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NCA Performance in Northern Ireland

Q2 2022/23 (July - September 2022)

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Introduction

About the NCA

The NCA leads the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime (SOC), a chronic and corrosive threat, affecting UK citizens more often than any other national security threat. The most recent National Strategic Assessment assessed that the overall SOC threat to the UK has continued to increase and has been largely resilient to the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Global networks, the UK border, and current and emerging technology, all play key roles as enablers of SOC offending. The latest estimated social and economic cost of SOC to the UK (approximately £37 billion¹) is assessed to be a significant underestimate of the true cost.

Our approach is to identify and disrupt high-harm, high-impact criminals (and organised crime groups), diminishing their capability, infrastructure and influence. In particular, we target those who:

- Exploit the vulnerable through child sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, servitude, fraud and other forms of abuse.
- Dominate communities, and chase profits, in the criminal marketplace - through criminal reputation and/or the use of violence in the supply of drugs and firearms.
- Undermine the UK's economy, integrity, and infrastructure & institutions, through their criminality.

Meeting the challenges of the changing nature of the SOC threat is a critical objective for the NCA, and wider law enforcement community, where substantial developments in SOC's complexity, scale, and volume, have been observed.

The NCA's 2022/23 Performance Ambitions

The NCA's Senior Leadership Team and the NCA Board are responsible for setting annual ambitions. These are tracked in our operational and strategic governance forums. To ensure the NCA deliver exceptional services and results across the Devolved Administration during 2022-23, the main objectives are as follows:

1. Continue to achieve branch-led disruptions in Northern Ireland and Scotland to build on our achievements in 2021/22.
2. Maximise the impact of our capability deployments in support of the SOC response in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Over 2022/23 these goals will be actively pursued with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Police Scotland, and other partners, to demonstrate the NCA's commitment to build even stronger relationships with our partner agencies. The NCA will continue to actively pursue these goals for 2022/23 and support wider agency performance ambitions at the high end of high harm in the Devolved Administrations.

¹ Home Office, 'Understanding Organised Crime: Estimating the Scale and the Social and Economic Costs', November 2018.

About this report

The aim of this report is to summarise the NCA performance and activities within Q2 2022/23 (July – September 2022 inclusive) related to Northern Ireland and the resulting impact on protecting communities from serious and organised crime. This includes the work of the Paramilitary Crime Taskforce (PCTF).

The NCA develops, deploys, and maintains a range of national capabilities and provides them to police forces and other partners. These capabilities create opportunities to identify and take action against those engaged in SOC, as well as providing specialist expertise to support broader law enforcement activity. Examples of support provided to PSNI are included within Annex A and throughout the narrative. The OFFICIAL classification of this report prevents the detailed inclusion of live operational activity and tactics.

The PSNI also submit a report to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) setting out its performance against SOC during this period. The two reports can be read in conjunction to give an overview of law enforcement activity impacting Northern Ireland. In certain instances, there may be some overlap between cases reported in the two products, reflecting the close working relationship between the two agencies.

We have responded to feedback from recent Board meetings and made the NCA and PSNI reports easier to read alongside each other. The structure of the NCA report has further evolved to provide additional clarity to the reader. It now includes extracts from the most recent National Strategic Assessment (Official version, published in 2021), and other relevant documents, in order to provide greater context. We will continue to work alongside PSNI colleagues to ensure that both reports are aligned as closely as possible.

Our impact in Northern Ireland

Disruption Assessment	NCA Led		NCA Support		Total	
	Oct-20 to Sep-21	Oct-21 to Sep-22	Oct-20 to Sep-21	Oct-21 to Sep-22	Oct-20 to Sep-21	Oct-21 to Sep-22
Major	7	5	1	0	8	5
Moderate	37	40	2	8	39	48
Minor	65	67	17	31	82	98
Total	109	112	20	39	129	151

Figure 1: NCA Disruptions with impact in Northern Ireland Oct 2020 to Sept 2022

12 Month Comparison

Figure 1 above shows that disruptions in Northern Ireland increased by 22 to 151 over the last 12 months when compared to the previous year, an increase of 17%. There were six more disruptions in Northern Ireland assessed as either major or moderate overall.

The increase in disruptions is attributable to operations developed in 2021/22, many of which presented interdiction opportunities at an earlier juncture. Operations developed earlier in 2022/23 have a focus on the high end of high harm. These are more likely to result in major and moderate disruptions, with fewer minor disruptions.

Quarter Comparison

Figure 2 shows the overall trend for minor and moderate disruptions is increasing overall, with quarter two recording the highest number of moderate disruptions for over two years. Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) remains the threat area where the highest proportion of disruptions were recorded. However the NCA also delivered a greater number of disruptions in organised immigration crime, drugs, firearms and cyber-crime threats in this quarter compared to last.

The remainder of this report will set out examples of NCA activities which, directly or indirectly, have an impact on SOC in Northern Ireland. Performance figures and case studies regarding our wider impact against SOC are contained below on pages 14 – 15, and updates from our specialist support services are provided in Annex A.

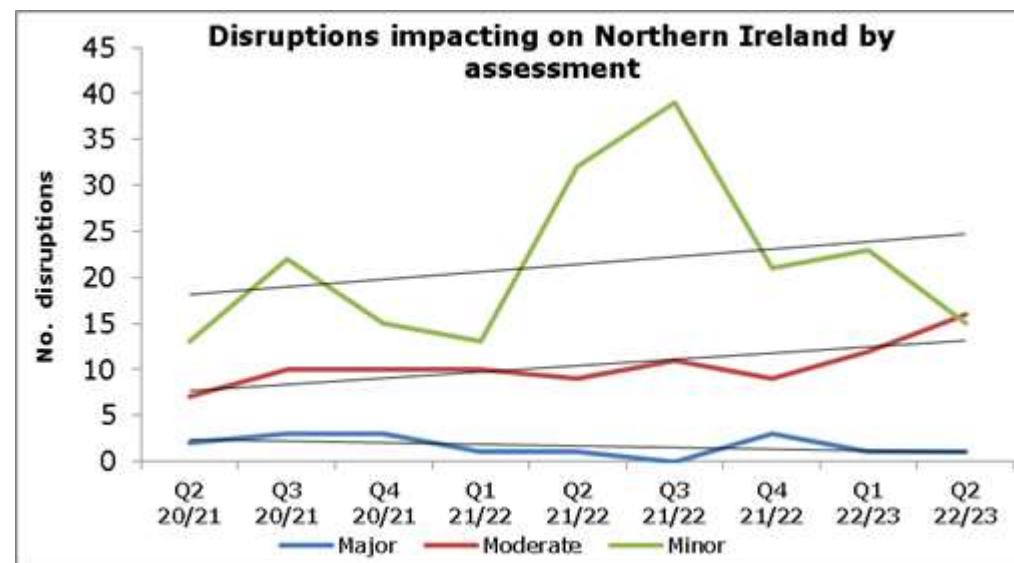


Figure 2: NCA Disruptions with impact in Northern Ireland by Assessment level over time

Those who seek to exploit the vulnerable

Child Sexual Abuse

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment:

- The 2021 National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime estimates that there are between 550,000 and 850,000 UK-based individuals posing varying degrees of risk to children.
- Platforms allowing children to interact with strangers increase the risk of technology assisted grooming, which can result in both online and contact offending. While some offenders build trust with children, others elicit sexual abuse following minimal interaction, using methods including manipulation, threats and sextortion. The ability for children to be groomed online within the safety of their own homes requires vigilance from those able to intervene.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) related criminality:

- The CSA Referral Bureau made 167 disseminations to PSNI during quarter two. Amongst those disseminations were a number of high priority referrals that related to self-generated Indecent Images of Children (IIoC), supporting ongoing concerns about the rise in such content. PSNI reported that during quarter two 16 arrests were made, 12 suspects attended voluntarily for interview and 40 children were safeguarded as a result of NCA disseminations. The number of children safeguarded in this quarter increased by 45% from the previous quarter. Material obtained during the victim identification has been added to the International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database, which will reduce duplication of victim ID efforts across the globe.
- NCA officers provided training to professionals from Northern Ireland charities. They attended 'Understanding Online Child Sexual Abuse' and 'CEOP Education Ambassadors' courses during this quarter. The Northern Ireland SBNI (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland) E-Safety forum meeting also took place this quarter where the NCA agreed to give members seven spaces on courses taking place in quarter three, with the aim to support officer knowledge of this specific online safety topic.

Organised Immigration Crime

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) involves moving a person across borders without legal permission or documentation with the assistance of an OCG. It can also involve individuals illegally remaining in a country. The movement of migrants across the Channel using small boats steeply increased in 2020 and continues to rise.
- The NCA established the Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC)/ Unité de Recherches Operationnelles (URO) with French law enforcement, which sees UK officers based in France to specifically target small boat smugglers. So far the JIC/URO has dismantled 21 organised crime groups in France.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) related criminality:

- CAUSEWAY Multi-Agency Hub (MAH) - one of a number of multi-agency hubs around the UK - found that the Common Travel Area (CTA) is commonly abused by criminals to facilitate organised immigration crime. OCGs are utilising this route predominately for groups willing to pay more to avoid riskier methods of entering the UK, such as small boats. Information suggests the current price for entry to the UK illegally via the CTA is €4,000 per person.
- In this quarter the CAUSEWAY MAH provided intelligence support to PSNI, targeting facilitators of organised immigration crime and identifying criminally motivated hauliers travelling into mainland UK and Europe via the CTA. CAUSEWAY MAH and PSNI also participated in joint operational intensifications, including a scaled-up proactive presence at ferry ports to target and intercept hauliers and passengers likely to be associated to or engaged in serious organised crime (predominantly drugs trafficking, money laundering, OIC and other offences) or matters which impact national security.

SOC Exploitation of the UK Border

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- The international nature of SOC means that the ability to exploit and circumvent the UK Border is a crucial aspect of many OCG operating models.
- OCGs have shown agility and resilience in their ability to move between different forms of transport. Examples include a shift to using small boats to facilitate organised immigration crime during periods of disruption at ports rather than road networks. Some OCGs have also diversified to exploit postal services to move illicit commodities across borders, whilst others have attempted use of private air travel for criminal gain.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against SOC exploitation of the UK Border:

- In this quarter the NCA continued to oversee multi-agency operational deployments focused Roll-on Roll-off² (Ro-Ro) ferry routes across the Irish Sea with law enforcement partners in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This activity, designed to better understand the SOC threat on these routes, is now routine and the NCA is continuing to strengthen relationships between partners in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the North West of England through this activity.
- The NCA work with partners, such as Border Force, to respond to threats to the border at ports and airports. In this quarter the NCA did not receive referrals relating to detections at the Northern Ireland ports/airports. However, a package of cannabis on route to an address in Northern Ireland was seized by Border Force and the investigation will be adopted by the NCA.

² Ships designed to carry wheeled cargo, including cars and vans.

Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- The term 'modern slavery' refers to human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. The most commonly reported form of exploitation in the UK is coerced criminality, where victims are forced to commit criminal offences, with UK nationals as the most commonly identified victim group. Labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude are also commonly identified, but underreported.
- It is likely that at least 6,000-8,000 offenders are involved in the exploitation of people in the UK. This figure is indicative of the complexity involved in recruiting, moving, controlling, and successfully monetising the services of victims of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

The updates below incorporate the most significant operational and partnership activities in Q2 for Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking (MSHT) related criminality:

- NCA co-ordinate and lead national intensifications, participation from law enforcement partners under a NCA project. The project targets sexual exploitation and high sophistication offending and includes visiting addresses, conducting border checks, community engagement and awareness raising to identify (and safeguard) victims of MSHT and arrest their traffickers. In this quarter, PSNI supported the response including a deployment at an airport. Whilst no arrests or safeguarding was required on this occasion, awareness of the threat has been increased and a model for response developed.
- During this quarter the NCA responded to three requests for tactical advice from PSNI in relation to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The NCA are also providing support to PSNI to attend an upcoming EUROPOL EMPACT (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats), where PSNI will present a case study of an operation involving Nigerian criminal trafficking networks, which traffic victims for sexual exploitation across Europe.

Those who dominate communities and chase profits in the criminal marketplace

Firearms

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- High demand for firearms in the criminal market continues. Several investigations led to the recovery of a wide range of weapons, including automatic firearms, which disrupted supply networks linked to OCGs.
- Handguns remain the most common firearm used by criminals. Most shootings are from original lethal purpose firearms, closely followed by discharges from converted, modified and reactivated handguns. Converted models and firearms from lesser known manufacturers with fake premium brand markings have also been increasingly recovered.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Firearms related criminality:

- In quarter two a suspect was arrested who had ordered a Front Venting Blank Firing (FVBF) weapon from Spain. Emanating from an NCA project, this NCA investigation involved the International Liaison Officer network and Belfast based NCA teams. PSNI supported this, attending the warrant, which resulted in the seizure of a further 13 forward-venting blank firers, two prohibited air weapons and numerous offensive weapons including machetes.
- An NCA operation led to the seizure of a SIG P20 handgun and 52 rounds of 9mm ammunition, which was posted to Northern Ireland from the USA. Three suspects were identified: one offender from the USA is currently convicted and awaiting sentencing. A further two people from Northern Ireland were identified; one pled guilty to possession of a firearm and ammunition and drugs and the second is awaiting trial.

Drugs

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment and Home Affairs Select Committee

- Drugs trafficking is the most prominent serious organised crime threat in Northern Ireland, where 64% of OCGs being monitored by PSNI are involved in the drugs market. Cannabis is the most commonly seized drug in Northern Ireland seizures but the availability of cocaine and heroin is increasing.
- Most large-scale seizures of drugs in Northern Ireland are detected at ports and are most commonly hidden on board trailers or containers which have entered Northern Ireland from Mainland UK.
- Afghanistan is the main source for heroin entering Europe. Ukraine was assessed as a strategic point in the Black Sea region for the trafficking of heroin and cocaine destined for Western European markets, including the UK. However, it is highly likely that OCGs involved in multi-commodity drugs trafficking will have been displaced to other Black Sea ports following the invasion of Ukraine.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Drugs related criminality:

- The multi-agency hub supported the successful recovery of £337,940 cash from a trailer travelling from Belfast to Liverpool. The trailer had links to cannabis trafficking between Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- The NCA has been involved in a significant investigation into the Kinahan group and is committed to dismantling their operation and those who enable their criminality. In September 2022, two Kinahan cartel members were identified and arrested in Spain. The pair had helped to launder more than €2million over 18 months. The NCA is working with law enforcement partners and US Government bodies to implement international financial sanctions to freeze bank accounts and make funds inaccessible. A number of partners, including PSNI and An Garda Síochána, worked closely to collate intelligence and evidence to achieve these sanctions. The NCA and An Garda Síochána investigation began after more than 200kg of cocaine and \$500,000 were seized in early 2021.

Undermining the UK's economy, integrity, institutions and infrastructure

Economic Crime

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- The economic and social consequences of fraud affect the whole of UK society, from the public and private sectors to the individual. The cost of fraud to the UK is in the billions, and is assessed to be increasing. Between January 2020 and December 2020, Action Fraud reported £3 billion in losses impacting individuals and organisations. However, providing an accurate figure is constrained by significant underreporting, with much fraud remaining undetected or hidden.
- Over 2020 money launderers adapted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant restrictions on physical movement, new technology and regulation. Measures were adopted to bring crypto assets into the scope of UK Money Laundering Regulations to mitigate the risk of their criminal exploitation. It is highly likely that over £12 billion of criminal cash is generated annually in the UK, and a realistic possibility that the scale of money laundering impacting on the UK (including through UK corporate structures or financial institutions) is in the hundreds of billions of pounds annually.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Economic Crime:

- PSNI conducted an investigation into money laundering where offenders exploited a loophole in a bank's fraud detection system to launder £20m. The NCA provided support to the PSNI investigation and provided a money laundering expert who gave evidence in support of the prosecution case. In July 2022 six offenders received sentences totalling 138 months and a further four defendants received suspended sentences totalling 60 months.
- The NCA, working as part of the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF), seized £28,000 held in a bank account and property in Northern Ireland valued at £85,000 from an offender with links to West Belfast UDA (Ulster Defence Association) for fraud and money laundering offences.
- A further six men were arrested for serious crime offences by officers from the Paramilitary Crime Task Force. The men were arrested in West Belfast as part of an investigation linked to INLA (Irish National Liberation Army) criminality.
- Regulators from Proceeds of Crime Centre (PoCC) visited Belfast to deliver Financial Investigation course to twelve investigators in September. This course has been updated to include the Criminal Finances Act 2017 and continued support from the PoCC Regulator in Northern Ireland is being provided, which includes professional development plans, and increasing accreditation and

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capability in applications under part 5 Proceeds of Crime Act (PoCA) 2002. The NCA continue to support PSNI by regulating the Financial Intelligence Officers continuous professional development and registration.

- Defence Against Money Laundering (DAML) requests are made by individuals or companies under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) 2002. Over the quarter 188 DAML requests were referred to PSNI from the NCA and PSNI action resulted in the denial of £7,361 of criminal assets.
- Under operation PUMPLESS the NCA submitted a file of evidence to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) in early 2022, as a result the PPS requested further enquires be undertaken. These continue and investigations are ongoing.

Cyber Crime

UK Threat Picture derived from the National Strategic Assessment

- The estimated cost, both direct and indirect, to UK victims ranges from the several hundreds of millions to billions of pounds per year. Despite an obligation to report data breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office, underreporting and inaccurate estimates continue to impact our ability to understand the true scale and cost of cybercrime to the UK. This is partly because of low rates of awareness, monitoring and understanding of the costs associated with cyber breaches. In some cases victims are reluctant to report because of potential reputational damage or uncertainty over what needs reporting and to which agencies.
- Ransomware continues to dominate law enforcement and media attention due to the financial, data and service losses incurred by victims. This year has been notable for the increasing use of an accompanying threat to publish stolen data by ransomware operators. Industry partners estimate that over 50% of all ransomware activity includes this additional threat.

The updates below incorporate our most significant operational and partnership activities (from Q2) against Cyber Crime related criminality:

- The NCA supported PSNI's response to three cyber-attacks against victims based in Northern Ireland. The NCA provide support via upstream enquiries, sharing information and providing specialist capabilities.
- The NCA provided support to PSNI in a suspected 'virtual kidnap' involving a student studying at a University in Belfast. This is a type of telecommunications fraud where offenders encourage a victim to fake their own kidnap to extort the family for a ransom. NCA and PSNI officers made a number of inquiries and located the victim alone in a hotel room, where she was then safeguarded. The victim's family had paid a significant sum to the offenders prior to police involvement and a reactive investigation is currently underway.

Our wider impact against SOC

Serious and organised criminals operate in the UK and overseas. Aside from our work in Northern Ireland, the NCA continues to lead other activities which we assess will have an impact on protecting communities in Northern Ireland. Examples include: removing dangerous content from the internet; shutting down distribution channels for drugs and guns; and creating a hostile environment for SOC criminals to operate in; raising public awareness.

The table below presents headline figures incorporating both NCA-led activity and activity in support of our Law Enforcement (LE) partners, working together to tackle SOC in communities across the UK and further afield.

Total NCA Disruptions						
Disruption Assessment	Oct-20 to Sep-21		R12	Oct-21 to Sep-22		R12
	Lead	Support	Total	Lead	Support	Total
Major	91	54	145	122	85	207
Moderate	635	402	1037	814	699	1513
Minor	1548	936	2484	1439	1425	2864
Grand Total	2274	1392	3666	2375	2209	4584

Figure 3: Total NCA Disruptions, October 2020 to September 2022

- Our operational strategy - to increase impact against criminals and groups operating at the high end of high harm - is resulting in greater disruptive impact on the SOC threat. The total number of NCA disruptions between October 2021 and September 2022 increased by 918 compared to the preceding 12 months to date, an increase of 25%. Disruptions assessed as major increased by 62 (43%) and disruptions assessed as moderate increased by 476 (46%).
- Lead disruptions assessed as major also increased over the last 12 months: the NCA conducted 31 more disruptions assessed as major (+34%) and a further 179 disruptions assessed as moderate (28%).
- The International department of the NCA recorded 586 disruptions (as the lead Agency or in support of a partner) in quarter two, bringing the year to date total to 1,193. Over half of all international disruptions year to date relate to three threat areas; Drugs 30%, CSA, 13% and Fraud 11%. The NCA contributed to a combined total of 38 tonnes of Class A drugs being seized across the globe in quarter two.

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The case studies below provide examples of high impact disruptions we have delivered during this reporting period.

- The NCA and international law enforcement partners conducted a significant operation this quarter to dismantle a major criminal network suspected to be involved in smuggling up to 10,000 people into the UK. The NCA, EUROPOL, Eurojust and UK law enforcement partners conducted raids in the UK, Belgium, Germany, France and the Netherlands and arrested 40 suspects. In total the operation seized 135 boats, 45 on-board engines and 1,200 life jackets.
- The NCA also arrested 24 suspects with potential connections to Western Balkan organised crime groups, which routinely exploit migration routes through the region. The NCA has established a project to better understand this threat. Intelligence and baselines will be established in the next quarter to enable NCA officers to better monitor this threat and the impact of the NCA response.
- The NCA, in collaboration with the UK and Turkish Governments are working to minimise potential for Turkish-made blank-firing imitation firearms to be converted into lethal-barrelled weapons. The Turkish Government have introduced new build specifications closely aligned to similar provisions within the EU. The Turkish commitment to this initiative is also demonstrated by their intention to undertake compulsory purchase of legacy non-compliant manufacturer's stock, resulting in the collection of 400,000 weapons for destruction. It is also now mandatory for manufacturers and dealers to register blank firearms on a national database, with sales to international visitors restricted, seeing a 50% drop in purchased blank imitation firearms.
- A NCA project has contributed to the seizure of 600 firearms through collaboration with the Guardia Civil over 2018-2022. This has led to at least 74 arrests and 50 subjects convicted of firearms offences. NCA collaborated with Spanish authorities to consider a review of the legislation and legislative compliance on sellers of this weapon type. As a result of those efforts, Spanish law changed in September 2022 to require retailers to put measures in place to confirm the identity of buyers and ensure authority form Police for the purchase.
- In September the NCA intercepted a consignment of 1,200kg of high purity cocaine intended for import into the UK. This major disruption to the organised crime group resulted in lost commodity, compromise to their shipping methodology and the arrest of two members of the OCG. The OCG used a UK front company and a company based in Ecuador to conceal their activities; the UK front company has ceased all interaction with the shipping company and all future shipments to Europe from the company in Ecuador, believed to be controlled by an West Balkans crime group, are cancelled.

ANNEX A: Supporting partners with our Specialist Capabilities

The NCA leads the UK SOC response through a combination of intelligence development, enforcement and investigation. Within this, the NCA has developed a range of niche capabilities - from advanced analysis to technical solutions - that service both our investigations and those of our partners. A snapshot of how these have impacted the SOC threat in Northern Ireland are provided below.

Support Area	Significant Q2 Updates
<p>Major Crime Investigation Support (MCIS)</p>	<p>The NCA’s Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) provided advice and support to PSNI on 15 cases, and deployed officers on 5 occasions. Cases included murder, sexual offences and non-accidental injury (NAI). Three main cases MCIS assisted with were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation into the fatal shooting of Sean Fox in West Belfast • The murder of Daniel Heaney <p>The continued support to the fraud investigation into a spurious fertility clinic.</p>
<p>UK Financial Intelligence Unit (UKFIU)</p>	<p>UKFIU activity has a direct impact in Northern Ireland and UKFIU disseminate Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) and requests for Defence Against Money Laundering (DAMLs) to PSNI. During quarter two, UKFIU assisted with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing one international request on behalf of PSNI (relating to drugs). • Disseminating eleven counter terrorism related SARs to PSNI. • Conducting 14 counter terrorism related search requests on behalf of PSNI. • Fast-tracking 15 SARs relating to suspected vulnerable persons and 16 relating to suspected child exploitation SARs to PSNI. • Allocating 188 requests for a Defence Against Money Laundering (DAML) received under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) 2002 to PSNI and the NCA CRT Belfast for advice (based on the location of the suspect, victim or other geographical factors). Four DAMLs was refused and

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	<p>PSNI took action to deny assets of £7,361 from the above.</p>
Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)	<p>We continue to deliver training to professionals working in an education setting across Northern Ireland. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) team agreed to give Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland E-Safety forum members seven spaces on 'Understanding Online Child Sexual Abuse' courses taking place in Q3, to increase their knowledge of this specific online safety topic.</p> <p>CEOP trained two professionals from charities in Northern Ireland on the new 'Understanding Online Child Sexual Abuse' course.</p>
Anti-Kidnap & Extortion Unit (AKEU)	<p>AKEU received eight requests for support from PSNI in this reporting period. AKEU provided appropriate support for each request, including proactive assistance in two kidnap investigations and six blackmail investigations.</p>
UK National Central Office (UKNCO) for the Suppression of Counterfeit Currency and Protected Coins	<p>The UK National Central Office (UKNCO) for Counterfeit Currency processed and analysed a total of 15 counterfeit and currency seizures that were submitted by the PSNI. As of the 30th September 2022, The Northern Irish Issuers confirmed that they have withdrawn all paper denominations up to £20 and replaced them with polymer notes. No withdrawal date has been set for the NI paper £50 pound notes.</p>
UK Protected Persons Service (UKPPS)	<p>The NCA Central Services Unit provides, as a part of the UK Protected Persons Service (UKPPS), operational support to the PSNI Protected Persons Unit which is aligned to the UKPPS. In this quarter, the UKPPS has provided seven new instances of support to PSNI.</p>
UK International Crime Bureau (UKICB)	<p>The National Extradition Unit (a team within UKICB) arrested six suspects and completed five surrenders.</p> <p>UKICB have been working with the Home Office and Northern Ireland to launch I-Leap (International Law Enforcement Alerts Platform). I-Leap is a Home Office programme developing new services providing real-time access to International Alerts data.</p>

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU)

PSNI regularly request subject checks against NCA databases to inform PSNI investigations.

PSNI joined a national operation to protect victims of sexual exploitation in England and NCA provided other specialised support to PSNI over the quarter

PSNI will showcase an operation involving Nigerian criminal trafficking networks at EUROPOL EMPACT (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats), which will be supported by NCA.

ANNEX B: Data by Threat Area

Figure 4: Breakdown of NCA Disruptions impacting on Northern Ireland by SOC threat, April 2022 to September 2022³⁴

SOC Area	Threat	Q1 2022/23				Q2 2022/23				R12 Total	R12 Total	Trend
		Major	Moderate	Minor	Total	Major	Moderate	Minor	Total	Apr 20-Mar 21	Apr 21-Mar 22	
Those who exploit the vulnerable	Child Sexual Abuse	0	8	1	9	0	9	0	9	31	29	▼
	Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	0	1	5	6	0	2	3	5	15	27	▲
	Organised Immigration Crime	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	2	▼
Those who dominate communities and chase profits in the criminal marketplace	Drugs	0	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	9	15	▲
	Firearms	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	7	7	◀▶
Those who undermine the UK's economy, integrity, infrastructure and institutions	Cyber	0	0	6	6	1	0	2	3	28	33	▲
	Fraud	0	2	1	3	0	1	0	1	2	15	▲
	Money Laundering	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	6	▲

³⁴Note that this reflects disruptions against the main SOC threats; there are additional disruptions not shown in this table, categorised as 'other'.