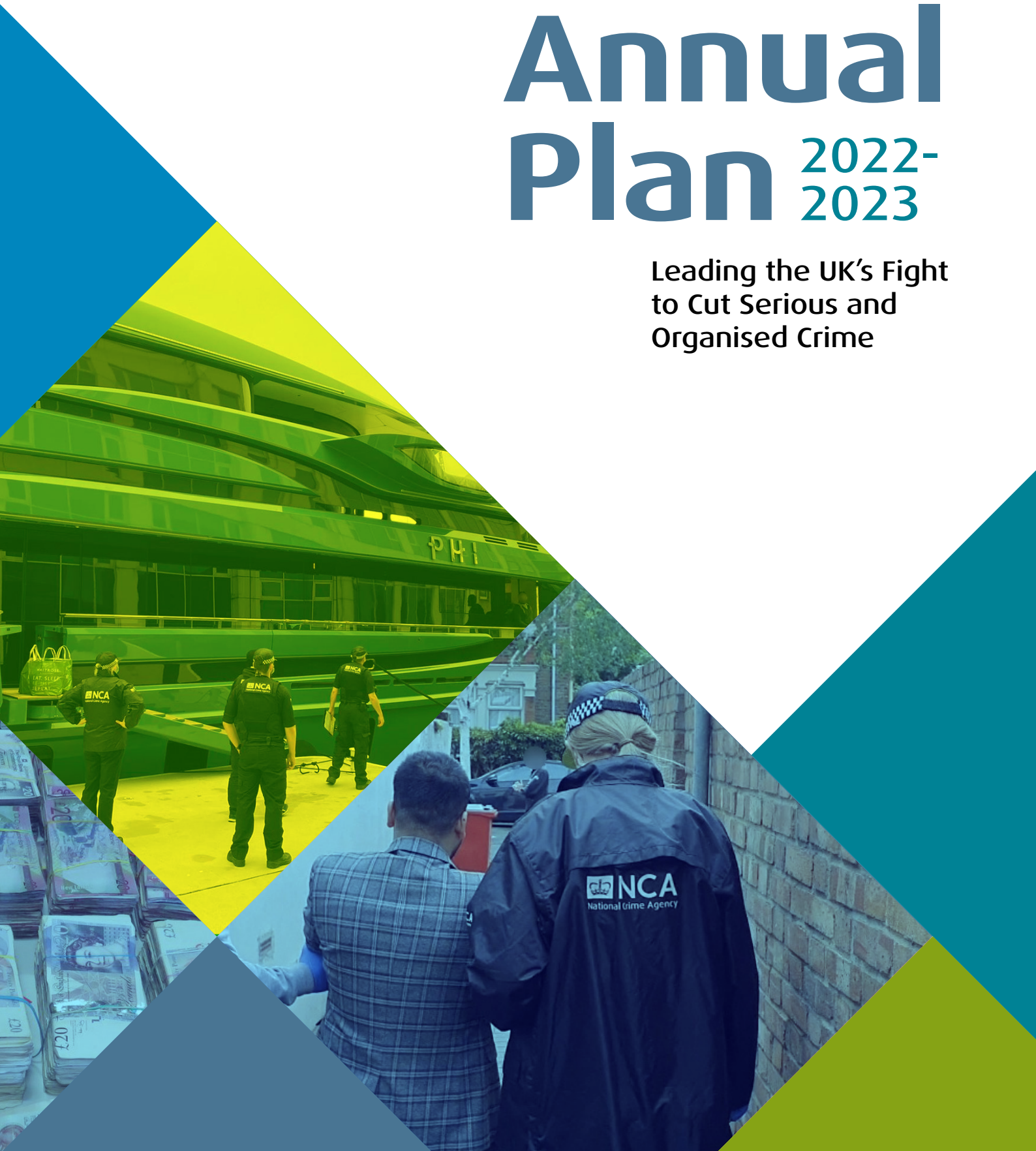




Annual Plan 2022- 2023

Leading the UK's Fight
to Cut Serious and
Organised Crime



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Foreword by the Home Secretary

The UK faces increasingly complex and global threats from serious and organised crime (SOC) and hostile state activity. Russia's brutal and unprovoked war against Ukraine will only increase these threats. Now more than ever the UK Government must protect our security by targeting the most dangerous criminals: people who seek to profit by exploiting the vulnerable, dominating our communities and undermining our economy. We are intensifying work on hostile states and cracking down even harder on corrupt elites through the new Economic Crime Act, tackling dirty money at home and in support of our international friends.

The NCA is critical to our response to these threats, leading law enforcement in combatting SOC and providing niche capabilities to tackle hostile states. As criminals adjust post pandemic, we must be ever more agile in our response, rising to the challenge of evolving threats and increased criminal use of technology. Through its relentless pursuit of criminality, the NCA is protecting the UK from threats such as illegal migration, drugs and firearms trafficking, fraud and money laundering, child sexual abuse (CSA), modern slavery and cyber crime. It is a major player in the delivery of the Government's Beating Crime Plan.

The NCA has had great success over the last year. But it never rests on its laurels. It is committed to developing further its specialist skills, technology and capabilities to counter threats. To achieve this, I have tasked the Agency to focus on the following Strategic Priorities:

- Protect the integrity of the UK against SOC groups and networks operating internationally, at the border and online;
- Dismantle the highest-harm organised crime groups and networks;
- Lead and co-ordinate national law enforcement agencies in tackling serious and organised crime within the UK;

- Intensify work to tackle the threat from hostile states, corrupt elites, cyber and economic crime;
- Play a full role in delivering the Government's wider strategy to reduce crime and respond to national security threats.

In recognition of the scale of the challenge, we have agreed funding over the next three years through the 2021 Spending Review, which will enable the NCA to enhance its cross-cutting investigative capabilities, increase its understanding and combat the highest harm criminals and threats. In light of the invasion of Ukraine, the Government will also work with the NCA using the powers of the Economic Crime Act to remove key barriers to using Unexplained Wealth Orders and target corrupt elites and their professional enablers. To beat those seeking to bypass our severe economic sanctions against Russia, we have established a 'Kleptocracy' cell in the NCA that focuses on corrupt elites laundering their funds and material assets within the UK.

The NCA continues to show great commitment and success in its fight against SOC. The Annual Plan outlines how it will achieve this. It is a privilege to work with the NCA and its superb staff to keep the UK safe.

Rt. Hon. Priti Patel MP



Statement by the Director General

I am proud to share the NCA's Annual Plan for 2022/23, which sets out our priorities for the year ahead and how we will deliver them.

Our National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime for 2022 identified the major crime trends which will drive our activity over the coming year. The criminal use of technology is evolving and is a key enabler of all SOC threats. Online criminality is growing exponentially, with criminals exploiting technology and the online environment to commit fraud, sexually abuse children, and deploy ransomware. Criminal business models – adapted and developed in response to Covid-19 measures – have become business as usual. Criminals may well also seek to make the most of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine; we will work with our partners to ensure we respond effectively. Faced with a threat that is increasingly complex and global in nature, it is more important than ever that the UK's response to SOC is cohesive, effective and targeted against the most damaging threats.

In 2021/22, we seized over 237 tonnes of illegal drugs and realised cash seizures and restraint orders totalling over £350m, denying criminals access to the proceeds of their crimes. We have taken over 120 firearms off the streets and safeguarded almost 400 children from sexual abuse. In the UK, we built on our excellent operational collaboration with Police Scotland and supported the implementation of the Criminal Finances Act 2017 in Northern Ireland – improving our ability to proactively target dirty money. Globally, we worked with international partners to implement a holistic approach to criminals targeting the UK.

But there is more to do. With our three year funding settlement, and a growing budget of around £800m, we are now in a better position to plan and build an Agency for the future – improving our technology, investing in our officers and sharpening our operational focus.

The Home Secretary has set us five new Strategic Priorities, with this Annual Plan being the first stage in delivering them. To deliver against these Strategic Priorities, I have set four operational priorities for the Agency. We will increase our understanding of, and impact on, the criminals causing the most harm; strengthen our leadership role with partners and the public; build our workforce to meet the future threat; and improve the foundations on which we deliver operations.

This Annual Plan sets out how we will deliver strong operational performance and build for the future. I and the rest of the Agency remain firmly committed to ruthlessly targeting the organised criminals who exploit the vulnerable, damage our economy, and threaten our communities. We are here to protect the public, and we are proud to do so.

Graeme Biggar CBE



Annual Plan on a Page¹

Our Mission

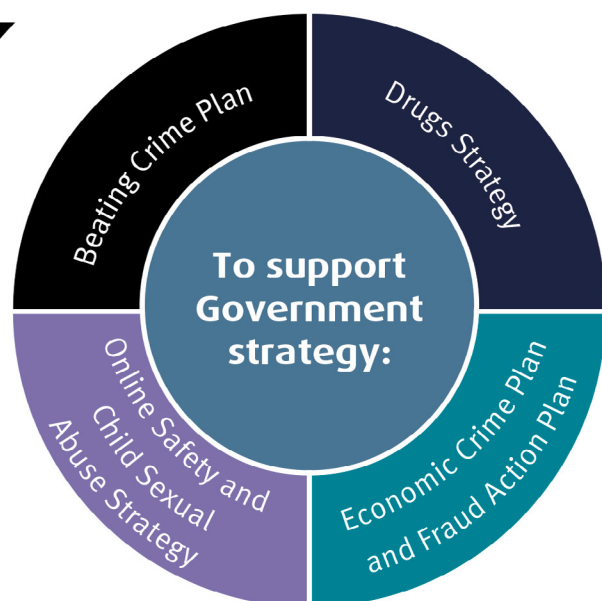
Leading the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime

Home Secretary's Strategic Priorities

1	2	3	4	5
Protect the integrity of the UK against serious and organised crime groups and networks operating internationally, at the border and online.	Dismantle the highest harm organised crime groups and networks.	Lead and co-ordinate national law enforcement agencies in tackling serious and organised crime within the UK.	Intensify work to tackle the threat from hostile states, corrupt elites, cyber and economic crime.	Play a full role in delivering the Government's wider strategy to reduce crime and respond to national security threats.

Director General's Operational Priorities

1	2	3	4
Increase our understanding of, and impact on, the criminals causing the most harm.	Strengthen our leadership role with partners and the public.	Build a workforce that meets the future threat.	Improve the foundations on which we deliver operations.



Underpinned by our core values:

Flexibility

Integrity

Respect

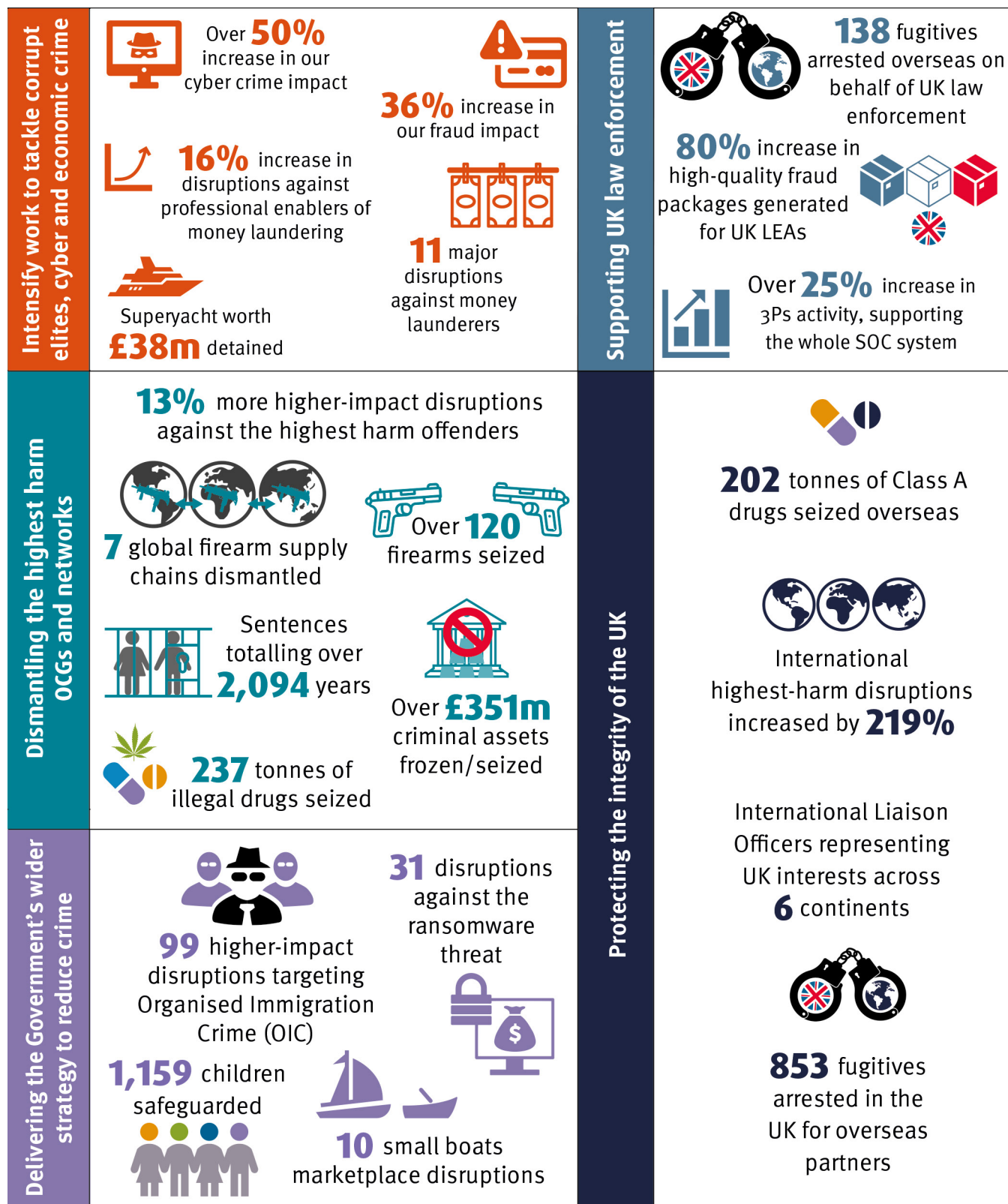
Serving the Public

Transparency

¹ The NCA's Annual Plan reflects the conclusions of the Agency's internal business planning process, and is published for public record.

2021/22 in numbers*

In 2021/22, NCA activity led to:



*Figures are to end of Q3 2022 and are compared to partial year-to-date figures from 2020/21.

Home Secretary's Strategic Priorities

The Government is committed to protecting the British people by cutting crime and enhancing our national security and prosperity. Tackling the ever-evolving threat posed by serious and organised criminals remains key to meeting this challenge. The NCA's core mission is to protect the UK from the threat of SOC, working with partners to lead the national response.

The Home Secretary has set the following Strategic Priorities to ensure the NCA has a clear understanding of where its efforts should be focused over the coming years. The Agency will:

1. Protect the integrity of the UK against SOC groups and networks operating internationally, at the border and online.	The NCA will help protect the UK's physical and virtual border from the impact from illicit commodities, organised immigration crime – with a focus on human trafficking and the threat from small boats – and online harms. This will be achieved by intervening upstream, close partnership working through international network, and enhanced targeting both at the UK border and online. It will collect, share, exploit and respond to intelligence to disrupt criminals and choke off supply upstream and at the border.
2. Dismantle the highest-harm organised crime groups and networks.	The NCA will lead law enforcement to target the most determined and sophisticated criminals, specifically those who are beyond the reach of local and regional policing and require the Agency's specialist capabilities. It will drive down the threat by disrupting critical enablers such as corrupt insiders and criminal communications platforms, and erode the criminals' profit motive by denying them access to illicit commodities and financial assets.
3. Lead and co-ordinate national law enforcement agencies in tackling SOC within the UK.	The NCA will work in close partnership with Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU), national policing, local authorities and the private sector to strengthen the response to SOC. It will do this by developing and disseminating intelligence which creates opportunities to tackle harm in our communities, and by investing in the development and delivery of specialist capabilities which ensure that no criminals are beyond the reach of law enforcement.
4. Intensify its work to tackle the threat from hostile states, corrupt elites, cyber and economic crime.	As part of the UK's response to Russia's war with Ukraine, the NCA will target illicit finance, sanctions evasion, corrupt elites and their professional enablers, using the full powers established under the Economic Crime Act and the enhanced capability delivered through the Kleptocracy Cell. The NCA will work with partners to defend the UK from cyber threats, responding to critical cyber incidents, disrupting the activities and degrading the capabilities of hostile states and criminals.
5. Play a full role in delivering the Government's wider strategy to reduce crime and respond to national security threats.	The NCA will strengthen the response to online harms and fraud; support the delivery of the HMG Drugs Strategy and CSA Strategy and make a unique contribution to the Beating Crime Plan. In each case, NCA activity will reduce the harm suffered by the victims of crime. The NCA will also enforce new legislation, remaining responsive to sharply rising or emerging organised crime and national security threats.

The Home Secretary expects that the NCA will set out how it intends to deliver against these priorities in its 2022-25 Business Plan.

Director General's Operational Priorities

To fulfil our mission and deliver against the Home Secretary's Strategic Priorities, the Director General has set four operational priorities for the Agency. These priorities will guide our activity during the first year of our three-year Business Plan. We will **Pursue** serious and organised criminals and work closely with our partners to deliver **Prevent, Protect** and **Prepare** outcomes (known as the **4Ps**), in line with the Serious and Organised Crime Strategies for England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

	1. Increase our understanding of, and impact on, the criminals causing the most harm	2. Strengthen our leadership role with partners and the public	3. Build a workforce that meets the future threat	4. Improve the foundations on which we deliver operations
We will:	<p>Target the most sophisticated and irreplaceable enablers of crime when we collect intelligence.</p> <p>Increase the proportion of NCA operations focused on the most complex and harmful criminality.</p> <p>Improve the way we task investigations to partners, ensuring we all operate at the right level.</p> <p>Enhance our ability to measure the long-term impact we have on the threat.</p>	<p>Be a visible operational leader, driving the wider UK 4P response in support of key Government priorities.</p> <p>Increase public understanding of what we do and how they can help us and protect themselves.</p> <p>Further enhance our collaboration with the private sector, including in tackling fraud and CSA.</p>	<p>Set a new strategic direction for the Agency.</p> <p>Ensure our people strategy is aligned with our operational priorities.</p> <p>Improve our officers' ability to respond to emerging criminal and technological challenges.</p> <p>Recruit officers that represent the community we serve and strengthen our culture of inclusion.</p>	<p>Continue our digital transformation to ensure we have the critical technology, infrastructure and intelligence capabilities we need to operate effectively.</p> <p>Make greater use of technology to improve the way we handle data, helping our officers to do so.</p> <p>Make certain we are ready to leave our London headquarters in 2025.</p>

We will undertake key activity to deliver our priorities and measure our success.

	1. Increase our understanding of, and impact on, the criminals causing the most harm	2. Strengthen our leadership role with partners and the public	3. Build a workforce that meets the future threat	4. Improve the foundations on which we deliver operations
We will do this by:	<p>Raising the threshold at which we take on a new operation, focusing on investigations that only a national Agency can do.</p> <p>Using our National Data Exploitation Capability (NDEC) to identify the highest-value targets faster and share information with partners.</p> <p>Stepping up our response to corrupt elites, dirty money and kleptocracy.</p> <p>Being clinical in drawing operations to a close, freeing capacity to disrupt criminals causing the most harm.</p>	<p>Leading the delivery of a new strategy for national law enforcement functions and coordinating national action plans to tackle the threat.</p> <p>Building a stronger communications team that can proactively engage with the public.</p> <p>Establishing the UK's Designated Reporting Body for CSA.</p> <p>Supporting delivery of Government's Beating Crime Plan, Fraud Action Plan, and strategies to tackle Illicit Finance, Drugs and OIC.</p>	<p>Developing and beginning to implement a new long-term Strategy.</p> <p>Implementing a new framework that focuses on outcomes and helps us place officers and their skills in the right place.</p> <p>Introducing new career pathways that help our officers develop within the Agency.</p> <p>Driving and monitoring the success of inclusion and diversity initiatives.</p>	<p>Investing more money in digital platforms, intelligence collection and data exploitation.</p> <p>Continuing to roll out training programmes for officers in data and information management.</p> <p>Implementing the first stage of our long-term strategy to improve and streamline our estate.</p>
We will know we are successful when:	<p>We achieve impactful disruption in our investigations at an earlier stage than before.</p> <p>More of our operations are disrupting the most harmful criminals.</p> <p>Collectively we and our partners have a greater impact on significant threats like Illicit Finance and OIC.</p> <p>We can better articulate our contribution to wider Government priorities.</p>	<p>The national operational response to the threat is more cohesive, more efficient and more effective.</p> <p>More of the public can describe what we do and proactively take action to counter SOC.</p> <p>The impact of fraud and CSA on UK victims is degraded.</p>	<p>We can directly map our performance to our strategic and operational priorities.</p> <p>Our skills are well-aligned to future demand.</p> <p>More of our talented officers stay in the Agency and progress laterally as well as being promoted into the areas we need them most.</p>	<p>We carry less risk as an Agency and can apply technology to our operations in a smarter way.</p> <p>We manage and share data more efficiently and more securely.</p> <p>We have a clear plan for moving London based officers to new sites.</p>

Measuring impact and managing risk

Measuring impact

Our performance is measured at four levels: activity, output, outcome and impact. Activities lead to services or products delivered (outputs). The outputs start to bring about change (outcomes) and this change contributes to the overall impact.

In 2022/23 we will introduce a new framework to measure our performance. The framework will be outcomes-based and ensure we are measuring our impact, rather than simply recording our activity. It will assess how effectively we are deploying our capabilities against the most sophisticated and harmful offenders. This will include those who provide the expertise and infrastructure that enable SOC offending.

We expect to track progress in Year 1, with substantial growth in impact achieved by the end of the three-year Business Plan period.

The performance framework will dock directly into Government performance reporting, meaning we can more easily measure our contributions to initiatives such as the Beating Crime Plan, the Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy, and the new National Cyber Security Strategy. It will also allow us to better track our progress in delivering our Strategic and Operational Priorities.

Managing risk

The NCA Board sets the Agency's risk appetite annually, with regular oversight of our corporate risk profile provided through our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. We manage our risk through a framework that allows us to understand, evaluate and mitigate risks across all business areas, while providing assurance that controls are appropriate and effective. The most significant risks to the Agency are recorded on our Corporate Risk Register which is updated regularly and subject to rigorous scrutiny.

In 2022/23, we will prioritise the mitigation of five of our corporate risks: Penetrating Criminal Communications, Cyber Defences, Information Management, Intelligence Failure, and Data Utilisation. Addressing these risks and ensuring compliance with our statutory obligations will ensure we maintain public trust and confidence, thereby maintaining our authority to operate.



NCA and partners



We are proud to work with partners across all sectors to deliver a comprehensive response to SOC – in the UK, at the border, and online. SOC remains a global threat, so we maintain a network of international liaison officers in key locations around the world. To support delivery of our four operational priorities, in particular bolstering our leadership role, we will focus our partnership work in the following areas:

Enhancing our collaboration with national security partners to ensure we have the capabilities we need for the future	Working more closely alongside regional policing to drive efficiency and greater overall impact	Building on our strong private sector partnerships
<p>We will seek opportunities to drive interoperability across our estate, with the aim of delivering enhanced operational benefits, driving diversity and greater value for money.</p> <p>We will continue to ensure the right data is available to exploit across the intelligence and wider national security community, sharing intelligence as widely as possible to achieve operational outcomes. We will support the analytical community by improving tools, skills and professional support.</p> <p>On digital operations, we will work collaboratively on capability development, interoperable technologies and policy change to mitigate the risks posed to our ability to collect intelligence.</p> <p>We will leverage research and development from governments, academia and the private sector, co-creating solutions to enhance our capabilities through science, technology and innovation.</p>	<p>We will fulfil our commitment to the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to better integrate our business planning with ROCUs – scoping opportunities to share or jointly build capabilities and training and development.</p> <p>We will scope opportunities for co-location, providing efficiencies and improving collaboration – working closely with the Association for Police and Crime Commissioners and the NPCC lead for SOC.</p> <p>We will grow our partnership approach to tackle illicit finance and cyber crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Economic Crime Centre will coordinate and task the operational response. • The National Cyber Crime Unit will work with ROCUs to consolidate the Law Enforcement Cyber Crime network. <p>We will build on our strong relationship with the Crown Prosecution Service to achieve criminal justice outcomes more quickly.</p>	<p>We will drive CSA threat reduction through chairing the Virtual Global Taskforce, reducing the vulnerability of children and young people to online CSA through training, a multi-audience approach, and continued engagement with industry to address online harms.</p> <p>We will upskill financial institutions in recognising the proceeds of OIC and modern slavery and human trafficking (MSHT).</p> <p>We will protect legitimate business from exploitation through our work with the firearms trade and industry.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the cyber security community and businesses to tackle cybercrime.</p> <p>We will work with academia and NGOs to better understand SOC threats, enhance the response, and support victims.</p> <p>We will continue to expand our work with the financial and technology sectors to tackle economic crime, including fraud against the public.</p>

We are also working with Government agencies and regulators operating at the national level, including HMRC, the Serious Fraud Office, the Financial Conduct Authority, Ofcom, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement, to align our three-year business plans, find ways to work better together and identify opportunities to invest in joint capabilities and interoperable technology.

Our work in Scotland and Northern Ireland

Policing and criminal justice are devolved matters in Scotland and Northern Ireland. As a UK-wide organisation, we ensure our activity within both jurisdictions takes full account of their specific and differing legislative, operational and political requirements, whilst also respecting the primacy of the respective police forces and prosecution authorities.

We work collaboratively with local, national and international partners to identify, tackle and disrupt SOC threats impacting Scotland and Northern Ireland, and we remain committed to protecting their communities.

To achieve this, we will actively maintain positive working relationships with our partners in Scotland and Northern Ireland, maximising opportunities for further collaboration that benefit their responses to the threat. Our Director General (Operations) will be the strategic lead for the NCA's relationships with partners in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Scotland

The delivery of the NCA's functions in Scotland is governed by a memorandum of understanding with Scottish Ministers and with the Lord Advocate's office. The Director General designates appropriately trained and qualified NCA officers with the powers of a Scottish constable. We are able to conduct our own operations in Scotland with the consent of the Lord Advocate. In addition, the full range of our national capabilities, services and functions is available to Police Scotland and other Scottish law enforcement partners, to support and enhance their operations.

This year, we will focus on:

Organised Crime Partnership	Specialist Capabilities	New and emerging threats	Local strategic priorities
Driving a strong and operational response to the SOC threat. Actively developing opportunities to broaden and develop our collaborative effort across the SOC landscape, taking an innovative and proactive approach.	Broadening access to NCA specialist capabilities and growing joint investigative capabilities to tackle priority threats. Collectively ensuring these capabilities are targeted where they will have the greatest impact and strengthen the overall Scottish response to SOC.	Monitoring and responding to changes in serious and organised criminality using our international reach and strong operational partnerships.	Supporting the delivery of local strategic priorities through analysis of key threats, sharing our insights to inform the overall SOC response in Scotland. Deploying our major and serious crime teams to support Police Scotland's priority investigations.

In undertaking the above, we will actively contribute to the objectives of Scotland's SOC Strategy, whilst also supporting the work of the Scottish SOC Taskforce and the production of the Scottish Multi-Agency Strategic Threat Assessment.

Northern Ireland

The delivery of the NCA's functions in Northern Ireland is governed by memoranda of understanding with the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The Director General designates appropriately trained and qualified NCA officers with the powers of a Northern Ireland constable.

This year, we will focus on:

Operational response	New and emerging threats	Policy-level changes and the strategic intelligence picture	Community engagement
Exploring new joint operating models with PSNI and other law enforcement partners, to tackle SOC in Northern Ireland and at its border. Scoping opportunities for increased co-location and access to joint investigative capabilities. Providing specialist capabilities to Northern Ireland law enforcement partners.	Monitoring and responding to changes in serious and organised criminality using our international reach and strong operational partnerships.	Working with the Northern Ireland Department of Justice in support of their Organised Crime Strategy. Providing intelligence and threat assessments to support the Organised Crime Task Force and wider collaborative, multi-agency approach.	Working with partners to increase our reach and improve our messaging to Northern Ireland communities, better protecting them from harm. Alongside PSNI, improving our engagement with senior leaders and community groups.

We will have due regard to the Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-25 and Annual Performance Plan, and will support the strategic vision outlined within the Organised Crime Strategy (Northern Ireland) 2021-2024. We will also offer the full range of our capabilities to support the Paramilitary Crime Task Force, and play our part in the Joint Agency Task Force, helping to deliver effective operations across the island of Ireland.

We operate in Northern Ireland under a General Authorisation. We have strict internal requirements regarding the understanding of, and adherence to, the PSNI Code of Ethics. Any NCA officer carrying out any function in Northern Ireland must undertake training on the Code of Ethics and pass the assessment. The Director General values the continued opportunity to appear before the Northern Ireland Police Board on a biannual basis.

NCA resource and budget

Our total budget for 2022/23 is £797.7m. This represents an overall increase of £86m (12%) compared to 2021/22, predominantly reflecting increased funding for data and technology investment (£42m), pay inflation (£10.4m), plus c. £40m additional funding for operational priorities such as the HMG Drugs Strategy, CSA Designated Body, Counter Kleptocracy Cell and Joint International Crime Centre.

Our budget is made up of a number of different funding streams.

- Vote funding is secured through our Supply Estimate and voted by Parliament. This comprises **79%** of our budget.
- External funding is from a number of other funding streams, spanning different bodies, making up the remaining **21%** of our budget.

This is shown in Table 1 below.

The 17 bodies that provide the external funding streams decide annually whether to continue their funding of the NCA.

Table 1: Indicative NCA Budget**

	RDEL (£m)	CDEL (£m)	Total (£m)
NCA Core Vote Funding	530.3	101.3	631.6
Admin*	37.4		37.4
Programme*	492.9		492.9
Capital*		101.3	101.3
External	130.1	36	166.1
Other Home Office Allocations	116	36	152
Funding from other government departments	14.1	0.0	14.1
Total – cash funding	660.4	137.3	797.7

* To be confirmed as part of the Main Estimate process 2022/23

** Numbers include decimal place roundings

The figures in Table 1 are in line with the budget controls agreed with the Home Office and HM Treasury and reflect the NCA Board's draft budgetary targets. As a non-ministerial department, the NCA requires Parliamentary approval of its Vote funding for 2022/23. The figures in Table 1 cover the costs of our planned activities.

The external funding increases reflect continued investment to deliver additional activities which will require the whole Agency to successfully deliver performance linked to the new investment.

In addition we received funding for non-cash items such as depreciation and annually managed expenditure (AME) for legacy costs

such as pension liabilities. These funding streams are subject to a separate Home Office allocation process, which requests Parliamentary approval for funding to meet the actual costs incurred in the year.

The budget does not address all of the Agency's priorities nor many of its financial pressures. These include our estates strategy, legacy data and technology costs, and cross-Government efficiencies requirements. We have committed to making savings this year to relieve these pressures.

At the end of 2021/22, we employed c. 5600 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers. By the end of 2022/23, we plan to grow to c. 5900 FTE officers.



 **NCA**
National Crime Agency



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