

fasCommittee(s): Police: Economic Crime Board	Date(s): 9 th November 2015
Subject: National Police Coordinator's Office (NPCO) Update	Public
Report of: Commissioner of Police Pol 52-15	For Information

Summary

This report summarises the work of the National Police Coordinator's Office (NPCO) delivered against the National Policing Fraud Strategy.

Pursue – Reducing the economic crime threat through coordinated investigation of the criminal activities of groups and individuals engaged in economic crime and the disruption of their activities

- We continue to see an increase in prioritised police operations against criminal networks across the UK
- Recent operational activity has led to recovery orders totalling £2.4M against a key Organised Crime Groups (OCG)
- Dissemination of investigative packages by NFIB to UK policing is increasing
- Attrition rates have decreased. Improvements in service delivery to victims of fraud and cyber crime across the country.
- An HMIC study into digital crime and policing distributed to police forces in July 2015 has endorsed the work of the NPCO¹.
- The NPCO is establishing a volume fraud taskforce between policing and the banking sector on behalf of the Home Secretary.
- We continue to support disruption activity through NFIB. This includes take downs of bank accounts, web pages and telephone numbers circa 40,279

Protect – Strengthening the protection of individuals, communities, systems and infrastructure against economic crime

- We are developing our support for victims of fraud through coordination of a victim strategy that advocates a tiered response designed around individual needs of victims of fraud
- The NPCO is collaborating with partners to extend the national reach of protect advice; informing both citizens and businesses on how to protect themselves against fraud, cyber and identity crime

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

¹ HMIC report - Real lives, real crimes – A study of digital crime and policing (not published)

1. Pursue

Prioritised investigations

This is a separate paper on the agenda in the Non-Public section.

Asset recovery confiscation order

Executive action has resulted in 5 fraud OCG members receiving lengthy jail sentences. Further police activity supported by local forces and NLF Asset Recovery Team has been successful in securing confiscation orders of £2,376,690.49. These funds will be returned to victims of this fraud.

HMIC Digital Crime Study.

The HMIC study on Digital Crime and Policing was distributed to Police forces in July. The study supported and endorsed the work of the NPCO to improve the policing response to Fraud.

The study findings highlighted the vulnerabilities of local forces in regard to lack of knowledge of Action Fraud processes, local force responsibilities and senior officer ownership of the end-to-end process of managing fraud. Through the Economic Crime Portfolio the NPCO is leading a series of activities to ensure forces have and maintain awareness of the Action Fraud process, together with ongoing awareness raising around the management of Fraud and ensuring victims receive the support they require.

End to end management of fraud.

The NPCO continues to work with Police forces across the country to enhance their activities against NFIB referrals to each force, and their reporting of outcomes against disseminations.

Through the introduction of Regional Fraud Working Groups (RFGWs) linked to the National Fraud Working Group (NFWG) chaired by DCS Clark (CoLP) the NPCO engages directly with every force in the country and is able to identify, disseminate and share good practices linked to the management of Fraud. This work has assisted forces in improving their performance against disseminated NFIB packages. This has resulted in an 18% increase in outcomes being reported to NFIB, and evidences improved performance in the management of Fraud nationally.

The volume of reported fraud and cyber crime has increased quarter on quarter with Q2 reported figures standing at 56,989 crimes. The increase is reflected in the current volume of serious and complex fraud investigations which stands at 156 on a national basis with a total of 3,056 victims attributable to those crimes, of those investigations 27 are complex OCGs.

Fraud Taskforce

At the last Ministerial Serious Organised Crime Meeting (MSOC) chaired by the Home Secretary the City of London Police proposal of a joint taskforce between banking and policing was approved. This was with the then forthcoming results of the Crime Survey for England and Wales in mind. These results were published on the 15th October 2015 and estimated that the level of fraud and cyber crime committed against households was in excess of 7 million incidents per year.

On behalf of policing the NPCO are leading this venture, a draft proposal has advocated the establishment of five work strands for the taskforce to deliver on:

- Understanding the threat: develop the common understanding of threats, vulnerabilities and drivers to focus the activity of the taskforce
- Victims and vulnerability: more efficient identification of victims and potential victims, and proactive interventions to prevent repeat victimisation
- Behaviour change / education: empowering customers to protect themselves against fraud
- Tackling systemic vulnerabilities: technological and data mining solutions to make it more difficult for fraudsters to operate
- A collective response: improving the operational response to fraud

A final version of this proposal is due to be presented to the Home Secretary in the forthcoming period for ratification.

2. Protect

The National Victims of Fraud Strategy

The National Victims of Fraud Strategy (NVFS) is part of the national policing strategy for fraud and is designed to assist chief officers in delivering the most appropriate support to victims of fraud in their community. The NPCO has collaborated extensively with partners, victim support and protection services to produce a second version of the strategy.

The strategy advocates a tiered response to providing victim support ranging from direct, immediate personal contact with a victim following the report of crime, to the provision of wider fraud prevention and remediation advice. The victim response will be based on an assessment of individual victim needs. The current version of the strategy has been disseminated to all police forces, counter fraud community partners and partners involved in managing victims of fraud.

National identity crime campaign titled “Not With My Name”.

The purpose of the 12 month campaign was to raise public awareness of identity crime and help individuals and organisations protect themselves from becoming victims. The campaign is a joint initiative delivered in partnership with 35 police forces and partner agencies, including FFA UK, Cifas and Get Safe Online

On the 29 June 2015 the NPCO led the delivery of the first stage of the campaign, during the first week of activity the campaign received coverage on national television and media outlets. Social media saw more than 23 million followers throughout the country receiving key prevention messaging.

Stage 2 of 'Not With My Name' was launched at the end of September, specifically targeting the student population. Further information will be provided at the next Board.

“Protect Yourself” events

In line with the objectives of the Fraud Protect Strategy the NPCO delivers a programme of 'protect yourself' events.

In Q2 the office has collaborated with Merseyside Police to deliver a number of workshops aimed at educating carers of vulnerable adults, those working in the volunteer services and frontline police officers and staff. Presentations were provided on the current fraud and cyber crime threats and how people can protect themselves. This activity also involved a live roundtable discussion on BBC Radio Merseyside with Merseyside Police, victim support and Trading Standards.

NPCO collaboration with financial institutions has provided an excellent opportunity to improve the reach of fraud prevention messaging by delivering fraud and cyber crime prevention events to their clients. The current monthly audience is in excess of 1,000 small and medium sized businesses.

NPCO has collaborated with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to develop a programme of activities to advise its 20,000+ members on how to protect their businesses. The method of communication includes webcasts, magazine articles and presentations.

Conclusion

We continue to develop the delivery strategy around the “4 P” model. Further reporting to the ECB in the future will encompass greater detail into operational pursue activity together with setting out a structure and delivery mechanism for the delivery of work around Protect, Prepare and Prevent nationally.

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