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The National Body for Business Crime Data

Since the start of the year the NBCS has demonstrated notable success with arrests of over 70 offenders and sentences of 100 years. By collating evidence from reported offences the NBCS has revealed links with organised crime teams and therefore challenged the view that business crime is 'petty theft' and a drain on police resources.

The NBCS has also helped provide much needed reassurance to staff that businesses are doing all they can to reduce the risks of crime and so better protect their people.

This ongoing success has led to the NBCS obtaining strong support from across the business community in a range of sectors and also from UK police forces.

Speaking at the Retail Fraud Conference in April, Chief Constable Sue Fish (National Police lead for Business Crime) spoke highly of the NBCS's achievements and encouraged the businesses present to sign up.

The NBCS is also collaborating with the Home Office, which has recently invited the NBCS to represent its members on the National Retail Crime Steering Group and to attend several round table events looking at tackling business crime.

NBCS members and partners continue to speak highly about the benefits of collaboration. For further details see: www.nationalbusinesscrimesolution.com/collaboration



'The more retailers who adopt a single point of contact through the NBCS, the richer the data becomes ...'

Raising business crime on the agenda

Increasing member numbers has led to an increase in data being shared with the NBCS. This has enabled better detection of those previously considered to be low level offenders, raising this up the policing agenda. Many forces now assess harm and risk before they will provide a police response.

In response to the NBCS collating linked offences and presenting this back to police together with impact assessments, many offences have been tasked for further action. NBCS intervention has also led to more forces taking cases forward as conspiracy charges, which hold a lot more weight when sentencing decisions are passed.

The co-operative

Phillip Willsmer, Risk Operations
Director for the Cooperative Group

observed: *'Retailers and businesses need a single point of exchanging data with law enforcement. If contact becomes fragmented there is a danger that incidents will either be duplicated or missed and this will not reflect an accurate picture of the retail crime landscape. The more retailers who adopt a single point of contact through the NBCS, the richer the data becomes, and this,*

coupled with the fact that law enforcement are now recording business crime, will assist in focusing both the police and our own resources in a collaborative approach to the benefit of all.

There have been several recent examples where NBCS engagement and support has been invaluable, most recently where NBCS intervention proved instrumental in the identification of offenders involved in a £160,000 fraud. The two-way communication keeps our colleagues updated with information regarding the offenders and their associated vehicles, ensuring they remain vigilant and providing early warnings – this intelligence has proved extremely valuable and is desired by all stakeholders. The NBCS have proved pivotal in keeping this subject live and providing momentum, especially where there was little appetite to investigate a positive line crime.

Their continued engagement has really steered some of our investigations in the right direction with a resulting arrest of offenders - and all this for an annual fee equivalent to the cost of a CCTV system!'

Notable successes

In addition to working with the police to apprehend those involved in business crime, the NBCS also benefits its members through the early alerting of emerging trends and hotspot areas. Since the start of the year the NBCS has circulated over 450 alerts, warning businesses of potential threats. These alerts have led to the identification of over 160 offenders and has enabled many more businesses to take targeted action against those who threaten their business and their staff.

Flagging vehicles

Since the start of the year the NBCS has flagged over 160 vehicles which has led to 31 arrests and the recovery of a significant amount of property. In one recent case, the NBCS provided vehicle information to action the arrest of a team engaged in rooftop burglaries.

When the vehicle was stopped a significant amount of cigarettes were recovered and returned to the member business. Sharing vehicle details also enables police partners to do ANPR analysis and profile the movements of suspicious vehicles. This helps pre-warn member businesses of where teams are active and has led to the detection of several offences by placing the vehicle in areas where offences have been reported to the NBCS.



Prolific shoplifters

Earlier this year NBCS activity led to the arrest and sentence of a prolific team involved in shop theft from fashion retailers in the North West.

A member business had notified the NBCS of a prolific shoplifter and research of the NBCS database revealed offences against several other member businesses. The NBCS raised an investigation and collated the linked offences. Circulation of images of the offenders led to further member businesses coming forward to state they had been victim to high value thefts from the same team. At least four member businesses had been targeted, with estimated losses of around £40,000.



The NBCS briefed the police and were successful in getting this raised at the North West Regional Organised Crime meeting for tasking. This led to Greater Manchester Police taking the lead and following an arrest in North Wales the collated matters were put for sentencing. The team was sentenced to over two year's imprisonment each.

Dawn Williams, Matalan Senior Risk Adviser, Central England and North Wales, commented:

'Over the last 18 months, our stores far and wide have been plagued by a team of prolific shoplifters. On the evening of 23 March 2016, via live updates from our stores, we were finally able to get the pair arrested outside one of our Nottingham branches. Thanks to the work NBCS put together, linking our data with arrests from other retailers and liaising as one point of contact with all the police forces affected, this duo received custodial sentences of 2 years and 3 months'.

Another fashion retailer affected by the same team said: 'Excellent coordination by the NBCS, and their ability to quickly gather intelligence and evidence from numerous retailers for the Police enabled positive action to be taken.'

Armed Robberies



NBCS alerts enabled member businesses to see patterns of armed robberies and to put additional security into the stores likely to be affected. The NBCS helped facilitate meetings with the relevant police force to ensure awareness of this series and of the target hardening put in place to reduce offences and help detect those responsible. This engagement led to the arrest of those responsible bringing this spate of offences to a timely end.

By collating linked offences the NBCS helped secure the conviction of this team who were sentenced to a total of over 40 years. Police commented that never before had they seen such significant sentences passed for this type of crime. The retailer involved thanked the NBCS and commented: 'This was a cracking result that shows that when people work together amazing results can happen'.

NBCS achievements

- Interventions led to 72 arrests - up by 37% compared with same period last year
- Alerts led to 161 suspects being successfully identified – up by 56% compared with last year
- NBCS activity led to arrest of teams costing businesses over £220,000
- Sentencing decisions led to over 100 years imprisonment including:
 - over 40 years for a team of armed robbers
 - over 2 years for a prolific shoplifting team
 - conspiracy charge of 9 years for team involved in self scan burglaries

NBCS data January to June 2016

Crime Trends and Linked Series

While burglaries and robberies continue to present issues for a number of our members, there has been a notable increase in fraud offences with both refund fraud and card fraud presenting a significant issue for many members.

Intelligence from 'The Hub'

Since the start of the year the NBCS has raised 66 investigations. These involve 37 police force areas and 44 businesses. Just under a half of all investigations raised involve several businesses from a variety of sectors.



Emerging MOs

Rooftop burglaries have been an issue since the start of the year with two teams being arrested for a series of offences across the UK. Despite these arrests there have been further offences noted in the Humberside area and the West Midlands. Analysis of the vehicles involved indicates the offenders are travelling from the West Midlands – work will continue to collate offences and flag vehicles involved.

There have also been a recent spate of offences where offenders are price switching items to obtain high value goods at a discounted price. Card fraud for gift cards has also been prevalent. Forged Scottish notes have presented an issue for many members from a range of sectors. These are widespread and involve 8 police force areas.

Hotspots

The West Midlands continues to present a problem with several offences and criminals originating from this area being investigated. Armed robberies within the Greater Manchester police area have increased, together with milk powder thefts. An increase in offences in the South East and London is noted, with a spate of refund frauds affecting fashion members.

Hot Products

Cigarettes continue to be one of the main commodities targeted but we have also seen notable increases in trolley push outs for alcohol, particularly involving foreign national teams that travel extensively across the UK. Offences to obtain cash remain high with investigations ongoing into a series of armed robberies. There has been an increase in cash stolen from tills during trading hours. Although these had stopped following the arrest of a main offender, further offences have since been reported. Attacks on delivery drivers have been prevalent over past months, but it is hoped that recent police interventions following engagement with the NBCS will see these offences brought to a timely end.

An increase in the theft of sun creams has been noted, repeating a pattern from last year. Images suggest the same team are involved. Trolley push outs of milk powder have recently increased as have offences involving bedding, where the offender damages items to obtain refunds. NBCS enquiries have found that the person responsible is known to police having previously received a sentence for offences involving high value lingerie.



Foreign National Offending

Due to the increase in offences involving Eastern European crime teams the NBCS has set up a separate flagging system to collate instances. The main issues are high value trolley push outs for alcohol, often with goods valued at around £1000 a time. Offences are widespread and go over numerous force areas and involve several NBCS member businesses.

This topic was discussed at a recent meeting with NBCS Grocery members and will be part of forthcoming discussions with senior police taking the lead on foreign national offending.



Law Enforcement

Following a significant increase in offending by foreign nationals, the NBCS has recently been invited to attend a meeting with a number of senior police leads responsible for addressing this type of crime along with the National Crime Agency (NCA). The intention is to pull together a profile on the impact this offending is having on UK businesses and to implement a joint response to tackle this growing issue.

The NBCS worked closely with the NCA last year to develop an analytical profile on cigarette offences and to highlight the impact on UK businesses. This was recognition that the NBCS now holds valuable intelligence that can be used far more effectively by law enforcement to assess the harm and risk many business crimes pose.

An initiative that the NBCS has been running with Kent police has enabled the force, for the first time, to understand the level of organised retail crime across their area and has also shown several links to more serious types of crime such as trafficking.

For information or to sign up please contact

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Collaboration

Together with obtaining police support and providing better information on potential threats, the main aim of the NBCS is to support its members across the country to achieve greater consistency when tackling business crime. The NBCS has therefore met with a wide range of partners from solution providers such as Facewatch and DISC, through to local and regional partnerships and organisations such as the National Association of Business Crime Partnerships to agree to joint working.

The NBCS is currently leading a working group looking at developing a local to national model that helps enhance the role of local partnerships as well as working with Chief Constable Fish to help further develop the Primary Authority model and expand this to more businesses and police force areas.

