and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to discuss how to improve working together and champion efforts that focus on modern slavery and other associated areas of vulnerability and serious and organised crime.

2a.44 The NATMSN has continued to strengthen its operation and increased engagement with PCCs. The network provides regular communications and briefings to PCCs on a wide range of activities, topics and issues and each network event has also provided PCCs with more in-depth information on emerging issues and key themes as well as opportunities for discussion and collaboration.

2a.45 Through the PCC network, the Modern Slavery Police Transformation Programme (MSPTP) has provided a small grants scheme to support PCCs to tackle modern slavery locally and deliver engagement and awareness raising activities which focussed on vulnerable groups or businesses. A second round of PCC workshops has been delivered during this year based on the success and feedback provided from those workshops held in 2018/2019, to support the roll out of the PCC Modern Slavery Toolkit.

2a.46 Two national partnership events were held during the year which promoted best practice in partnership work to prevent the exploitation of children and the support provided to victims to prevent re-trafficking.

Tackling non-compliance and serious labour exploitation, including modern slavery

2a.47 Over the last year, the UK Government has continued to take steps to strengthen its response to labour market enforcement to better

understand and identify non-compliance and take action against unscrupulous employers to tackle serious labour market exploitation. This has included:

- Matthew Taylor, the interim Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME), publishing his annual report following a comprehensive review of the performance of the of the three enforcement bodies; the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, the GLAA and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs – National Minimum Wage Team against the 2018/19 annual strategy. [The report](#) was published in July 2020.
- Increased funding for all three enforcement bodies beyond the levels recommended in the DLME's Labour Market Enforcement Strategy 2019/20. The UK Government spends £33 million a year on state enforcement of employment rights.
- The three enforcement bodies have continued to utilise labour market enforcement undertakings and orders to take action when labour market offences have been committed deliberately or recklessly, with over 51 undertakings issued by the bodies and 5 Orders granted by the Courts since March 2018.
- Consulted on the creation of a Single Enforcement Body and committed to

a establish a body to crack down on employers abusing employment law.

2a.48 Matthew Taylor was appointed to the role of interim DLME for a 12-month period in August 2019 and started in post in September 2019. His tenure was extended in July 2020 for an extra six months.

2a.49 In 2019/20 the GLAA has continued to embed the use of its powers under Section 114B of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to investigate serious cases of labour exploitation. It continues to see an increase from 2018/19 in its investigative workload, with a 26% increase in GLAA-led investigations, working in partnership with other enforcement bodies, in 47% of the investigations it undertakes.

2a.50 In 2019/20, the GLAA conducted 268 enforcement operations using its powers under PACE across a range of sectors, including construction, agriculture, hand car washes, and hospitality. As a result, the GLAA arrested 29¹¹ people for suspected labour market offences. As a First Responder, the GLAA also referred 30 potential victims of modern slavery to the NRM and recovered £166,605.30 cash for workers.

¹¹ Please note that 13 of the arrests were actually made by partner agencies, but supported by the GLAA.

Case Study: Operation TACIT

As a result of the serious allegations of labour exploitation, unsafe working conditions and illegal employer practices in the textiles industry in Leicester, in July 2020, a multi-agency taskforce led by the GLAA was set up.

The Taskforce based in Leicester brings together the enforcement bodies to continue work to secure robust intelligence to enable appropriate enforcement activity. Membership includes: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs - National Minimum Wage Team; Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate; Leicestershire Police; National Crime Agency; Health and Safety Executive, Leicester City Council; Department for Work and Pensions; Public Health England, Leicester Fire and Rescue Service and Immigration Enforcement.

The Taskforce has clear operational and strategic deliverables which include coordinating a multi-agency approach to enforcement activity, the gathering and sharing of intelligence and wider community engagement to help raise awareness and encourage workers to come forward and report any concerns.

Asset Recovery

2a.51 Asset seizure is an important element of the UK's response to modern slavery, as the crime of modern slavery is often motivated by financial profit.

2a.52 Annex A in the [Asset Recovery Statistical Bulletin](#) sets out data extracted from the Joint Asset Recovery Database (JARD)¹², showing the value of the cash seizure and criminal confiscation orders relating to cases involving modern slavery in England and Wales in each of the last five calendar years.

Scotland

2a.53 In February 2020, Confiscation Orders were imposed on two people who were convicted of offences in terms of the Human Trafficking & Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 in January 2018. The Orders totalled £104,209, £13,533 of which will be paid to the victims of the offences as compensation.

Northern Ireland

2a.54 In 2019/20, a Proceeds of Crime Act hearing agreed to a Forfeiture Order of £6,500 of monies linked to an Organised Crime Group which has successfully been recovered as criminal property. Over the same period, £200 was seized from a suspect under PACE and then given to the charity who supported the suspect while on Court Bail.

¹² JARD is a live database which is continually updated. As such, the data provided may vary from reports run on earlier dates.

PREVENT

2b.01 Prevent activity aims to stop people from committing modern slavery crimes or becoming victims of modern slavery in the first place. It also focuses on preventing re-offending and re-victimisation.

Building the evidence base

2b.02 The UK Government is committed to improving our understanding of this complex and hidden crime and will continue to work to strengthen the evidence base of the nature and scale of modern slavery in the UK.

2b.03 In July 2019, the UK Government announced it would invest £10 million to establish a new Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre, which opened in autumn 2019. The Centre is now fully operational and is starting to commission new research to enhance the evidence base to inform our policy and operational response and improve understanding. Research calls to date have focussed on the support for victims and survivors of modern slavery, and on the impact of COVID-19 on modern slavery.

2b.04 In March 2020, the Home Office partnered with the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham to trial an innovative pilot 'buddying' scheme which will pair policy officials and academics working in the anti-slavery sector to strengthen collaboration on evidence-based policy development.

2b.05 Following the tragic incident on 23 October 2019, where 39 Vietnamese nationals were found dead in a lorry container in Essex having arrived on a ferry from Belgium, the Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group organised a workshop predicated on a similar incident to inform and exercise partners. Over 150 delegates attended from a wide range of emergency services, including health, local authority, resilience and military professionals, together with voluntary organisations, Welsh and UK Government officials. A report on the notable practice and lessons identified was produced and circulated.

2b.06 The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Department of Justice (DoJ), along with other stakeholders to the Santa Marta Group

research project, are contributing to an all-island initiative to provide the best data possible on the scale, scope, extent and nature of human trafficking and exploitation on the island of Ireland. A preliminary report on this research project is due to be shared before the end of 2020 with the Justice Minister and PSNI, prior to publication.

2b.07 The Santa Marta Group, endorsed and supported by Pope Francis, is an alliance of International Police Chiefs and Church Bishops from around the world working together with civil society to eradicate modern slavery.

Raising Awareness of Modern Slavery

England & Wales

2b.08 Raising public awareness of modern slavery helps to increase resilience against these crimes and reduce public tolerance of exploitative behaviour. The UK Government works with a wide range of partners to raise awareness of modern slavery. Over the past year, this activity has included:

- The NCA, in collaboration with the NPCC Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime Unit, hosted a conference which brought together third sector stakeholders to share the law enforcement perspective on the current threat picture in the UK.
- The NCA partnered with the accountancy and legal sectors to develop a set of 'red-flag indicators' to help identify signs of modern slavery through client contact and business processes. The new modern slavery glossary code has allowed reporters to categorise their suspicions to enable a more effective law enforcement response.
- Joint work between the NCA and the NHS Safeguarding Network to standardise safeguarding practices and improve guidance and training. This led to an increase in staff confidence, particularly in relation to interactions with potential victims of sexual exploitation and has led to improved identification of victims and reporting to appropriate first responders.
- The GLAA continued to develop business engagement activity to prevent exploitation and has partnered with the

Shiva Foundation to create the Hospitality Protocol, building on existing collaboration with the retail, construction, and textiles industries. The launch of the Protocol was postponed due to COVID-19.

- In partnership with the Clewer Initiative (Church of England) the GLAA has also supported the development and launch of the Farm Work Welfare app - to tackle rural labour exploitation and modern slavery and has supported a pilot project with Boston College to improve students' understanding of labour exploitation and the GLAA's work.
- The Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group is working closely with the Welsh Government Homeless Action Group to raise awareness and prevent homeless people becoming vulnerable and exploited. The Homeless Action Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of Crisis and funded by the Welsh Government.

Scotland

2b.09 Police Scotland engaged closely with media organisations following on from the successful prosecutions for Operation Synapsis, where four members of a crime group were prosecuted for offences relating to the trafficking of 14 female victims. The prosecutions generated significant media interest which highlighted the issue of human trafficking and exploitation.

2b.10 The Scottish Government commissioned a fourth annual public awareness study in early 2020 to build on evidence from previous years on whether awareness is improving and what aspects continue to prove challenging. The survey sets out a range of questions relating to public perceptions of what human trafficking is, whether it takes place in Scotland and what people would do if they had a concern.

2b.11 As part of their funding agreement with the Scottish Government, Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA), through their training officer, provided bespoke awareness raising sessions for a diverse range of frontline services. The full day multi-agency sessions were designed and delivered in partnership with the Scottish Guardianship Service and JustRight Scotland. The training has focused on what frontline workers need to know and includes specific

sections on trafficking and exploitation indicators, the NRM, a focus on the gendered nature of exploitation, the impact on survivors, how services can best respond and reinforced the importance of taking a trauma informed approach. Approximately 750 professionals have attended awareness raising sessions.

Northern Ireland

2b.12 Throughout 2019/20 the Department of Justice (DoJ) delivered a range of awareness sessions in partnership with NGO specialist groups and PSNI colleagues at universities, with procurement practitioners, airport staff, Seafarers Mission, ethnic minority representative groups, medical and social work students. The DoJ worked with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) who produced and published comprehensive guidance on trafficking and slavery for council workers and Police and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs).

Training and Tools for Frontline Staff

England & Wales

2b.13 The UK Government's modern slavery campaign, 'Hidden in Plain Sight' targeted frontline professionals in banks, job centres and healthcare settings to spot the signs of and increase reporting of modern slavery. The campaign increased awareness and understanding amongst the target audience, as well as police, local government and social workers. Since launch, the campaign has led to over 1,000 referrals to the Modern Slavery Helpline through calls and online referrals on the website, potentially helping to save more than 400 victims of modern slavery.

2b.14 Border Force has worked with port operators to install modern slavery material in public areas of UK ports to raise awareness of the crime which can now be seen at ports of arrival. This has been a ministerial and IASC priority. Information stickers displaying the MS Helpline number can also be seen at Border Force Primary Control Point (PCP) desks.

2b.15 The UK Government designed a set of operational principles for tackling modern slavery to ensure a consistent approach to activity where

potential victims of modern slavery may be identified. The principles will be used by operational staff, reflecting best practice and legal obligations.

Scotland

2b.16 On Anti-Slavery Day 2019, the Convention Of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) published [guidance for frontline local authority staff and managers](#) on how to deal with human trafficking and exploitation in their local authority area. The guidance seeks to support local authorities in developing good practice to identify, refer and support victims and to disrupt and deter criminal activities. Information for staff on spotting the signs of trafficking through to strategic planning and opportunities for partnership working is also included.

2b.17 The Scottish Government worked in partnership with NHS Health Scotland to develop [guidance to support healthcare workers](#) in recognising and responding appropriately to victims of human trafficking and exploitation. This guidance was also published to coincide with Anti-Slavery Day 2019 and sets out how to spot the signs of trafficking, the steps to take and procedures to follow if concerns are present, how to access further support and information on the NRM process.

Northern Ireland

2b.18 The Department of Justice conducted a training needs assessment across the region to determine the knowledge gaps across the cohorts of frontline professionals working for Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care sector. Social work leads then developed an internal pathway guidance document for roll out across the five Trusts in Northern Ireland.

2b.19 Slavery and Trafficking Risk and Prevention Orders

2b.20 The legislation in place across the UK includes civil preventative orders that enable courts to place tailored restrictions on the activities of individuals convicted of, or considered to be at risk of committing, modern slavery offences. These civil orders are an important tool to prevent slavery-related harm before it occurs and to prevent re-offending.

2b.21 In England and Wales, between July 2015 (when the Modern Slavery Act came into force) and March 2020, 147 Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders and 60 Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders have been issued¹³. In 2019-20, 12 Interim Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders were issued.

Scotland

2b.22 Police Scotland have committed to encouraging investigating officers to consider all safety measures available to them and make an application to the relevant court for Trafficking and Exploitation Risk and Prevention Orders (TERO / TEPO) where the circumstances allow.

2b.23 Police Scotland have, in conjunction with the Scottish Government and the COPFS, developed guidance and an online process which officers can utilise to make TERO and TEPO applications. This will improve consistency and has increased the number of applications being considered.

2b.24 Since the implementation of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015, eight TEPOs have been imposed on conviction as part of sentences for those convicted of human trafficking crimes. These orders place limitations on an offender for at least 5 years to prevent further offending and protect potential victims. A number of TEROs are also currently being considered for ongoing enquiries.

Northern Ireland

2b.25 In Northern Ireland, Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) are considered for every eligible person in a PSNI modern slavery investigation, between 2017 and 2020, 2 STPOs have been issued. The Department of Justice will, through the 2021/22 Modern Slavery Strategy, signal the intention to engage with key stakeholders to consider the potential benefits and implications of introducing Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders in Northern Ireland based on evidence and experience from other jurisdictions.

¹³ Sourced from HMCTS management information. Data are taken from a live management information system and can change over time. Figures include interim Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders and interim Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders.

PROTECT

2c.01 Protect activity aims to improve the resilience of the UK and the wider global economy to modern slavery. This means driving action to eliminate modern slavery from communities and supply chains, including working with both the public and private sector to increase vigilance and safeguard workers.

Transparency in Supply Chains consultation

2c.02 The transparency requirements introduced in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 saw the UK the first country in the world to require businesses to report annually on the steps they take to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. The legislation has been described as a game changer and has driven drove business awareness and sparked an international trend for transparency measures. The Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act identified opportunities to strengthen the approach and following a Home Office led consultation in 2019 the Government has committed to an ambitious package of measures to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the legislation. In its consultation response, published on 22nd September, the Government announced that it will:

- Mandate specific reporting topics to improve the quality of reporting, increase transparency, facilitate improved comparison of statements and enhance scrutiny of how companies are improving year on year. If an organisation has taken no steps within one or more of those of these areas, they will be required to state this clearly.
- Introduce a single reporting deadline and require organisations to publish their statement on the new Government digital service to increase compliance and transparency.
- Extend the reporting requirement to public bodies with a budget of £36 million or more, to leverage public spending and accelerate progress towards identifying modern slavery risks in public sector supply chains.

- Develop enforcement options in line with the ongoing development of the Single Enforcement Body for Employment rights (led by BEIS) and issue a further update in due course.

2c.03 Sections 1 and 2 of the [consultation response](#) on changes to the reporting requirements for commercial organisations, are on behalf of England, Scotland and Wales. Section 3 of this consultation response, on extending the reporting requirement to the public sector, is on behalf of England and Wales. Scotland will consult separately on these proposals in due course. Northern Ireland will engage and consult with affected Northern Irish commercial and public sector organisations on the proposals.

Government modern slavery statement reporting service

2c.04 To increase transparency and ensure organisations' modern slavery statements are more accessible, the Home Office is developing a Government digital reporting service to make modern slavery statements available in one place. As well as enabling the Government to more effectively monitor compliance, the new service will increase accountability by making it easier for investors, civil society and consumers to scrutinise action and analyse trends in progress across sectors and over time. User feedback during testing has been very positive and this service will launch in public beta in early 2021.

2c.05 An audit of compliance, undertaken by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre on behalf of the Home Office, checked if organisations identified in scope of section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 had published a modern slavery statement and found that 83% of organisations had either published a modern slavery statement (58%) or policy (4%), or were identified as likely to be covered by a group statement (21%). A further 8% of organisations did not have a website. The audit findings indicated that the Home Office's previous letter writing campaigns to businesses had helped to increase compliance, but it also highlighted the challenges in monitoring compliance. The planned changes to the legislation and the creation of a new digital reporting service will address these issues and the Home Office will continue its work

to improve compliance in line with the launch of the digital reporting service planned for early 2021.

UK Government Modern Slavery Statement

2c.06 On 26 March 2020 the UK Government published the world's first Government Modern Slavery Statement.¹⁴ The Prime Minister's foreword was a clear statement of the UK's ambition in this space, and highlighted the UK's commitment to continuing its global leadership:

2c.07 'It's not enough for government and businesses to simply say they don't tolerate modern slavery. As we take stock of both the challenges faced and achievements made, we must match our words with actions.'

2c.08 The statement outlined the steps that Government has taken so far to drive responsible practices and prevent risks, including work to build cross-Government capacity and engage over 400 suppliers. It also set goals for ministerial departments to work towards as they prepare to publish their own annual modern slavery statements from 2021 onwards. The Government will also publish a progress update summarising how departments have met these goals in late 2021.

Scotland

2c.09 The Scottish Government continues to raise awareness of modern slavery risks in public procurement, encouraging public sector buyers to take a relevant and proportionate approach in their procurements.

2c.10 A [Scottish Procurement Policy Note](#) was published in February on reducing the risk of human trafficking and exploitation in the performance of public contracts. The Scottish Government also launched a new online platform in June providing easier access to the [National Sustainable Procurement Tools](#). The [guidance](#) for practical application of sustainable procurement is also on the platform enabling public sector buyers to more easily access and reference information on how to tackle risks/opportunities at various stages of the procurement process.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-modern-slavery-statement>

Working with business

2c.11 The UK Government has continued to work closely with businesses to develop guidance, share expertise, explore approaches to enhance transparency and promote responsible practices. The UK Government engaged with many businesses, to discuss risks in public procurement, as it prepared to publish its own modern slavery statement for the first time in 2020. The Business Against Slavery Forum, a partnership between Government and business, was scheduled to host a conference in March for the business community to consider its collective response to modern slavery, share learning and discuss shared challenges but due to COVID-19 and the increased pressures on businesses during this period this was postponed. We are considering taking this forward virtually at a later date and looking at how the Forum can support business' reporting on modern slavery in the context of COVID-19.

Case study: Partnership approaches

BT and Co-op are members of the Business Against Slavery Forum, a partnership between Government and business (see paragraph 2c.11).

BT believes that technology has the potential to play a greater role in preventing modern slavery, and in 2018 co-founded Tech Against Trafficking, a coalition of technology companies and global anti-trafficking experts. Together with partners, the coalition has published an interactive map of over 300 potential tech solutions.

One solution that received support this year was the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC), run by the UN's International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which provides online access to a global anonymised dataset on human trafficking cases and analyses trends. The dataset covers over 108,000 individual cases involving 175 nationalities exploited in 164 countries. To support this initiative, Tech Against Trafficking have improved the dataset analysis capability to better protect the privacy of victims and provided guidance to IOM on developing CTDC further.

Co-op, a fellow member of the forum, developed Bright Future in 2017 to offer employment opportunities to survivors of modern slavery. Developed in partnership City Hearts, a charity dedicated to support survivors of modern slavery, Bright Future offers survivors four-week paid work placements at participating organizations, followed by a guaranteed job interview for a permanent position within the organization. To date, Bright Future has 23 business partners and 37 referral partners and has successfully placed 63 survivors into permanent employment.

To secure its long-term future, Bright Future became an independent co-operative enterprise in May 2020. Going forwards, Bright Future is seeking to invite survivors who participated in the programme to join its Board to help shape its future.

Modern Slavery at the Border

Case Study: Northern Ireland – multi-agency collaboration at the Border

In February 2020, the PSNI's Modern Slavery Unit and An Garda Síochána's Human Trafficking Investigation and Co-ordination Unit carried out National Days of Action in the Border area as part of the Joint Cross Border Task Force. The Days of Action were organised and co-ordinated with a view of conducting visits to several car washes to look for signs of labour exploitation by engaging with persons working at the premises in an effort to safeguard their welfare and detect any signs of exploitation. A multi-agency approach was adopted, and assistance was provided by personnel from the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), Revenue Commissioners and the Department of Social Protection. The PSNI were assisted by the Department of Communities, N-Ireland Water and NIE, Immigration and HSENI.

Since late March 2020, Adult Service Website Adverts (ASW) have reduced by approximately one third in comparison to pre COVID-19 numbers. The ASW are encouraging the use of web cams and phone calls rather than face to face contact with clients and escorts. Since August 2020, the numbers of adverts have increased.

Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC)

Dame Sara Thornton took up the role of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner on 1 May 2019. The Commissioner has a UK-wide remit to encourage good practice in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of slavery and human trafficking offences and the identification of victims. The Commissioner published her Strategic Plan 2019-2021 in October 2019, which set out four priority areas.

Priority 1: Improving victim care and support

The Commissioner met many victims and survivors of modern slavery across the UK, to listen to their views on what is needed to support their longer-term recovery. The Commissioner wrote to the Minister for Vulnerability to encourage a pilot permitting victims in the NRM access to paid work. The Commissioner hosted a roundtable with Public Health England to develop thinking on a public health approach to modern slavery. A joint review of what works in existing multi-agency decision making models and the implications for child victims of trafficking was written with ECPAT-UK. With the onset of COVID-19, the Commissioner wrote to the Home Office to raise her concerns about the impact of the pandemic on victim support, wrote an open letter to the sector to set out information on financial subsistence within the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract, and held two virtual roundtables with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, NGOs and trade unions to discuss labour exploitation concerns.

Priority 2: Supporting law enforcement and prosecution

The Commissioner wrote to chief constables in England and Wales on force prosecution rates and the use of ancillary orders. A call for evidence on the use of the Section 45 Statutory Defence informed a series of roundtables and a review. This activity considered child protection concerns arising from the call for evidence. The Commissioner gained assurance from the College of Policing that modern slavery training would be rolled out across forces in England and Wales. The Commissioner has been monitoring the level of police referrals to the CPS and whether this is matched by CPS charging decisions. The Commissioner has promoted effective national coordination through liaison with the Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit, National Crime Agency, and National County Lines Coordination Centre; and has engaged with the International Crime Coordination Centre to understand post-Brexit planning for international law enforcement.

Priority 3: Focusing on prevention

The Commissioner met with retailers and suppliers impacted by Operation Fort, the UK's largest modern slavery case to date, to understand their risks and challenges in detecting and preventing exploitation in business supply chains. A review, including a business Maturity Framework, was launched at a virtual event with business leaders, government, and civil society. The Commissioner has built understanding of the business response to trafficking in supply chain risks, tracking the quality of modern slavery statements and is working to progress consideration of this issue within public procurement and policy areas. The Commissioner has developed the relationship with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority over the past year and is supportive of their level of operational activity despite limited resources. The Commissioner commissioned a research and awareness-raising project by financial crime consultancy Themis and the TRIBE Freedom Foundation to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in financial services.

Priority 4: Getting value from research and innovation

Support for the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (MSPEC) continues with the Commissioner sitting on the Centre's Advisory Group. The Commissioner hosted a researcher from the UKRI's Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS) who produced a review on the impact of survivor support research on policy. The review was launched at events with parliamentarians, civil servants, and researchers. The Commissioner continues to collaborate across academic networks to encourage greater data sharing and research that improves the evidence on what works to inform the modern slavery response.

VICTIM IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT

2d.01 Victim identification and support activity is focused on reducing the harm caused to victims of modern slavery as a result of their exploitation. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the process by which the UK identifies and supports potential victims of modern slavery. To date, the NRM has lifted thousands of modern slavery victims out of dangerous situations of exploitation and supported them to begin to rebuild their lives.

National Referral Mechanism (NRM) data

2d.02 The number of NRM referrals has increased year-on-year since its inception in 2009, which is likely to be due to greater awareness of the NRM process, though higher incidence of modern slavery cannot be ruled out.

2d.03 In 2019, 10,627 potential victims were referred to the NRM, a 52% increase from the 6,986 referrals in 2018. However, the second quarter of 2020 saw the second successive quarter-on-quarter decrease (-23%) in NRM referrals which is understood to be influenced by the effects of restrictions implemented in the UK as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2d.04 Of the potential victims referred in 2019, 32% (3,391) were female, 68% (7,224) were male, one individual was transgender and the gender of 11 potential victims was unknown (<1%). Males have slightly increased as a proportion of all NRM referrals compared to 2018.

2d.05 Over half (5,866) of the referrals were for those potentially exploited as adults, with 43% (4,550) referred for potential exploitation as children. These proportions are similar to 2018 figures.

2d.06 In 2019, 125 different nationalities of potential victims were referred to the NRM, compared to 128 in 2018. Overall, the top 5 most commonly referred nationalities were UK, Albanian, Vietnamese, Chinese and Indian nationals. Since 2018, Indian nationals have replaced Romanian nationals in the top 5.

2d.07 For more detailed breakdowns see the published 2019 annual and the 2020 quarterly

publications. [NRM statistics publication before quarter 2 2019](#) were published by the NCA and can be found on the [NCA website](#).

Duty to Notify

2d.08 As specified in section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, public authorities in England and Wales have a statutory duty to notify the Home Office when they come across potential victims of modern slavery. This duty is discharged by either referring a child or consenting adult potential victim into the NRM, or by notifying the Home Office if an adult victim does not consent to enter the NRM.

2d.09 In 2019, 2,274 potential adult victims of modern slavery were referred via the DtN process in England and Wales, a 34% increase from 1,699 in 2018. Just over half (54%; 1,225) were male and 46% (1,038) were female (the gender of the remainder was unknown), which is similar to 2018.

2d.10 The majority of potential victims reported via the duty to notify in 2019 were from non-EEA countries (61%; 1,387), whereas 29% (659) came from EEA countries and 8% (176) from the UK.

2d.11 Labour exploitation was most commonly reported (36%; 828) followed by sexual exploitation (22%; 505).

2d.12 Just over a third (790) were referred by UK Visas and Immigration, whilst 12% (275) were referred by Border Force.

Scotland

2d.13 Following the conclusion of the Duty to Notify consultation in Scotland, a report providing analysis of responses was published on 30 April. Overall, the majority of responses expressed support for Scottish Government proposals. Due to the fast-moving response to COVID-19 and its impact on public services, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice has agreed to delay legislative implementation of the duty in Scotland. It is unlikely to come into force before 1 April 2021 at the earliest.

Northern Ireland

2d.14 Duty to notify provisions have not been implemented in Northern Ireland, initially due to the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive. On 16 January 2020 the Northern Ireland Assembly was restored, and Naomi Long was appointed as Justice Minister. Work will begin in the next financial year to scope out the best means of taking forward the Duty to Notify provisions.

Modern Slavery Strategy and Implementation Group (MSSIG)

The MSSIG supports implementation of the UK Government's modern slavery agenda through collaboration and engagement between the Government, Devolved Administrations, NGOs and businesses. The MSSIG structure and meetings provide an opportunity for the Home Office and other government departments to engage with key stakeholders and to hear directly about their priorities and challenges. The group consists of six thematic MSSIG groups covering different strands of the modern slavery strategy, including Law Enforcement, Prevent, Protect, Prepare, International, and Children. Each thematic group decides its own priorities and work plan in conjunction with the Home Office. Chairs from each group feed into a Core Group which meets quarterly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, MSSIG groups continued to meet virtually.

Improving the identification of victims of modern slavery

2d.15 Building on the success of recent reforms to the NRM, the Home Office recently established the NRM Transformation Programme. Through this work, the Government will address the challenges that the current NRM system faces to deliver a world-class system that effectively identifies and delivers needs-based support for victims of modern slavery. The NRM Transformation Programme will ensure that:

- victims are given certainty about their status as swiftly as possible;
- victims are safeguarded and supported based on their individual recovery needs, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable and making good use of existing access to mainstream services;
- victims are empowered to report their exploitation to law enforcement and to take an active role in the prosecution of modern slavery offences;
- victims are supported to begin to rebuild their lives with increased resilience against future exploitation; and
- public confidence is upheld by minimising misuse by those seeking to take advantage of the system.

2d.16 We are committed to embedding the survivors' voice in future policy. We are undertaking user research that has engaged with survivors directly, to better understand their experiences, their recovery needs and their NRM journeys. This research will help us build a strong evidence base to inform future policy changes,

placing survivors at the core of policy development.

2d.17 On 29 April 2019, the Home Office launched the new Single Competent Authority (SCA) to run the NRM. The SCA is responsible for the identification of modern slavery victims across the UK and for the management of victim support in England and Wales through the VCC. The SCA was created as part of a wider programme of reform to the NRM, which also included improvements to the identification process and the support provision for victims.

2d.18 Moving into a single, expert case-working unit has allowed a more streamlined approach to the way in which decisions are made, enabling high quality, consistent and timely decisions for potential victims of trafficking of all nationalities and ensuring good collaboration across the various organisations which feed in to the NRM process.

The SCA Digital System

The launch of the SCA in April 2019 called for new ways of collaborative working and so, in January 2020, the unit welcomed a new digital casework management system, built exclusively to assist with considering NRM decisions. The system centralises all aspects of a potential victim's case, from the initial referral to the final conclusive grounds decision, and encompasses several important functions including task management, document production, and the ability to centrally record information. The system also provides updates of outstanding tasks as well as notifying caseworkers of any changes made to potential victims' records. The introduction of the single digital system has streamlined case working functions and enhanced workflow. Furthermore, it has allowed teams across the unit to work collaboratively to ensure all aspects of the decision-making process are completed in a timely manner and to a high standard, whilst ensuring that the survivor remains at the heart of the decision-making process.

2d.19 The Home Office has released an online [modern slavery training module](#) for First Responders, which was developed with Civil Service Learning and in consultation with key First Responder representatives and the office of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. The aim of the training is to provide all First Responders with a consistent level of knowledge to enable them to effectively identify and refer, where appropriate, potential victims of modern slavery to the NRM. The Home Office is grateful MSOIC for hosting the training on their website, which received over 4,000 visits in the first two months it went live. Feedback from the online training will help the Home Office to keep the training needs of First Responders under review and better ensure that they are well equipped to discharge their duties in identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery to the NRM.

2d.20 Through its Anti-Slavery Training Programmes, the Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group continues to deliver a wide range of courses to front line professionals and practitioners, in addition to delivering public awareness campaigns across Wales. This includes specialist 'Hydra-Centre' based joint training for Law Enforcement Senior Investigating Officers, Crown Prosecutors and Crown Advocates. Additionally, to support adult victims of modern slavery, the Group has created the Wales Modern Slavery Safeguarding Pathway, which incorporates the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). Initially the MARAC Co-ordinator was funded from assets confiscated under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, but the post is now main-streamed and funded jointly by the Welsh Police Forces.

2d.21 In Northern Ireland, under the Department for Justice's (DoJ) multi-agency strategy, a strategic approach to training and awareness for statutory bodies on how to identify victims is being delivered. This includes delivery of training to health and social care providers who are likely to encounter potential victims of modern slavery accessing health and social care, including children and young adults. Improving support for adult victims of modern slavery.

Multi-Agency Assurance Panels

In April 2019, independent Multi-Agency Assurance Panels (MAAPs) were introduced to help ensure robust and consistent decision-making processes are undertaken within the NRM, as well as to improve victim and stakeholder confidence in NRM decisions.

MAAPs are comprised of an independent, publicly appointed chair and at least two representatives from police/law enforcement, local authorities and NGOs with appropriate background or relevant interest in modern slavery issues and in protecting vulnerable individuals. The panels review all negative conclusive grounds decisions for cases referred to the SCA, adding a further level of scrutiny into the decision-making process. The introduction of MAAPs means that such decisions are always considered by three separate individuals or groups (the SCA decision maker, the SCA "second pair of eyes", and the MAAP). Although MAAPs cannot overturn negative conclusive grounds decisions, they can ask the SCA to review a case further before it is issued.

An evaluation of the MAAPs is being conducted to assess their impact on the quality of NRM decision-making and stakeholder confidence in the decision-making process, along with the perceived credibility, transparency, and independence of the MAAPs themselves. Home Office analysts are working with Ipsos Mori to conduct the evaluation. The MAAP evaluation process commenced in Summer 2020, with the aim of publishing in early 2021.

The ten publicly appointed MAAP Chairs have been extended in post by 18 months.

2d.22 In March 2020, the Government published Statutory Guidance under Section 49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The guidance provides a clear framework of the support for some of the most vulnerable people in our society, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of frontline staff and local stakeholders, and setting out the support victims are entitled to and how this is accessed. Modern slavery remains a rapidly evolving area and it is important that the guidance is continually updated to ensure it is reflective of current policy and practice, and thus remains useful for decision makers, First Responders, support providers and survivors. A Statutory Guidance Reference Group, chaired by the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit, has therefore been established to inform these updates. The Reference Group is formed of permanent members including other government departments, police, the Local Government Association, the office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, support providers, and representatives drawn from MSSIG. Other stakeholders will be invited on an ad hoc basis where helpful for certain topics of discussion.

2d.23 In September 2019, the Home Office implemented the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) to ensure that confirmed victims of modern slavery get the assistance they need for any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, through the Government-funded VCC or other appropriate services. The RNA informs a tailored victim move-on plan with the aim of establishing longer-term stability by helping victims to transition out of VCC support and back into a community.

2d.24 The Home Office, together with CQC, have now finalised an inspection regime for safehouses and outreach support to ensure all victims are receiving appropriate support in the VCC. We are now working together to embed and launch this inspection regime ahead of a move to the MSVCC.

2d.25 As part of a financial support review, from the 1 July 2020 the Government introduced the first set of changes (found from page 139 of the [Modern Slavery Act 2015: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales](#), to the financial support available for potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery through the VCC, including increasing the weekly payment to those in

outreach support, increasing the weekly payment for child dependents and introducing new weekly payments for pregnant women and young children.

2d.26 To ensure that all potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery have access to the support they need, the Home Office has reviewed the current financial support policy, and work is underway to implement a new policy focused on an individual's recovery needs.

2d.27 The Home Office also worked with six local authorities to develop and disseminate best practice for victims in the VCC to transition into communities and access local services. The Local Authority Pathway Pilots concluded in March 2020.

Improving support for child victims of modern slavery

2d.28 To inform the continued roll-out of the ICTG service, this year, a further assessment of the service has been completed by Ipsos MORI in partnership with the Home Office. The assessment, due for publication shortly, focuses on the role of the ICTG Regional Practice Coordinator (RPC). While children without a figure of parental responsibility in the UK will receive direct support through an ICTG Direct Workers, the ICTG RPC role supports children who do have a figure of parental responsibility in the UK. The RPCs take on a more strategic role working with the professionals supporting the child, encouraging them to take a coordinated and multi-agency approach.

2d.29 As part of the NRM Transformation Programme, the Home Office is continuing the national roll-out of the ICTG service. The next phase of roll-out will target the areas with the highest level of need, building on the success and lessons learned from the ICTG Early Adopter Sites, which cover one third of local authorities in England and Wales.

2d.30 We are also exploring whether child victims would be better supported if local authorities were empowered to take decisions regarding whether children are victims of modern slavery. Following engagement with local authorities and stakeholders in the child sector, we are now planning to pilot this approach in a number of

local authorities across the UK. These pilots will test different models within local authorities of multi-agency decision making, which draw on existing safeguarding structures, and appropriate multi-agency partners.

2d.31 Given the increase in county lines activity, the Home Office has significantly increased investment in specialist support for county lines victims this year. With investment of up to £860,000, the St Giles Trust will be delivering one-to-one support in London, Merseyside and the West Midlands (the three largest county lines exporting areas), which will help vulnerable children and young people who are criminally exploited by county lines gangs to leave the exploitative environment. Furthermore, the Home Office continues to fund Young People's Advocates (YPAs) in London, Manchester and the West Midlands to support young women and girls, especially if they have been victims of, or are at risk of, sexual violence by gangs, including county lines. The UK Government has also continued funding to the Missing People's SafeCall service, a specialist 24/7 helpline providing advice and support to children, young people and their parents/carers who are concerned about county lines, criminal exploitation, and gangs.

Support for Victims

2d.32 Across the UK, victims of modern slavery are provided with specialist support and advocacy to assist them in rebuilding their lives and reintegrating into local communities following exploitation. While the NRM decision-making is delivered by a central mechanism, victim support is devolved, with different arrangements in place in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Support for Adult Victims - England and Wales

2d.33 Following an open procurement exercise, the Home Office announced, on 29 June 2020, that the new Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) had been awarded to The Salvation Army. This five-year contract will provide support to adult victims of modern slavery and their dependents in England and Wales.

2d.34 Potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery will be able to access more flexible support under this improved service. As part of the NRM, the new MSVCC will ensure the safeguarding and protection of victims and provide tailored support for individual recovery needs, lifting victims out of situations of exploitation and putting them in a position where they can begin to rebuild their lives with increased resilience against future exploitation. As with the existing contract, all victims' needs will be individually determined on entry to the service, continually re-assessed throughout and considered again when they are preparing to leave. The new contract will allow for more specialised services to meet those needs, including varied accommodation, improved support for those with complex requirements, and the introduction of a new service, Places of Safety, which will provide potential victims with initial support for three working days after rescue from immediate exploitation to consider if they wish to be referred into the NRM. The new contract will go live following a period of transition from the current service.

2d.35 In 2019, there were 915 individuals supported in safehouse accommodation and 4,247 in outreach support¹⁵, with 1,030 individuals exiting the VCC.

2d.36 In September 2019, the Home Office introduced the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) to identify and support the victim's individual recovery needs. As of 30 June 2020, 1,132 RNAs had been completed. The RNA process has been rolled-out incrementally over this time in a phased approach to keep implementation under close review. Throughout this period, the Home Office worked with key stakeholders to monitor RNA roll-out and gather feedback to improve operational processes and clarify the policy. This feedback has informed updates to version 2 of the [RNA guidance](#), published on 21 August 2020¹⁶, as well as a new streamlined version of the RNA form to improve usability.

2d.37 The RNA process, as the first stage of introducing a more needs-based approach to

¹⁵ The support provided is only on last placement in the VCC. If an individual moved between accommodation and outreach, only the most recent support is to be shown.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovery-needs-assessment-rna-process-guidance>

delivering victim support, has provided a more tailored support package according to the individual victim's specific recovery needs. As of 30 June 2020, 17% of RNAs have requested all three pillars of support (accommodation, financial support, and support worker contact) from the VCC. The most commonly requested support pillar is support worker contact: 75% of RNAs requested support worker contact, 52% requested financial support, and 6% requested accommodation. The average length of support requested for ongoing support is 57 days and of the 1,132 completed RNAs, the Home Office fully agreed with recommendations set out in 53%, partially agreed with 38%, and did not agree with 8%.

Support for Adult Victims – Scotland

2d.38 The statutory period of support for adult victims in Scotland came into force on 1 April 2018 with the minimum period of support doubling to 90 days. At the same time, support for victims of the offence under Section 4 of the Act (slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour) was also placed on a statutory footing. These changes were agreed unanimously in Parliament and were welcomed by victim support organisations and the former Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

2d.39 The Scottish Government continues to provide funding to Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA), which specifically supports female victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, and Migrant Help which supports all other adult trafficking victims across Scotland. Reflecting the considerable rise in the number of individuals entering the NRM, funding has been significantly increased for both organisations in financial year 2020/21. Information on the number of potential victims of trafficking supported by TARA and Migrant Help between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 can be found at Section 5 of the [Trafficking and Exploitation Third Annual Progress Report and Strategy Review](#).

Support for Adult Victims - Northern Ireland

2d.40 In 2019, standards of victim support were enhanced through re-procurement of Northern Ireland's support contract. In line with legislative support requirements, Migrant Help is contracted by the Northern Ireland Department of Justice (DoJ) to provide support to adult male potential victims of modern slavery, and Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid is contracted to provide support to adult potential female victims of modern slavery. Assistance provided to potential victims includes safe accommodation, translation services and assistance in obtaining healthcare services, as well as assistance in obtaining legal advice/representation or, where appropriate, help with repatriation.

2d.41 The Northern Ireland Modern Slavery Strategy 2019/20 includes an undertaking to explore the potential for support, available to adult potential victims of modern slavery under the DoJ support contract, to be available for an extended recover and reflection period, subject to available resources. Many of the commitments of the 2019/20 strategy also roll over to 2020/21 and the issue of extended support remains under consideration.

2d.42 Table 1 details the numbers of adult male and female potential victims supported by DoJ's contracted support providers (currently Migrant Help and Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid). There has been a sharp rise in potential victims in Northern Ireland.

Data	2017	2018	2019
Male	13	8	33
Female	18	18	44
Total	31	26	77

[Table 1: Total number of supported adult potential victims in Northern Ireland]

Consultation launch for amends to the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

Department of Justice (DoJ) launched a consultation seeking views on two minor amendments to the modern slavery provisions in the HT Act 2015. These are to:

1. Amend section 12 of the HT Act 2015 to remove the statutory requirement to publish a strategy at least once in every year; and
2. Amend section 18 of the HT Act 2015 to extend support to victims of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

The policy intent of amending section 12 is to give the Department the ability to set the longer-term direction for addressing modern slavery while also delivering shorter-term operational plans. Combining these two planning components will provide an appropriate and proportionate level of assurance that DOJ can respond quickly to a changing environment while also enabling us to work collectively with others to agree a longer-term vision for the protection and support of victims and the prosecution of traffickers.

The policy intent of amending section 18 is to place on a statutory footing a decision made in January 2016, by the then Justice Minister, David Ford, to extend assistance and support to potential victims of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour (offences under section 1 of the Act). This proposed legislative change will therefore reflect current practice. Support for potential victims of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour is in place in other UK jurisdictions.

The ten publicly appointed MAAP Chairs have been extended in post by 18 months.

Support for Child Victims - England and Wales

2d.43 Local authorities are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in their area. Local children's services will work in close co-operation with the police and other statutory agencies to offer potentially trafficked children the protection and support they require. In addition, through Section 48 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the UK Government provides ICTGs, currently rolled out to one third of local authorities. All multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have now been implemented and are published on local authority, clinical commissioning groups and police authority websites.

Case Study - ICTG Service

Wales, an ICTG Early Adopter Site, has devolved safeguarding legislation. In 2018, as part of the Welsh government review of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures, specialist Task and Finish groups were developed that looked at specific practice guides that sit within the newly revised national safeguarding procedures. The ICTG Service worked alongside Welsh government, statutory agencies and other NGOs to develop the practitioner guides focussed specifically on children who are abused through sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and child trafficking. The practice guides support frontline practitioners to work with abused children by building consistent safeguarding pathways.

The ICTG Service has been rooted in these practice guides which include an inbuilt referral pathway to ICTG Direct Workers and ICTG Regional Practice Co-ordinators. The practice guides have been signed off and implemented by Local Safeguarding Children Boards in all regions.

Across Wales there is a confidence that when confronted with child trafficking in all its forms, frontline practitioners will know what the indicators are, what the expected safeguarding response should be, and how to make a referral into the ICTG Service. The ICTG Service in Wales has been involved in making sure that the safeguarding procedures have the voice of the child at the forefront adding to the trust that children found in Wales will be picked up and will not fall through gaps.

Allyson Davies, ICTG Manager for Cymru, says, “there is a consistent clearly agreed pathway for ICTGs within our national safeguarding procedures which identifies vulnerable children and refers

2d.44 Government statutory guidance on the ‘Care of migrant children and child victims of modern slavery’ (2017), recognises that placement decisions should take particular account of protecting the child from any continued risk from traffickers. If an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child becomes looked after by a local authority, the local authority must allocate the child a social worker to assess their needs and draw up a care plan, setting out how the Authority intends to respond to the child’s full range of needs, including education and health needs. This must consider the child’s wishes and feelings. For children who may have been trafficked, the social worker’s assessment should identify the child’s vulnerability to the continuing control of their traffickers. The local authority should then place the child with a carer (foster or residential) who has the necessary skills and experience to support them in a safe environment.

Child Trafficking Protection Fund

2d.45 Complementing the roll out of ICTGs to the initial Early Adopter Sites of Greater Manchester, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and Wales, in June 2016, the Government announced up to £3 million for a Child Trafficking Protection Fund

(CTPF). The CTPF had two objectives - to support the recovery of trafficked children including through specialist care, and to reduce vulnerability to exploitation by preventing trafficked children from going missing and potentially being re-trafficked.

2d.46 The CTPF completed in March 2019. An independent evaluation of the seven projects, led by the University of Bedfordshire, provides a detailed analysis of the seven projects.

2d.47 The evaluation, due for publication shortly, found that the CTPF has been a valuable initiative that has successfully built on the existing expertise, practical knowledge and experience of NGO’s working at the forefront of child trafficking response and prevention efforts. The projects reached 1802 key stakeholders in total and evidenced significant improvements in stakeholder knowledge and awareness of child trafficking.

Support for Child Victims – Scotland

2d.48 In Scotland, local authorities have responsibility for providing support to child victims of trafficking under existing child protection and children's services legislation. This support is given regardless of the form of abuse suffered. Section 11 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act makes provision for an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian for unaccompanied children who have been trafficked or are vulnerable to being trafficked in Scotland and puts the role of the Guardian on a statutory footing with other support services. A [public consultation](#) on the role, functions and responsibilities of an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian was conducted from August to November 2019. The [responses to the consultation](#) were published in December 2019 and [analysis of the responses](#) to the consultation were published in May 2020.

2d.49 Work is currently being undertaken to develop the new service and it is anticipated that it will be implemented in 2021. The Scottish Guardianship Service, which is funded by Scottish Government and delivered in partnership by Aberlour Child Care Trust and the Scottish Refugee Council, will continue to provide support to unaccompanied and trafficked children until the new statutory service is in place.

Support for Child Victims – Northern Ireland

2d.50 The Northern Ireland Department of Health leads on the protection and safeguarding of children in Northern Ireland. Robust measures to protect and support children, including victims of trafficking and modern slavery, are in place under the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

2d.51 Article 21 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 places a requirement on the Regional Health and Social Care Board to enable an Independent Guardian to assist, represent and support a child for whom an NRM referral has been or is about to be made, or for a separated child. The Independent Guardian Service (IGS) became fully operational in Northern Ireland on 1 April 2018 and currently has four Independent Guardians in place for children under the legislation. To evaluate the IGS, a selection process for appointment of an independent evaluator has been completed and an award has been made; the evaluation commences on 1 August and will complete by March 2021.

2d.52 For criminal proceedings, a Guardian Ad Litem (Guardian), an independent officer of the court who is experienced in working with children and families, is appointed to a child. The role of the Guardian is to represent the interests of the child in court and to report to the court the wishes and feelings of the child regarding their circumstances and preferred outcome to the proceedings.

INTERNATIONAL

2e.01 The UK continues to demonstrate international leadership, driving action towards the long-term ambition of eradicating modern slavery, here in the UK and overseas. All United Nations' member states have endorsed the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs – also known as Agenda 2030). Many of the SDG targets (1, 5.2, 8.7, 13 and 16.2) that underpin these goals will be instrumental to ending global modern slavery by 2030. Modern slavery causes significant damage to victims and the proceeds often fund other criminal activities of serious and organised crime groups. The Government recognises that the UK cannot tackle this crime alone and we must work with our international partners to deliver progress.

2e.02 The UK's work in combatting modern slavery brings together a cross-Government effort, encompassing Home Office, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Crown Prosecution Service, Border Force, Immigration Enforcement International, and the National Crime Agency.

2e.03 The UK's international engagement on modern slavery is aligned with the 2018 Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Strategy. This strategy provides a framework and outlines a set of capabilities designed to respond to the full range of serious and organised crime threats. As part of the Upstream Transformation Programme the regional Serious and Organised Crime Joint Analysis (SOCJA) assessments and Regional Strategies and County Action Plans continue to support our international response to modern slavery.

2e.04 The FCDO-led network of Joint Serious and Organised Crime Platforms (JSOCs), provides strategic leadership, in-country expertise, and resources for the 74 JSOCs, set up to align and coordinate HMG's implementation of our overseas response to SOC. A cross-government overseas policy network (SOCnet) is jointly run by the Home Office and the FCDO, to complement policy and operational work. Modern slavery is a priority for SOCnet as it reinforces the existing law

enforcement approach and builds on this by using all our overt diplomatic, political and development levers within our overseas network to counter serious and organised crime.

2e.05 An example of joint working facilitated by SOCnet is in Romania, where a Conflict Stability and Security funded programme launched a trafficking PREVENT manual (also now online), lesson plan and slideshow to educate (both male and female) students and encouraged them to become advocates in their local school and community. This was followed up by roadshows in which over 700 teachers, local anti-trafficking police (ANITP), and civil authorities in 5 of the highest risk counties of Romania were provided training on the materials and delivery best practice. Other projects in Romania to create sustainable and meaningful outreach have been working with key local actors like the Orthodox Church to promote messaging and increasing the capacity of key workers to support vulnerable young people.

2e.06 Joint work with individual international partners, including the EU, as well as multilateral groups and agencies, continues to be central to delivery. An example of this is the SOC Multilateral Trafficking in Persons strategy, which reconciles UK modern slavery strategy goals with US State Department Trafficking in Persons country recommendations.

2e.07 Responding to a recommendation by the Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act, the UK Government has now appointed Jennifer Townson as the Migration and Modern Slavery International Envoy. The Envoy is based in the FCDO and represents the UK in a range of bilateral and multilateral discussions. Since her appointment, the Envoy has engaged with countries, multilateral bodies and civil society representatives in support of HMG's MSHT international objectives. This has included engaging with Gulf states on reform of the Kafala system; Nigeria and Sudan on victim support and prosecutions; South Asian partners on trafficking and labour standards; and with like-minded international partners (US, France, Australia, Netherlands) and multilateral initiatives such as Alliance 8.7 to build practical international cooperation.

Collaborating with source countries to eradicate modern slavery in the UK

2e.08 The UK Government has continued to engage with source countries from where a high number of vulnerable people are trafficked into the UK. This includes UK Aid investment through the Home Office's Modern Slavery Fund, as well as strategic work in neighbouring countries. Some key examples of our work with source countries includes:

- Over £10 million invested in Nigeria, Albania, and Vietnam since 2017. These programmes focus on providing services for trafficked and vulnerable people to ensure their safe rehabilitation and reintegration into society; targeted outreach to increase resilience of at-risk communities; and capacity building of law enforcement and other first responders to ensure a victim-centred approach to handling modern slavery cases.
- The Government Communication Service International (GCSI – Cabinet Office) partnered with DfID, the Home Office and the Nigerian National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) to deliver phase 2 of the 'Not for Sale' campaign, a multi-channel strategic communications campaign to counter human trafficking in Edo and Delta states - where human trafficking of young women into conditions of modern slavery is most prevalent in Nigeria. Phase 2 launched on 15 January 2020 and lasted eight weeks, aimed at changing the opinions and attitudes of parents of young women by promoting alternative livelihoods as the best path to preserving the safety and dignity of their daughters, as well as ensuring greater prosperity for the whole family. The campaign resulted in a 24% decrease in the number of young women who had the intention of traveling abroad for employment in the next 12 months, and a 14% decrease in young women and their families who believe that young women who are trafficked abroad can better support their families at home.
- Work in India to develop government and civil society capacity and commitment to

addressing bonded labour, and work in the Philippines to tackle online child sexual exploitation both from the grassroots and at a strategic operational level.

- Following the Gray's tragedy in October 2019, the UK Government engaged with the Vietnamese government with victim identification and repatriation and information sharing and joint investigations.
- Enhancing our focus on returns and reintegration to explore how the Government can better support victims to return safely to their countries of origin and to reintegrate into society. This work has included running a roundtable with NGOs in Poland and research into existing processes in Romania.

2e.09 As part of the Home Office's Modern Slavery Fund, the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF) tests innovative approaches to build the evidence base on what works. Research being conducted via the MSIF includes the impact of social norms and stigma as a driver of vulnerability to trafficking and a barrier to reintegration, and how successful engaging at the brand and factory level can be in preventing forced labour. A range of interventions are similarly being trialled looking at embedding worker rights into international supply chains; developing a best practice model for engaging with survivors in rural communities; upskilling partner Government officials to prioritise the anti-trafficking agenda; and working with families, community leaders and labour brokers to prevent exploitation in domestic work. Finally, the MSIF is strategically supporting new technological approaches to preventing and reporting MSHT. Solutions at early stages of development include two apps for migrant workers, bespoke digital software for managing MSHT cases, and the launch of a global hub for tech solutions to MSHT - Code 8.7.

Building partnerships to eradicate modern slavery globally

2e.10 Modern slavery is a global problem and requires a global response. There are an estimated 40.3 million victims of modern slavery and trafficking worldwide, and a coordinated international response must be central to current efforts to secure a reduction in the global

prevalence of modern slavery.

2e.11 The UK continues to work alongside partner governments, the multilateral system, the private sector, and civil society to deliver commitments made under SDG 8.7. This includes the development of national strategies, prioritising efforts to protect victims, work to eradicate modern slavery from supply chains and strengthening law enforcement and criminal justice responses.

2e.12 The UK continues to work in partnership with the US, Australia, Canada and New Zealand to support implementation of the [Principles to Guide Government Action to Combat Human Trafficking in Global Supply Chains](#), launched in 2018¹⁷. On 24 October 2019, the UK participated in a US hosted workshop exploring how the Principles Governments can better collectively engage common suppliers on modern slavery due diligence.

2e.13 Bilaterally, the UK has supported efforts for better data collection on modern slavery in Latin America and Pakistan; promoting rights of female workers in Bangladesh; training programmes for police in India; and helped improve official responses to trafficking victims in Indonesia, Ethiopia, and Mali.

2e.14 The UK's international efforts to fight slavery are supported by an Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) commitment of over £200 million. Alongside the Modern Slavery Fund, a range of DfID and FCO programmes have worked to tackle the root causes of slavery by creating jobs and livelihoods, changing business and recruitment practices, building capacity for law enforcement, and protecting victims and the most vulnerable – especially children, women and girls. DfID funding includes:

- A £20 million commitment to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS), a new public partnership which seeks to pioneer new approaches to tackling slavery by constructing new methods for estimating prevalence and working with new partners in the private sector to develop innovative ways to addressing modern slavery including using technology. Norway has

now joined the UK and the US in support of GFEMS.

- A four-year (£12 million) UK Aid Connect consortia programme, Effective Approaches to End Worst Forms of Child Labour, led by World Vision. This project operates in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia, and focusses on improving law enforcement; increasing children's agency; improving livelihoods for conflict-affected families; and supporting businesses to improve supply chain due diligence and duty of care from the bottom up. This programme is led through a multi-institutional partnership representing large international organisations, media, businesses, and a leading research institute.
- £13 million for the Work in Freedom Phase 2 Programme which aims to reduce the risk of slavery amongst migrant women workers across South Asia. This programme has reached 480,000 vulnerable women and girls by educating and training women in their communities and working with governments, businesses, and recruiters.

We are also committed to improving evidence about the nature and scale of modern slavery to inform our programming efforts overseas to tackle the drivers of modern slavery and reduce the vulnerability of specific populations to modern slavery, including women and children. The UK has supported funding to the Delta 8.7, a global knowledge platform for Alliance 8.7 to help policy actors understand and use evidence, monitor implementation of commitments to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour.

2e.15 In the global effort to meet Agenda 2030, the UK is taking a leading international role to increase political will and drive action to eradicate modern slavery. Government continues to work through multilateral bodies and processes including International Labour Organisation, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the G7 and G20 to effect change through multilateral channels. The

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trafficking-in-supply-chains-principles-for-government-action>

UK also supports international coalitions such as Alliance 8.7 and UN forums such as the Inter Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) to share best practice with the international community and support implementation of national responses.

2e.16 The Call to Action to End Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, launched by then Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Theresa May, at the UN General Assembly in September 2017 is a political declaration on a set of common principles to use as the basis for country strategies and international action. It has been endorsed by close to over 90 countries to date. The Call to Action is now housed on the UN-led knowledge platform, which includes a list of all the countries who have endorsed to date and provides additional resources and evidence to inform

policies which contribute to achieving Target 8.7. The UK continues to advocate for member states to take concerted action to fulfil the commitments and develop tailored national responses to meet SDG 8.7. The UK will continue to work with partner countries to share best practice.

2e.17 This partnership work includes cooperation with EU countries. The UK Government will continue our work with European partners to eradicate modern slavery no matter what shape our relationship with the EU takes. Cooperation internationally is governed by the Crime (International Cooperation) Act 2003, which establishes powers and tools for investigating and cooperating and mutual legal assistance in every country.

Committed ODA programmes to tackle modern slavery since September 2018				
	Programme	Location	Summary	Allocation
Home Office Modern Slavery Fund	Modern Slavery Innovation Fund	Albania, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Vietnam	Support to projects trialling innovative approaches. Phase One ran from 2017/18-2018/19. Phase Two runs from 2019/20-2020/21	£11m 2017-2021
	Home Office led programme	Nigeria	Criminal justice capacity-building, victim support and prevention work	£5m 2017-2021
	Home Office led programme	Vietnam	Criminal justice capacity-building, victim support and prevention work	£3m 2017-2021
	Home Office led programme	Albania	Criminal justice capacity-building, victim support and prevention work	£2m 2019-2021
	Home Office / FCDO led programmes	Bangladesh, DRC, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sudan	Various projects including research, criminal justice capacity building and prevention	£2.5m 2017-2021
	Child Trafficking Protection Fund	UK and Vietnam	Support to seven projects protecting vulnerable children at risk of trafficking	£2.2m 2017-2019
18-20 Commonwealth Fund	UN Office on Drugs and Crime (Home Office lead)	India, Sri Lanka, Zambia, Malawi	Criminal justice capacity building with four Commonwealth countries	£2m 2018-2020
	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Home Office lead)	Bangladesh, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Namibia, Ghana	Support for Commonwealth parliamentarians to strengthen legislation and national action plans	£0.5m 2018-2020

Committed ODA programmes to tackle modern slavery since September 2018				
	Programme	Location	Summary	Allocation
18-20 Commonwealth Fund	UN Office on Drugs and Crime (Home Office lead)	India, Sri Lanka, Zambia, Malawi	Criminal justice capacity building with four Commonwealth countries	£2m 2018-2020
	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Home Office lead)	Bangladesh, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Namibia, Ghana	Support for Commonwealth parliamentarians to strengthen legislation and national action plans	£0.5m 2018-2020
	Ending child labour in the Commonwealth (DfID lead)	India, Pakistan, Bangladesh	Improve data, evidence and knowledge to support better interventions to tackle child labour and build capacity to end the practice in Commonwealth countries	£0.5m 2018-2020
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) programmes	International programmes	Various countries	Various projects, including scoping projects and prevalence studies, capacity building for law enforcement and support to National Action Plans	£1.4m 2019-2020
Department for International Development (DfID) programmes	AAWAZ II: Inclusion, Accountability and Reducing Modern Slavery	Pakistan	Support to tackle the challenges of child labour and modern slavery and strengthen the ability of the state to respond	£4.7m 2018-2023
	Support to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery	India, Bangladesh	Support to develop new and innovative approaches to tackling slavery	£20m 2018-2021
	Stamping Out Slavery in Nigeria	Nigeria	Support to strengthen slavery prevention work by Government and NGOs	£10m 2018-2023
	Protection, Rehabilitation and Reintegration support for Nigerian returnees from Libya	Nigeria	Support the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants, returned from horrendous conditions in detention in Libya	£3m 2018-2020
	Protecting Children on the Move	Horn of Africa	To protect up to 400,000 boys and girls at risk of slavery in the Horn of Africa and along dangerous migratory routes in Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia	£10m 2017-2020
	Regional programme targeting the worst forms of child labour	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, India, Nepal, Pakistan	To reduce the vulnerability of children to bonded labour in hazardous industries and to prevent children being trafficked into commercial sex work	£26m 2018-2023
	Effective Approaches in Ending Worst Forms of Child Labour (EAPEC)	Central African Republic, DRC, Ethiopia	To enable boys and girls rights to be protected from the worst forms of child labour. With specific focus on those forcibly recruited into armed conflict, used in prostitution, forced labour or hazardous work	£12m 2018-2021
	Preventing Child Labour	Bangladesh	Support the Government of Bangladesh to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by building the evidence base and pilot innovative approaches to protect the most vulnerable	£5m 2018-2022

Committed ODA programmes to tackle modern slavery since September 2018				
	Programme	Location	Summary	Allocation
Department for International Development (DfID) programmes	Work in Freedom Programme – Phase 2	South Asia/Middle East	Support to help women and girls facing slavery and exploitation across South Asia and the Middle East	£13m 2018-2023

Chapter 3: UK Response to Modern Slavery during the COVID-19 Pandemic

3.01 The COVID-19 outbreak has sparked a global health crisis with particularly severe effects for already vulnerable groups, including migrants, informal workers, women and girls, working children and those that are already or at risk of becoming victims of modern slavery¹⁸.

3.02 The Joint Slavery and Trafficking Analysis Centre assesses it remains likely that the threat of modern slavery to the UK remains below that in the period before the outbreak of COVID-19, and it is highly likely that continued restrictions on international travel will have led to an increased reliance on the existing victim pool in the UK.

3.03 Individuals with significant and multiple vulnerabilities, including those who have previously been exploited, remain at greatest risk of modern slavery. It is highly likely that, as demand for the services of victims increases, offenders will seek to re-engage with victims from whom they were not able to profit over lockdown.

Pursue

3.04 In March, the GLAA worked with industry partners and introduced a temporary licensing scheme to ensure critical food supply sectors were able to run as smoothly as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak. Temporary licences for food production were granted to businesses operating within the wider labour supply industry and who wished to support labour providers that held GLAA licences. Temporary licences were issued for a period lasting up to three months.

¹⁸ Source: <https://delta87.org/2020/03/impact-covid-19-modern-slavery/>

The scheme was closed on 1 June.

3.05 In May 2020, the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Unit rolled out training to help raise awareness of modern slavery with national helplines supporting a range of vulnerable victims during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.06 The NCA and the GLAA launched Project AIDANT COVID-19. This period saw an intensification of awareness raising activity across policing and law enforcement, with a focus on the food processing, food packaging and agricultural sectors. In total 37 police forces participated and conducted over 450 visits to relevant premises, with 27 new investigations initiated as a direct result of the AIDANT activity. Although there was an awareness raising focus, a total of 16 arrests were made, with 13 potential victims referred into the National Referral Mechanism and 38 Duty to Notify submissions completed.

Protect

3.07 The Home Office published new guidance for businesses on managing supply chains risks during COVID-19. [The guidance](#) set out possible steps for businesses to mitigate potential modern slavery risks, which could be increasing in some supply chains following sudden spikes or drops in demand products. The guidance also provided flexibility for businesses which needed to delay the publication of their Modern Slavery Statement as a result of COVID-19 related pressures.

3.08 During the Response and Recovery Phases of COVID-19, the Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership

Group worked with the Wales Homeless Action Group to raise awareness to prevent and safeguard homeless people from becoming exploited.

3.09 As COVID-19 restrictions necessitated the cancellation of planned face to face learning in Scotland, TARA developed a short 90 min webinar. During May, June and July, twelve multi-agency sessions were delivered remotely across Scotland. In addition, during this period a further four bespoke sessions were delivered to:

- The Scottish Guardianship Service
- Scottish Women's Aid
- West Dunbartonshire Council
- Glasgow City Council

Victim identification and support

Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (VCC) support

3.10 The Home Office provided £1.73 million of funding for modern slavery services, as part of the £750 million package announced by the Chancellor for charities during COVID-19. The funding enabled organisations working in the Victim Care Contract (VCC) to adapt how they provided support and respond directly to the challenges posed by COVID-19. This included ensuring the right accommodation was available, that victims could receive their financial assistance safely, that support services and therapies could be accessed remotely, and the provision of data packages, telephone and computer hardware and software.

3.11 In April 2020, the UK Government announced a number of changes to existing policies and practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, working to address heightened vulnerabilities for victims of modern slavery. To ensure victims could access essential support during this time, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) continued to take referrals of potential modern slavery victims.

In line with Public Health England guidance, the Home Office announced on 6 April 2020 that all individuals in accommodation support provided by the VCC would not be required to move on from their government-funded accommodation

for at least three months regardless of a decision on their modern slavery status, extended until 6 August 2020, when business as usual move on policy resumed, in line with wider government advice on moving home and with impacts of the pandemic on local services considered as part of move on planning.

The Home Office worked closely with The Salvation Army, as the Prime Contractor of the VCC, to implement changes to protect vulnerable potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery and the staff supporting them in compliance with Government COVID-19 guidance. Support Workers provided essential support services through virtual means where possible, and the Department worked at pace with The Salvation Army to implement an alternative card payment option to ensure that victims received their support payments in an appropriate manner.

Support for children

3.12 Throughout the pandemic, responsibility for child trafficking victims remained with local authorities. The UK Government took action to safeguard vulnerable children by supporting the systems that support children at risk of, or who are victims of, exploitation to make sure there were more ways to reach safe adults. The Department for Education funded the See, Hear, Respond project, managed by Barnardo's, to help children and young people in England experiencing harm and increased adversity during coronavirus, by providing support to those not being seen by social care or other key agencies. Furthermore, extra funding was awarded to the NSPCC Childline to enhance support for children and young people put at increased risk of harm through isolation at home. The Home Office funds the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) service, which provides an independent source of support and advice for trafficked children, responded quickly to amend its ways of working so that it could continue to support child victims of modern slavery remotely in early adopter sites.

3.13 The Home Office established the COVID-19 vulnerable children's hub to consider any additional risks to vulnerable children as a result of COVID-19. This includes the threat of child sexual exploitation and abuse, child criminal exploitation,

modern slavery and the impact of domestic abuse on children. This hub coordinated with Other Government Departments to join up policy, programmatic and funding responses.

Cross-cutting initiatives

3.14 The introduction of social distancing measures means there is a risk that potential victims of modern slavery are not identified by First Responders and may miss opportunities to access support. The Home Office developed a flyer on ‘spotting the signs’ for staff who are not First Responders to ensure different support services, including emergency services such as food banks, could spot and report signs of potential victims of modern slavery. The flyer was circulated as widely as possible, including using the local networks of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, The Salvation Army, and the Human Trafficking Foundation newsletter. As a result, there were a number of potential victims of modern slavery who were identified by frontline workers working in food banks where the flyer was distributed.

3.15 A Cross-Government Hidden Harms Virtual Summit, hosted by the Prime Minister, brought together key decision makers to share insights, best practice and agree an approach for tackling these crimes as we move towards the easing of lockdown measures. The Summit provided a unique opportunity to share best practice on proactive policing, improving criminal justice outcomes, improving the intelligence picture on these hidden crimes, and encouraging members of the public and those working with community partners to identify and respond to possible harms. Following the Hidden Harms Summit, the Home Office has published a report which contains a number of immediate next steps the Government is taking to respond to the issues raised. [The report](#) was produced and published on gov.uk.

Support in Devolved Administrations

3.16 The Scottish Government increased flexibility to their grant funded support providers to ensure that vulnerable individuals were able to remain within specialist accommodation and support, regardless of any decision on their victim status through the NRM, during the period of restrictions implemented to tackle COVID-19.

3.17 The significant increase in funding provided to both Migrant Help and Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) for 2020/21 has enabled the expansion of accommodation capacity available to both providers and this has been key as part of the COVID-19 response. Both providers continued to provide support in line with Health Protection Scotland guidance and delivered essential functions remotely where this was feasible during the most restrictive phases of the pandemic.

3.18 TARA have accessed the Victim Support Scotland fund and the Connecting Scotland Digital fund on behalf of victims. This has enabled TARA to widen the use of digital equipment, therefore mitigating digital exclusion and supporting survivors in their recovery.

3.19 To help ensure vulnerable children, including child victims of trafficking, received appropriate support and protection during the pandemic in Scotland the Scottish Government published the [COVID-19 National Child Protection Guidance](#).

3.20 Weekly data reports on vulnerable children have been collated to help inform Scottish Government’s response to the pandemic, and monthly Children, Young People and Families - Evidence and Intelligence Reports have been published on the Scottish Government website. A Covid-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group was also established in May 2020 to progress local and national actions in relation to vulnerable children.

3.21 During the COVID-19 pandemic Police Scotland worked closely with partners including Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), TARA, Migrant Help, and Border Force to monitor and produce regular briefings on intelligence and trends in trafficking and exploitation. The information produced by Police Scotland was

shared by partners to a combined workforce in excess of 1.4 million employees including all Scottish Local Authorities and the Scottish Business Resilience Centre.

3.22 Media releases, interviews and social media campaigns focusing on sectors that remained open during COVID-19 restrictions were also disseminated to raise public and business awareness of human trafficking and exploitation. As a consequence of these activities, valuable information was received from the public which led to safeguarding potential victims from prostitution, domestic servitude and labour exploitation.

3.23 In Northern Ireland, to ensure that potential victims of trafficking were safeguarded during the pandemic, under section 18(9) of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support For Victim) (Northern Ireland) 2015 Act and in line with other UK jurisdictions, Justice Minister Naomi Long approved two consecutive periods of temporary extensions of support (including accommodation) to adult victims of modern slavery in Northern Ireland during the COVID-19 crisis following a positive conclusive determination. This extension was also applicable to those individuals receiving support on receipt of a negative conclusive determination (i.e. that they are not a victim of modern slavery) in line with timescales agreed by the other jurisdictions.

International

3.24 The UK has pledged £764 million in Official Development Assistance and its expertise to stop the spread of the global coronavirus outbreak, find a vaccine and save lives around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic risks reversing years of progress towards ending child labour, forced labour modern slavery and human trafficking, increasing the risk of exploitation of already vulnerable populations - including women, migrant workers, informal workers and children.

3.25 The UK Government is working with international partners to assess the impact of COVID-19 across our existing programmes, ensuring they can respond and adapt to the current context in order to provide both immediate and long-term support to victims and vulnerable communities at risk of modern slavery. This includes engagement with relevant UN agencies,

donors and civil society to strengthen the international response.

3.26 The UK Government's new Vulnerable Supply Chains Facility scheme is partnering with 16 of the UK's largest retailers to enable vulnerable people and supply chains to recover from and remain resilient to the economic and social impacts of COVID-19, primarily in the agriculture and garment sector in 8 countries in Africa and South Asia (Myanmar, Bangladesh, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda and Ghana) to reach 165,000 workers directly and over 800,000 more broadly across UK supply chains.

3.27 The Modern Slavery Fund has seen projects pivot to respond to the new threat of COVID-19 and the added vulnerability it poses to individuals at risk of exploitation. Freedom Fund are supporting people in rural Indian communities to access government COVID-19 support schemes. They do this by providing access to IT facilities and one-to-one support to go through the government application, which otherwise people may not know about or struggle to engage with.

3.28 The Freedom Fund team is also gathering data on the accessibility of the COVID-19 support schemes, to help improve access for rural communities in the longer term.

3.29 **Ethical Trade Initiative** are distributing food parcels to vulnerable migrant workers in Malaysia. These people may be unemployed, unable to claim wages and unable to access state support schemes, meaning these parcels are a lifeline in the current context.

Chapter 4: The UK's Future Response

4.01 This report has outlined the UK's response to modern slavery and the actions taken to ensure that safeguarding victims and tackling this abhorrent crime in both the UK and internationally remained a priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK administrations will continue to build on the world-leading progress made this year.

4.02 Despite the recent reforms to the NRM we recognise that modern slavery cases are highly complex, and individual victims can have very different recovery needs linked to their exploitation. The NRM Transformation Programme will address the challenges that the current NRM system faces. We intend it to be a world-class system that effectively identifies and delivers needs-based support for victims of modern slavery, is legally robust, sustainable, and resilient to misuse.

4.03 The UK Government will continue to strengthen the evidence base on modern slavery with our academic partners.

4.04 The Government has committed to go further on state enforcement and establish a single enforcement body for employment rights to better protect vulnerable workers and create a level playing-field for the majority of employers complying with the law. The Single Enforcement Body will provide a clearer route for workers to raise a complaint and get support, enabling more coordinated enforcement action and the use of pooled intelligence to better target proactive enforcement. The Government will publish its response to the Single Enforcement Body consultation in due course.

4.05 We will consider enforcement options in line with the development of the Single Enforcement Body and issue a further update in due course.

4.06 The UK Government will continue its work to ensure that international victims of modern slavery are able to return safely from the UK to their country of origin, and that they are supported to reintegrate.

Scotland

4.07 The Scottish Government published its third annual progress report on implementation of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy in May 2020. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 places a legal duty on Scottish Ministers to prepare and review this Strategy and this was published alongside the progress report in May.

4.08 Throughout the many discussions, surveys, and events during the review process, it was clear that while improvements and refinements could be made to aspects, the Strategy remains fit for purpose and provides an effective framework for continuing to improve in the short term. However, the Scottish Government committed to working with all partners and other interests to develop a revised and updated Strategy.

2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery Annex – Data Tables

Chapter 2: Prosecutions data

England and Wales

Data	2016	2017	2018	2019
Received	212	321	190	275
Pre-Charge Decisions	251	327	298	427
Charged	175	237	188	239
% Charged	69.7%	72.5%	63.1%	56.0%

[Table A1: Pre-charge referrals and finalisations for defendants flagged as being involved in modern slavery] Data source: CPS Case Management System.

Data	2016	2017	2018	2019
Legal Decisions	226	287	249	322
Charged	175	237	188	239
NFA	49	49	61	83
Out of Court Disposal	2	1	0	0
Non Legal Decisions	25	40	49	105
Administratively Finalised	18	40	48	103
Other	7	0	1	2
Legal Decisions - % Charged	77.4%	82.6%	75.5%	74.2%
% Legal Decisions	90.0%	87.8%	83.6%	75.4%
% Non-Legal Decisions	10.0%	12.2%	16.4%	24.6%

[Table A2: Pre-charge legal and non-legal decisions for defendants flagged as being involved in modern slavery] Data source: CPS Case Management System.

Data	2016	2017	2018	2019
Convictions	216	180	191	251
Non-convictions	133	85	103	98
Total Completed Prosecution Outcomes	349	265	294	349

[Table A3: Completed prosecution outcomes for defendants flagged as being involved in modern slavery] Data source: CPS Case Management System.

Scotland

Year	Trafficking for sexual exploitation	Trafficking for other exploitative purposes	Forced labour and servitude	Aggravated by trafficking	Total
2017	7	3	4	0	14
2018	4	5	1	0	10
2019	2	2	0	0	4
2020 ¹⁹	5	0	1	0	6

[Table A4: Number of individuals where initial decision was to prosecute for human trafficking offences in Scotland, broken down by date the police report was received by COPFS].

Year	Trafficking for sexual exploitation	Trafficking for other exploitative purposes	Forced labour and servitude	Aggravated by trafficking	Total
2017	5	0	2	0	7
2018	0	1	0	0	1
2019	1	0	0	0	1
2020 ²⁰	0	0	0	0	0

[Table A5: Number of individuals convicted of human trafficking offences in Scotland, broken down by the date the police report was received by COPFS. Proceedings are ongoing against a number of individuals which means that these figures may change as cases are concluded].²¹

¹⁹ Between 1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020

²⁰ Between 1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020

²¹ It is important to note that a number of the individuals included in these figures will have been prosecuted for, and convicted of, offences other than human trafficking, such as immigration offences, brothel keeping or sexual offences. Evidence secured in the cases mentioned here may have been used to support prosecutions in other countries. Proceedings are ongoing against a large number of individuals listed here.

Northern Ireland

Data	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of persons "prosecuted for human trafficking and exploitation offences"	5	4	0

[Table A6 - the number of individuals prosecuted for trafficking in persons offences in Northern Ireland.]
Data provided by Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland Case Management System; based on 'most serious decision issued' – relates to the number of defendants for whom a decision issued by the PPS for prosecution in respect of a human trafficking offence.

Data	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of persons "convicted of human trafficking and exploitation offences"	2	0 ²²	2

[Table A7 – the number of individuals convicted for trafficking in persons offences in Northern Ireland]
Data provided by Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland Case Management System; based on 'indictable disposal date' – relates to outcomes at court in respect of defendants for whom a decision issued by the PPS for prosecution in respect of a human trafficking offence.

²² Source: Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland Case Management System; 2 persons were convicted of other offences (controlling prostitution) arising from Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking investigations.