

<b>Committee(s):</b> Economic Crime Board	<b>Date(s):</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014
<b>Subject:</b> Economic Crime Update – National Fraud Capability Programme	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Commissioner of Police Pol 71-14	<b>For Information</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>The National Capability Programme continues to make steady progress and the last reporting period has seen the inaugural meeting of the Home Office Strategic Oversight Group which has been a useful vehicle to assert influence over other Forces nationally.</p> <p>City of London Police (CoLP) is leading on the production of the National Fraud Strategy for the police services of England and Wales, consulting with our police colleagues and partners including the National Crime Agency (NCA) and private sector representatives.</p> <p>Increased effort is being put into the development fraud prevention initiatives. At the strategic level, CoLP has sought to raise the profile of fraud (and cyber-enabled fraud in particular) through the national media and speaking engagements. At the operational level CoLP has put in place a pilot crime prevention hub and linked into a network of crime prevention leads at local force and local authority level.</p> <p>CoLP continue to improve the service provided by Action Fraud since taking responsibility for it in April and complaints have continued to fall during this reporting period following re-design of the public interface. On the theme of support to victims of Fraud we continue to work with Victim Support UK and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), to put in place and pilot a Victim Care Unit for the vulnerable victims of economic crime.</p> <p>Wider engagement continues and there are plans for Commander Head to attend the Association of Police and Crime Commissioner’s Conference to deliver a workshop in the next reporting period.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>It is recommended that members receive this report and note its contents.</p>	

## Main Report

### **Background**

1. The National Capability programme team was created in April 2012 and continues to be led by Commander Stephen Head, National Police Coordinator for Economic Crime. Having largely put our City Of London Police capabilities in place the focus is now on our national role of leading improvement in the police service response to fraud at the national, regional and local levels.

### **Current Position**

2. The last quarter has seen us gain significant traction as the National Lead Force exemplified by the first meeting of the Strategic Oversight Group at which we were able to demonstrate to Home Office officials the value added at the national level. This meeting was attended by the Commissioner and the Chairman of the Economic Crime Board, Simon Duckworth. Our efforts and contribution to this area were recognised and it was agreed that we need to further publicise our successes, including in improvements to Action Fraud.
3. We have also used the Strategic Oversight Group to exert some influence on local forces and have seen improvement in those forces identified as needing additional support from us. Whilst the attrition measures, to which we refer in our performance report, are somewhat crude (we are working on this) they do at least give an indication of trend, relative position and order of scale. As such, they are useful in getting the engagement of Chief Officers and their Police and Crime Commissioners, and Commander Head has been able to use this to start shaping local priorities and commitment.
4. We are leading on the production of the National Fraud Strategy for the police services of England and Wales, consulting with our police colleagues and partners including the National Crime Agency (NCA) and private sector representatives. Whilst this strategy cannot be too overtly City of London centric it does offer us the opportunity to explain and put on record the capabilities we provide to national policing. Key amongst these is the role of Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) as the national centre for fraud and cyber crime reporting and intelligence. We continue to take every opportunity to strengthen this central role and are looking, for example, to provide this functionality to support the areas of identity crime, and bribery and corruption.
5. Regardless of how effective the police service becomes in tackling fraud it will never be able to simply 'enforce' its way out of the issue. To that end, we are putting increased effort into crime prevention (and this will feature heavily in the national strategy). By its nature, fraud tends, in many cases, to require some act of participation by its victims whether in compromising their identity or transferring funds. Our prevention work is therefore centred on raising

awareness in order to allow potential victims to avoid the behaviour that places them at risk. At the strategic level, we have sought to raise the profile of fraud (and cyber-enabled fraud in particular) through the national media and speaking engagements. At the operational level we have put in place a pilot crime prevention hub and linked into a network of crime prevention leads at local force and local authority level. We have used this to provide national support to local prevention needs with a series of road shows and conversely will be using the local assets in support of our national Christmas fraud prevention campaign. Interestingly, whilst there seems an abundance of policy and strategy in this area, consultation with the Home office and other partners in this revealed a need for leadership and coordination of its delivery for which they now look to the City of London Police. We will take up the challenge, building a coalition of the willing as our first step.

6. We continue to improve the service provided by Action Fraud since taking responsibility for it in April. Complaints about Action Fraud itself have reduced further since our last report following redesign of the public interface in conjunction with Victim Support and other partners and improvement to our communication with victims. Action Fraud continues to receive correspondence (approximately 200 items per week) from victims seeking further help with their case following referral to a police force and Action Fraud puts considerable effort into this aspect of its victim care service. The Strategic Oversight Board was clear that we should be presenting this as a positive, an indicator of value being added by Action Fraud. On the theme of support to victims we continue to work with Victim Support UK and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), to put in place and pilot a Victim Care Unit for the vulnerable victims of economic crime. Action Fraud has also now developed the 'front end' of bulk reporting to meet the concerns of business (working with the British Retail Consortium in particular) and we are now ensuring that NFIB can handle the increase in-flow before going live.
7. Commander Head continues to engage with Chief Officers and Police and Crime Commissioners and will be running a workshop at the national Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) Conference, addressing the issues of cyber crime and fraud. We have found that such engagement is now becoming much more of a meaningful dialogue, a further sign of the increased acceptance of our national role. It was a pleasure to write to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, congratulating him on Operation FALCON and the increase in fraud capability this represented and confirming our intent to work in collaboration with them. We have further shaped the work of the NCA threat group in which we lead and are looking to restructure the Economic Crime Portfolio working groups to ensure they have value that can ultimately be felt at the local level.

## **Conclusion**

8. This is an exciting period as we are increasingly able to use our leadership position to influence and improve the national police response to fraud. Our role in developing the fraud strategy and in putting in place and leading the economic crime prevention effort reinforces that position. We need to ensure

that others are aware of the value we are bringing to the national counter-fraud scene and will continue to work on this with the support of the City of London Corporation.

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