



BRIEFING FOR TRAFFICKING AWARENESS RAISING ALLIANCE (TARA) POLICE RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The UK response to the Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) for sexual and labour exploitation has included 3 key national initiatives, (1) Reflex, (2005), Operation Pentameter (2006) and Operation Pentameter 2 (2006 – 2007). Each of these initiatives has been founded on the principles that effective criminal disruption, investigation and victim care requires a cohesive multi-agency response.

The Scottish Police Service includes 8 territorial Police Forces, which share a common intelligence system known as the Scottish Intelligence Database (SID); in effect, with some restrictions based on sensitivities of intelligence, one Scottish Police Force can view intelligence originating from another Force. This has a real benefit in terms of understanding cross border criminal activity and the criminal threats that arises there-form. However, a similar system technological arrangement does not generally exist between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. This impact of this is that communication of intelligence relating to serious organised crime between Scotland and the rest of the UK has been more complex than the arrangements which exist solely within Scotland.

The 2006 Operation Pentameter initiative helped to identify a range of opportunities which both the UK and Scotland could embrace to improve the law enforcement and conjoined multi-agency partnership approached to victim care and disrupting the criminal Trafficking in Human Beings (THB). This included;

- The development of the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) which serves as a central repository for all UK intelligence, best practice and partnership activity relating to THB
- The development of the Scottish Human Trafficking Group (SHTG) to bring key representatives from all 8 Scottish Police Forces, British Transport Police (BTP), Scottish Government, Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA), the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) and other key partners to a single forum; this assists in the sharing of strategic information and approaches, improves communication and provides significant opportunity to develop and improve a true multi-agency response
- The development of the Scottish Regional Intelligence Cell (SRIC) for Operation Pentameter 2 (2006 – 07); this arrangement co-located representatives of the Scottish Police, the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA), the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) within a single unit. The benefits arising from this approach included improved sharing of information, greater communication with a range of partners, a centralised point of contact for dissemination of intelligence to and from the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the opportunity to further develop knowledge regarding the impact and effect of Human Trafficking within Scotland and the wider UK arena.

During Operation Pentameter 2, a significant proportion of all the intelligence relating to the Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) sourced throughout the UK originated from Scotland. Much of this is believed to be largely attributable to the development of the Scottish Regional Intelligence Cell (SRIC), which undertook roles not only relating to intelligence, but also in relation to education, marketing, partnership communication and policy development.

Key learning from each of the 3 national initiatives conducted since 2005 includes;

- Open communication is vital to partnership cooperation and activity
- There benefit for structured education within law enforcement regarding the complexities of addressing the trafficking in Human Beings (THB)
- A single multi-agency unit and national strategic group, dedicated to developing policies and strategies through which to address THB adds significant value to individual approaches
- Victim care is absolutely critical to future victim cooperation
- The opportunity to convene a multi-agency case conference prior to direct enforcement activity should be embraced at all times; this will greatly assist in the broader range of tactical approaches relating to victim care, long term security and evidence gathering.

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