

SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME AGENCY
ANNUAL PLAN 2011/12



SOCA
SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME AGENCY



Foreword by the Home Secretary

Since becoming Home Secretary I have made clear that tackling organised crime is one of the priorities of this Government.

The Organised Crime Strategy, which we will publish shortly, will set out how we will increase our capabilities to tackle organised criminals.

Organised criminals do not respect police force boundaries, just as they do not respect international borders, so our response must be truly national and global.

That is why a central part of our plans for improving the fight against serious and organised crime is the creation of a new National Crime Agency (NCA) - a powerful body of operational crime fighters, led by a senior Chief Constable. We will shortly be setting out our plans in more detail.

The functions which SOCA performs will be incorporated into the new Agency. This will enable us to build on the knowledge and expertise of SOCA.

But the consequences of organised crime are played out on our streets and in our communities on a daily basis, so our response must go right down to the very local. The drug dealing on street corners; the burglary and muggings by addicts; the prostitution involving the trafficking of vulnerable young women - all are fundamentally driven by organised criminals.

That is why it will be my responsibility as Home Secretary to issue a Strategic Policing Requirement, which will cover the response to national threats like organised crime.

But this is for the future. SOCA's annual plan sets out how it will keep up the pressure on organised criminals in the intervening period.

Restructuring will provide greater flexibility and agility to direct resources to operational delivery.

SOCA will also work with partners both here and abroad to have the maximum impact against organised criminals, whether that might be in the form of criminal justice measures or other disruptive interventions.

SOCA has produced significant results against serious organised criminals in convictions, drugs seized and assets recovered. I congratulate them and their partners, both in the UK and overseas, for what has been achieved so far and look forward to us working together to build on that success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa May', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

RT. HON THERESA MAY, MP



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Joint statement by the Chair and Director General

This is the sixth annual plan for the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), which we are required to publish under Section 6 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005. It sets out how SOCA will exercise its functions in the year 2011/12. An Annual Report covering how SOCA has discharged its functions during the year 2010/11 will be published in July.

The Annual Report will show that SOCA has reached new benchmarks in its impact against organised crime. The work to get to this point has been taken forward since the beginning of SOCA, with incremental success achieved year-on-year. This is as a result of the continuing drive and professionalism of SOCA staff.

The government's National Security Strategy, published on 18 October 2010, outlined the greatest risks to the security of the UK and its well-being, in three tiers. Tier two threats included '*a significant increase in the level of organised crime affecting the UK*', and tier one included '*hostile attacks upon UK cyber space by other states and large scale cyber crime*'. In addition, tier three included '*a significant increase in the level of terrorists, organised criminals, illegal immigrants and illicit goods trying to cross the UK border*'.

Over the last five years SOCA has developed a range of operational responses to tackle organised crime even more effectively and these are being shown to be increasingly successful. For example we have developed skills and techniques which allow complex and multiple strands of information to be analysed and turned into actionable intelligence, supported by enhanced investigatory and technical capabilities. There has also been significant investment in a flexible and scaleable infrastructure. The government's intention to create a National Crime Agency provides the opportunity to build on these approaches within improved structural arrangements across the UK, so that the new Agency can realise the ambition to deliver more law enforcement activity against more organised criminals, at reduced cost.

In its first four years, SOCA planned its work around five strategic imperatives. These proved useful for managing the interaction between different departments. More recently, the Board initiated a programme of organisational change (EVOLVE). The objective is to ensure that SOCA is doing only those things it must do, and can maintain the greatest impact in the most cost effective way possible, in preparation for transition to the NCA. The EVOLVE model is designed to be flexible and to maintain and improve business delivery during a period of change and financial pressure.

The SOCA Board has concluded that in 2011/12 activity should be driven by the following priorities:

- the dislocation of those criminal markets where SOCA has the lead responsibility for UK law enforcement and support to other agencies in areas for which they have the lead. These will be identified within the new organised crime strategy;
- the systematic management, on a risk basis, of all SOCA Persons of Interest (PoIs) identified as involved in organised crime impacting on the UK, through effective information management and planned interventions; and
- delivery of more law enforcement activity against more organised criminals, at reduced cost and securing criminal convictions against the most serious criminals.

This plan sets out how SOCA will take forward activity in 2011/12 in order to meet these priorities and to ensure there is no let up in the pressure on organised criminals ahead of the creation of the NCA. The plan is also an important tool in demonstrating our wish to be more transparent in respect of our intention, performance, and explain the complexity and range of our roles and responsibilities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'I' followed by a series of loops and a trailing line.

Sir Ian Andrews

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized 'T' followed by the name 'Pearce' in a cursive script.

Trevor Pearce QPM

31 March 2011

INTRODUCTION

SOCA is a UK-wide organisation with international reach which is tasked by the Home Secretary. Its main functions are set out in the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (SOCAP). These are to prevent, detect and contribute to the reduction of serious organised crime and to the mitigation of its consequences; and to deliver statutory requirements set out in legislation, including those in respect of information relating to crime and in international treaties. The Government has announced its intention to create a National Crime Agency (NCA) that will harness and build on the intelligence, analytical and enforcement capabilities of SOCA. It is intended that the new Agency should be fully operational by December 2013¹.

This plan shows how SOCA will build on its achievements and investments over the past five years to disrupt and dislocate criminal markets and to continue to deliver a step change in the numbers of organised criminals who are subject to a level of SOCA engagement. It will help SOCA to navigate through the challenging resource environment flowing from the Comprehensive Spending Review 2011/12 – 2014/15 (CSR) while transitioning to an NCA which will deliver more law enforcement activity against more organised criminals with the same or reduced resources. The plan is framed in the context of the relevant sections of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the report of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) both of which were published in October 2010. The former identified cyber-crime specifically as a tier one priority risk and organised crime more generally as a tier two priority risk. It is intended to be consistent with the new Organised Crime Strategy referred to within the Home Office Business Plan 2011/15²³.

SOCA assumed its full functions on 1 April 2006, since when it has established an international reputation for excellence in tackling large and complex criminal conspiracies; made significant improvements to the understanding of the characteristics of organised crime; developed new tools and capabilities to manage and extract greater knowledge from its data; and achieved significant success in the interdiction of illegal commodities and dislocation of criminal markets. These tools and approaches will remain the most potent weapons in SOCA's future armoury. From inception, SOCA has recognised however that the scale of organised crime affecting the UK is such that criminal justice tools, including cash forfeiture and asset confiscation, will not be sufficient on their own to deliver a sustainable impact on the international criminal conspiracies affecting this country. SOCA will therefore continue to increase the number of lawful disruptive interventions against all levels of organised crime, including those embedded within our communities and institutions, ensuring that as many organised criminals as possible are subject to action.

This Annual Plan, sets out how it plans to exercise its functions during 2011/12.

GOVERNANCE

SOCA is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Home Office. It is led by a Board with a majority of Non-Executive members. The Board is responsible

¹ Home Office Business Plan 2011/15, pg 12.

² Ibid.

³ Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the people.

for ensuring that SOCA discharges its statutory responsibilities and meets the strategic priorities set under statute by the Home Secretary.

The Board of SOCA comprises:

Sir Ian Andrews	Chair (Non-Executive)
Trevor Pearce	Director General
Peter Clarke	Director (Non-Executive)
Sue Garrard	Director (Non-Executive)
Francis Plowden	Director (Non-Executive)
Malcolm Cornberg	Director and Chief Operating Officer
Paul Evans	Director Strategy and Prevention

Brad Jones, acting Director Operational Delivery, attends the Board. To maintain the required balance between non-executive and executive members he is not a member of the Board. During the year it is expected that the Home Secretary will appoint an additional Non-Executive Director and the Director Operational Delivery will then become a member of the Board.

The Chair of SOCA, appointed by the Home Secretary, is responsible for SOCA's overall approach and for its relationship with Ministers and with Government generally, for SOCA's strategy and, with the Board, for oversight of its operational performance.

The Director General is also appointed by the Home Secretary, and is responsible for everything SOCA does operationally and administratively. He is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of SOCA's management team and for the appointment, accreditation and direction of its staff. As Accounting Officer, he is responsible for SOCA's expenditure and accounting arrangements.

The Non-Executive Directors bring a wealth of experience to the leadership and oversight of SOCA:

- Peter Clarke serves on the trustee board of Crimestoppers and is a member of the Government's National Security Forum. Peter is a former Metropolitan Police Officer;
- Sue Garrard is Senior Vice-President, Global Communications, Unilever plc. She was formerly the Director General of Marketing, Communications and Customer Strategy at DWP, and a non executive member of the Board of Directgov; and
- Francis Plowden is a Commissioner and Chair of the Audit Committee at the Judicial Appointments Commission. He was formerly a managing partner for Coopers and Lybrand and Head of Government Sector at PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

FUNCTIONS

SOCA's functions are set out in the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (SOCAP) and (in relation to civil recovery functions) in the Serious Crime Act 2007. They are to prevent and detect serious organised crime and to contribute to its reduction in other ways and the mitigation of its consequences, and to gather, store, analyse and disseminate information on organised crime.

SOCA works in close collaboration with UK intelligence and law enforcement partners, notably UK police forces, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the UK Border Agency (UKBA); the private and third sectors; and equivalent bodies internationally.

SOCA supports the operation of the Child Exploitation and On-line Protection Unit (CEOP). CEOP is an affiliated unit and while it has operational independence from SOCA it is accountable to the SOCA Board through a committee chaired by Francis Plowden. It publishes its own separate Business Plan and Annual review.

Structure and resources

In its 2010/11 Annual Plan SOCA announced that it would review its business model. The review was in recognition of the changing internal and external context to SOCA's work and the greater understanding of the drivers and enablers of organised crime and of how to counter it most effectively. The changes flowing from this review will take effect on 1 April 2011. They will increase further the flexibility and agility of SOCA, ensuring that maximum resources are directed towards operational delivery. They will enable SOCA to deliver even greater impact in future, building on its achievements to date, and will ensure that firm foundations are laid for the NCA.

SOCA will implement a single organisational model that generates the most effective collective response to the challenge of organised crime. The model is founded upon three core business groups: Strategy and Prevention; Operational Delivery; and Capability and Service Delivery.

The Strategy and Prevention Group will drive SOCA strategy, ensuring that this reflects government priorities while preserving the flexibility to deal with fast moving strategic challenges and opportunities. It will bring together those SOCA functions focussed on preventative activity with partners. It will include an enhanced Civil Recovery team delivering a more holistic approach to asset denial, including recovery, seizure and freezing. The strategic approaches defined by the Group will inform the Executive Tasking Group which will provide strategic direction to the Operational Delivery Group on priorities for action.

The Operational Delivery Group will plan how and where the desired impact and response can be achieved, allocate the appropriate resources in the right combination and sequence to achieve the most effective impact, and execute the subsequent criminal justice and other disruptive interventions. It will include the majority of SOCA's deployable assets.

The Capability and Service Delivery Group is responsible for the continuing investment in, and development and delivery of essential organisational capabilities which cut across all business groups; together with service delivery and the management of

relationships with service providers. This group will be led at director level by the Chief Operating Officer whose role will embrace the functions of Finance Director and Chief Information Officer.

During 2011/12, SOCA will employ some 3,700 full-time equivalent staff operating from around forty sites in the UK, and a similar number of locations overseas. The Estates Strategy is aimed at reducing still further the overall number of sites in the UK by consolidating upon fewer and larger integrated "hubs". The Plan is based on a total Resource Delegation of £416.6m, a Capital Delegation of 21.2m and the identification and exploitation of opportunities for efficiency savings across all SOCA activities.

ORGANISED CRIME THREATS TO THE UK

Organised crime is identified in the National Security Strategy⁴ as a major threat to the UK and the Strategic Defence and Security Review, also published in October 2010, confirmed that it poses a significant and persistent threat to the UK and its citizens, businesses and economy. At present at least 38,000 individuals are known to be involved in organised crime affecting the UK. It is estimated that organised crime costs the UK economy and society between £20 billion and £40 billion per annum. The threat from organised crime will increase over the next five years with increasing globalisation and as new technologies make it easier for criminals to hide or disguise their communications and exploit new opportunities.

The threat cannot be tackled by a single agency or even a single sector. SOCA is committed to working with as wide a range of partners as possible from the public and private sectors. SOCA will continue to circulate industry 'Alerts' and engage regularly with the private sector to raise awareness of the threats posed by serious organised criminal activity and provide target hardening advice on how the business sector can better protect itself.

THE HOME SECRETARY'S PRIORITIES

The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 provides for the Home Secretary to set SOCA strategic priorities. This was first done in June 2005, to cover the first three years of SOCA's existence, and confirmed at SOCA's commencement. The priorities set by the then Home Secretary were:

- SOCA should devote a higher proportion of its resources and activity to intelligence than the agencies that it replaces;
- Class A drugs and organised immigration crime, in that order, should be its top priorities;
- effort should continue to be devoted to the other organised crime threats already identified, including fraud against individuals and the private sector, hi-tech crime, counterfeiting, the use of firearms and serious robbery; and
- emphasis should be placed on recovering the proceeds of crime.

⁴ A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The national Security Strategy.

In 2005 the then Home Secretary also set sectoral priorities: that SOCA should maintain effort against Class A drugs at broadly the same level as its predecessor agencies, that effort against organised immigration crime should be raised; and that, together, these two areas should account for the bulk of SOCA's effort.

In October 2007 the then Home Secretary reaffirmed Class A drug trafficking and people smuggling and trafficking in that order as SOCA's priorities, but directed that SOCA should elevate firearms work as an additional priority recognising that this would require some revision of priorities elsewhere. In March 2010 the then Home Secretary confirmed that these priorities remained valid and that they should be rolled over into 2010/11.

In July 2010 the Home Secretary published 'Policing in the 21st Century: reconnecting police and the people' in which she announced her intention to publish a new overarching strategy for tackling organised crime. It is expected that SOCA's priorities will be reviewed following publication of that strategy.

EXERCISE OF FUNCTIONS

The SOCA Board has concluded that in 2011/12 the response to the direction set by the Home Secretary should be driven by the following priorities:

- a. the dislocation of those criminal markets where SOCA has the lead responsibility for UK law enforcement and support to other agencies in areas for which they have the lead. These will be identified within the new Organised Crime Strategy;
- b. the systematic management, on a risk basis, of all SOCA Persons of Interest (PoIs) identified as involved in organised crime impacting on the UK, through effective information management and planned interventions; and
- c. the delivery of more law enforcement activity against more organised criminals, at reduced cost and securing criminal convictions against the most serious criminals.

The SOCA Board has also:

- considered the exercise of SOCA's functions in Scotland and Northern Ireland in consultation with the relevant jurisdictions;
- confirmed its commitment to the continued pursuit, with partners, of a single strategy against organised crime (the UK Organised Crime Control Strategy); and
- determined a structure and organisation for SOCA, and the use of available resources, to support those priorities.

Exercise of functions in Scotland and Northern Ireland

SOCA has statutory duties in relation to the whole of the UK and its remit reflects the fact that criminal conspiracies do not respect devolved or national boundaries. Whilst the nature of organised criminal activity might show regional variations, its impact and the harm it causes are the same. SOCA's policies and processes are designed to be sufficiently flexible and dynamic to tailor the pursuit of national priorities to local delivery.

Responsibility for policing and crime fighting are devolved to Scotland and Northern Ireland. SOCA will continue to engage closely with partners in both jurisdictions in line with the priorities set by the Home Secretary, and alongside the strategies and targets agreed by the relevant administrations. It will contribute actively to strategic planning, focussed on both traditional and non-traditional responses and, in the interests of transparency, provide regular briefings, tailored to the local context, to ensure that the scope and nature of its role is properly understood.

SOCA's approach is specifically geared towards tackling the local impact of organised crime. In Scotland, SOCA will continue to contribute to the Serious Organised Crime Task Force which has responsibility for monitoring progress against the Scottish Government's Serious Organised Crime Strategy 'letting our communities flourish'. It will continue to have staff embedded at the Scottish Intelligence Co-ordination Unit and at the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service; to exploit the opportunities offered by Organised Crime Group Mapping to co-ordinate a tiered response to SOCA PolIs based in Scotland; and to support other initiatives such as Operation Leitrim. This joint SOCA/Crown Office-led project seeks to locate and repatriate fugitives from Scottish justice overseas and will benefit from the activity carried out under the joint SOCA/Crimestoppers Operations Captura and Return – projects that identify fugitives in Spain and The Netherlands for extradition back to the UK.

SOCA will also continue to support Project Quarternity – an initiative mounted under the auspices of the Scottish Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group that seeks to assess the impact on Scottish communities of criminals based in Spain and to target them accordingly. As well as the work undertaken by partners in Scotland, this has drawn on SOCA resources throughout the UK and in Spain, as well as the Spanish authorities – with whom SOCA has agreed the Mission Statement: 'Making Spain a hostile environment for Scottish Organised Criminals'.

Project Endorse is a SOCA venture that has significant support from the Scottish Intelligence Co-ordination Unit. It uses enhanced profiling of drugs seizures to improve the shared understanding of drug trafficking routes and networks and helps to identify opportunities for operational intervention.

In Northern Ireland, SOCA will continue its membership of, and contribution to, the Organised Crime Task Force, working in support of local priorities and seeking to identify new ways of supporting partners' activity, and principally that of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It will continue to have staff based at the 'Regional Intelligence Unit Plus' facility and to develop a baseline assessment of the Northern Ireland drugs market better to understand its links to the rest of the UK and beyond and to identify opportunities for successful interventions.

SOCA will engage with partners in the devolved administrations and the Home Office with respect to the formation of the NCA so as to ensure that all jurisdictions are able to take advantage of the opportunities that the new Agency will offer.

ASSESSING PERFORMANCE

Reporting the outputs of law enforcement activity, whether the number of individuals successfully prosecuted or the quantity of illegal commodity or unlawfully obtained assets seized, is important. It has a welcome impact on public confidence and demonstrates that criminals are not “untouchable”. For organised crime at a national level, however, such output measures alone do not directly or consistently demonstrate the scale of the impact on the overall problem.

In the document ‘Policing in the 21st Century: reconnecting police and the people’, the Home Secretary proposed the creation of the NCA: a powerful new body responsible for ensuring that more law enforcement activity takes place against more organised criminals, at reduced cost.

Taking into account the direction from previous Home Secretaries, together with the emerging plans for the new Agency, SOCA will report against:

- the percentage of organised criminals subject to action;
- financial and other assets restrained / denied;
- effects on criminal markets, particularly the Class A drugs market; and
- a range of other output measurements.

The performance regime designed by the SOCA Board follows this framework. It employs a range of qualitative as well as quantitative measures, not all of which it is appropriate to publish. The performance report is considered regularly by the SOCA Board and provided to the Home Office for scrutiny.

