



CEO's Quarterly Report

July - September 2014

News

Modern Slavery Bill next steps

The Modern Slavery Bill continues to progress through Parliament and is approaching its final stages in the House of Commons. The next time the committee meets in October will hold great interest for the GLA. This looks set to be the date when members will discuss a possible amendment to the legislation concerning the GLA remit.

The proposed change states that the legislation should 'enable the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to tackle modern day slavery' and puts forward two different suggestions that would allow this. The first is for a review of the GLA's remit and a report to be sent back to the House within a year of the Bill receiving Royal Assent. The second calls for the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act to be amended to include other areas of work where modern slavery or trafficking may be taking place

The GLA has been heavily involved in helping to draft this new legislation with Chief Executive Paul Broadbent and Chair Margaret Beels having previously given evidence to the select committee.

Modern Slavery campaign and hotline launched

A campaign to raise awareness about modern slavery in the UK has been launched by the Home Office. The GLA helped advise on the content and subject matter for the TV advertisements, which target the public, businesses and Government partners. As well as the advertising campaign, also introduced have been:

- A modern slavery helpline 08000 121 700, to encourage reporting of modern slavery examples. Calls are anonymous if desired.
- A [modern slavery website](#), providing more information on the types of slavery, the signs to spot, the reporting mechanism and the appropriate referral processes for victims

Keeping track of victims

The GLA is set to take steps to improve its chances of gathering evidence and securing successful prosecutions by liaising more effectively with victims of exploitation. The plan is to assign the role of Victim Liaison Officer to one of the existing operational staff for a period of six months in order to provide greater support before during and after the court process and, more importantly, to assist the victim to return to some degree of normality. The intention is that by doing so, fewer workers will be 'lost in the system'.

Chair reappointed - board changes

Current chair of the GLA Margaret Beels has been re-appointed for a further two years and will oversee agreed governance reforms. The moves were announced in Parliament by Karen Bradley, the Home Office Minister for Modern Slavery and Organised Crime. MPs also agreed the 'Draft GLA Regulations for 2014', which reduce the GLA board from 29 members to nine, streamlining the governance processes as specified in the regulations.

In presenting her proposals to the committee, the minister said: "Reforming the board in the way provided for in the regulations will enable the GLA to better adapt to the changing circumstances that it faces. The Government wishes to bring the regulations forward now to ensure effective recruitment of new board members, starting this summer."

She added that the aim was to create a board that had the best skills and expertise in the sectors being regulated, as well as commercial, financial and legal experience - plus knowledge in the regulation of comparable sectors. The minister also said she was pleased the incumbent Chair had agreed to extend her term at the GLA.

Strengthening links in the regions

The GLA is looking to improve links with the police, labour users and other non-Government Organisations across the UK by appointing regional Single Points of Contact from existing enforcement staff. Volunteers have been sought to cover: Scotland, Wales, North East, Yorkshire & Humberside, North West, West Midlands, East Midlands, South East, Eastern region, South West and London. The intention is to develop stronger links by providing a consistent and familiar contact within the GLA for all partners and stakeholders from a particular region.

Events

NFU 'Seasonal Labour' seminar

GLA Chief Executive Paul Broadbent and board member David Camp, of the Association of Labour Providers, have addressed farmers on how the supply chain can work together to reduce exploitation. They also explained to delegates at the National Farmers' Union seminar how growers can secure labour legally and safely now that the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) has been scrapped. The GLA's strategy proposes a clear and strict focus for the GLA on the gross abuse and exploitation of workers by rogue gangmasters. It also states a firm intention for the GLA to achieve greater efficiency and target its increasingly limited budget and resources through enhanced intelligence sharing, working in partnership and by adopting a risk-based approach to inspections and enforcement.

Crimestoppers National Conference

A presentation explaining the plight of vulnerable and exploited workers and how the GLA can work with others to help them was well received at Crimestoppers' annual conference. After addressing the event in York, Chief Executive Paul Broadbent was invited to become a patron of the charity and gratefully accepted.

Operations

Operation Triage

Eight people were arrested after a series of successful warrants were carried out in Plymouth and Cornwall as part of a major investigation into human trafficking and modern slavery. Search warrants were executed at five properties in Plymouth and one address in Bodmin. Police arrested eight people, five women, aged between 26 and 34, and three men, aged between 35 and 37, on suspicion of trafficking people into the UK for the purpose of labour exploitation and on suspicion of money laundering.

Seven men, all suspected victims of human trafficking and Czech nationals, were recovered to safety and taken to a reception centre. Thirteen children, thought to be linked to the suspects, were found at the addresses by police and social services and were taken to a place of safety.

This was the largest operation of its kind carried out into adult labour exploitation in Devon and Cornwall. More than 200 staff were involved from the police, the GLA, the National Crime Agency and other partner agencies including Plymouth City Council, British Red Cross, The Salvation Army and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Op Triage gathered momentum after an intelligence profile developed by the GLA identified potential instances of forced labour, trafficking and unlicensed gangmaster activity. This was shared with the local force.

Op Chabeta

Two Portadown men were arrested in a joint operation between the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the GLA following an investigation into suspected human trafficking and labour exploitation.

They have since been charged with a total of 50 offences and both remain on remand in custody. Samuil Covaci, aged 23, and Ioan Lacatus, aged 31, each face 12 people trafficking and 12 forced labour charges. They have both also been charged with acting as a gangmaster without a licence, while Mr Lacatus faces a further count of concealing property contrary to the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

A third man, aged 27, was also arrested as part of the operation but later released on police bail pending a report to the Public Prosecution Service. In the week prior to the arrests, 20 Romanian nationals had been rescued by the police from two locations in County Armagh, as part of the PSNI-led investigation. The 14 men and six women ranged in age from 20 to 48 and had been working in a meat processing factory.

Performance

IT Update

The GLA introduced the case management software application Crimson at the start of this year and it went live in April. The package allows in-depth recording, management and analysis of current incidents and investigations allowing the GLA to work more effectively and efficiently. Since it was implemented nearly 400 incidents have been recorded resulting in 172 investigations.

Quarter two 2014/15 – 1 July to 30 September 2014

Operational

- Application Inspections: 21
- Compliance Inspections: 16
- Licence Revocations: 4
- Workers identified as exploited: 118
- Ongoing Criminal Investigations: 35

Licence Totals -

- Full: 960
- With ALCs: 6

Financial

The GLA is projected to close at the year end within budget, including the required austerity savings. However, there are some external costs that may affect this should they be charged to the GLA account.

Parliamentary Questions

2014-15	PQ Totals	Subjects				
Quarter		Finance	Operational	Powers	Staffing	Board
Jul – Sep	1	0	1	0	0	0
Apr - Jun	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total (financial year to date)	2	0	1	1	0	0

Licensing and Legal

'Obstructive' Transline refused licence

A major West Yorkshire recruitment business was refused a new licence by the GLA after refusing to provide sufficient details relating to its travel and expenses scheme.

Qualitycourse Ltd, of Halifax Road, Brighouse – who trade as the Transline Group - supplied temporary workers to assemble pizzas for the retail sector – work that falls inside the GLA's regulatory sector. The company had held a licence since 2006 but allowed it to lapse through an in-house administration error in July last year. A fresh application was submitted in which the company stated that it turns over around £1 million in the food processing sector alone.

During the inspection process Qualitycourse requested that the new application be treated in isolation and stated it did not want the GLA to look into the compliance of the company under its previous licence. Throughout the subsequent correspondence the business was obstructive and proved reluctant to provide requested information about its operations under the lapsed licence.

For obstructing the inspection process, the GLA decided the named Principal Authority on the licence, Colin Beasley, and other named directors of Qualitycourse had failed the 'fit and proper' person test - a critical requirement for a GLA licence. A separate application submitted by Transline Europe Limited was also refused as directors who had failed the 'fit and proper' test for Qualitycourse were named on the board of the new company.

Other News

Project Advenus

Derbyshire Constabulary and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority joined forces to help businesses identify any workers who may have been trafficked into the county for the purposes of forced labour. Project Advenus involved a programme of visits to Derbyshire companies that might be at risk from trafficking within their labour supply chain.

Paul Broadbent, the GLA's Chief Executive Officer, said: "By teaming up with the police to visit Derbyshire businesses, operating in sectors that are typically targeted by traffickers, we hoped to educate people in how to spot the signs of trafficking and forced labour."

The GLA explained what the companies could and should do if they suspected trafficking was taking place within their workforce as well as how they might act to prevent it from occurring in future. Companies visited had either unknowingly employed trafficked individuals in the past, or used large numbers of agency and/or migrant workers so were flagged as potentially susceptible to forced labour.

Scottish update

A meeting was held with Police Scotland to discuss plans and developments for the GLA's work north of the border. Among the subjects tackled were the Modern Slavery Bill, cyber slavery and the possibility of embedding a GLA officer within the Crime Academy. If approved this employee would assist in identifying, assessing and assisting with forced labour and trafficking enquiries.