



Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority



Devon & Cornwall Police

4 May 2018

Dear Colleague

We write as respective leads on behalf of the National Police Chiefs Council and Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) to provide you with some information about specific operational activity planned for later this month (May) to protect people from exploitation.

Under the leadership of the National Crime Agency (NCA), law enforcement agencies have been working together over the past year to deliver regular weeks of action, or intensification phases, badged as Operation Aidant. Each phase aims to disrupt offenders who are active in a specific type of exploitation, across the broad spectrum of harm that is Modern Slavery.

Between 14 and 18 May 2018, Operation Aidant activity will target offenders who exploit people for their labour, which can include infiltrating exploited labour into an otherwise legitimate business setting. In addition to harming vulnerable people, labour exploitation undermines the legitimate business economy and reduces the effectiveness of other industry standards and protection measures.

The GLAA is leading this phase of Operation Aidant due to their specific knowledge and responsibilities and their experience of working collaboratively with the business sector to strengthen protections for workers.

Law enforcement agencies including NCA, police forces, GLAA, HMRC, Border Force, Immigration Enforcement and others will be focused on raising awareness of this issue and identifying adults who are being exploited for labour, either UK nationals or those who have been trafficked to the UK. This will be matched by increased activity taking place across European countries, co-ordinated by Europol, to tackle Trafficking in Human Beings. We are encouraged at the very positive support from colleagues in European countries.

The strategic intent behind these initiatives is to reduce the threat of modern slavery to the UK by:

- improving our own and wider communities' awareness about the issue
- developing a stronger understanding of the way in which offenders operate and how they exploit conditions of vulnerability in other people
- developing effective partnerships and ways of working together within the law enforcement family and with other influencers in society.

Within the UK, law enforcement agencies have been asked to consider both high risk industries and look at areas where less is known about the risk of exploitation, with a focus on food processing and production, large-scale construction and the textiles industry.

Some sectors have highlighted concerns that this type of proactive activity may have a disproportionate impact on *legitimate* industries and/or lawfully employed and hardworking migrant workers. We seek to reassure you that Operation Aidant activity is intended to *support* lawful and legitimate businesses and to prevent infiltration by criminals, protecting those workers who have been enslaved or subject to inappropriate working processes, such as wage theft.

Both the GLAA and the police service are keen to ensure that the business community is able to play an active and sustained role in tackling labour exploitation, and welcome the identification of joint local or national initiatives that would support closer working towards this aim.

We hope you find this information in advance of the intended operational activity useful.

Yours sincerely



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National Police Chiefs Council Lead for
Modern Slavery



Roger Bannister
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