



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

CEO Report to Board

20 September 2018

Introduction

Over the summer we have seen a surge in the number of construction companies putting their names to the information sharing protocol we developed with the industry.

Seven more leading companies and social enterprises have pledged to work with the GLAA in tackling modern slavery and labour exploitation. Since the protocol was launched in October 2017, influential organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) and the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) along with companies such as Sir Robert McAlpine and Morgan Sindall Group have signed up to the fight against modern slavery and labour exploitation.

Hand car washes continue to create headlines and raise concerns around slavery and exploitation. The GLAA has given evidence to MPs about its work to improve consumer confidence and protect vulnerable workers at hand car washes (HCWs).

The Environmental Audit Committee met in Parliament in 10 July to hear evidence from the GLAA, other regulators, and ministers about the impact of the growing number of HCWs operating in the UK.

We have also been working closely with the Clewer Initiative to support its new **Safe Car Wash** app - developed to allow the general public to engage with the problem. The app is a tool that, according to Clewer, will enable the largest community intelligence gathering exercise ever attempted in the United Kingdom.

Motorists are being encouraged to report concerns around exploitation and vulnerability of workers at HCWs using it. In the first few weeks more than 1,800 reports were received.

Since being granted new police-style powers by government to investigate exploitation across the labour market, the GLAA has commenced 305 investigations, 11% of which relate to the HCW sector. In addition, we have received 178 referrals from members of the public concerned about the operation of HCWs, with the most serious reports leading to enforcement activity and arrests.

In August the Framework Agreement between the GLAA and the Home Office was signed by myself, Board Chair Margaret Beels and the Permanent Secretary Sir Philip Rutnam.

The document sets out how the two organisations will work together and is an essential part of the foundation of the relationship between a public body and a sponsor department. It can be read [here](#).

And thanks to the efforts of GLAA colleagues and the support of Board members, we successfully delivered our Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18 to the National Audit Office in August.

Our approach to prevention has seen productive discussions continue with key stakeholders within the textiles sector around developing better sharing of information.

Our operational activity continues to have an impact. We supported West Yorkshire Police in the rescue of two children thought to have been trafficked into the UK. GLAA investigators joined detectives, neighbourhood policing teams, and the charity Hope for Justice in visiting a number of commercial premises in Halifax.

The children both aged 17 (one had been in the country since he was 15) were located in two stores where they were present with staff who were working. It is believed they were victims of human trafficking gangs and both were placed into the National Referral Mechanism for suspected victims of modern slavery and are now in the care of social services.

We also arrested a Bulgarian man and woman in two separate operations in Telford. The 32-year-old man and 51-year-old woman were arrested on suspicion of acting as unlicensed gangmasters under Section 12 of the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004.

In both cases, officers acted following intelligence that the suspects had been financially exploiting Bulgarian workers who had recently arrived in the UK.

A 42-year-old Romanian man was arrested on suspicion of modern slavery and gangmaster offences in Suffolk. We acted following allegations that the suspect had been supplying workers into the regulated food processing sector before controlling their work through accommodation, wages and other aspects.

He has been released under investigation pending further enquiries.

And we have seen convictions in Northern Ireland where a Romanian man was jailed and three Lithuanian men sentenced for separate gangmaster offences following investigations carried out by the GLAA.

A 29 year old man was sentenced to three months in prison after being convicted of acting as an unlicensed gangmaster. And the three Lithuanian men were all fined and ordered to pay offender levies after pleading guilty to acting as unlicensed gangmasters.

Performance

The GLAA's operational activity is covered separately within our Performance and Insight Pack.

Regional Seminars

The final events in our series of twelve regional seminars with GLAA stakeholders were held over the summer.

A separate paper looking at the seminars in detail has been prepared for the Board.

Freedom of Information Requests

There were ten FOIs received in the period of the CEO report of which;

- responses issued = 6
- Ongoing = 4
- Published on website = 5*

*Our FOI disclosure log shows our responses to requests made to the GLAA under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 that might be of wider public interest

No exemptions have been applied for this reporting period

<http://www.gla.gov.uk/who-we-are/freedom-of-information-requests-2018/>

Parliamentary Questions

Asked by	Ref	Question asked	Published response	Link
Baroness Kennedy of Cradley	HL9855	To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to combat modern day slavery in agriculture.	See below	http://www.gla.gov.uk/media/3659/baroness-kennedy-of-cradley-240718-modern-slavery-in-agriculture.pdf
<p>The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority operates a licensing scheme to regulate businesses that provide temporary labour in high risk sectors in the agricultural, shellfish gathering and food processing and packaging sectors, to protect workers from exploitation. The scheme is underpinned by licensing conditions, which require businesses to comply with employment and other relevant law. In addition, section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, requires all businesses operating in the UK with a turnover of £36 million or more to report on the steps they are taking to prevent and tackle slavery and human trafficking in their supply chains. While many businesses in the agricultural sector may not meet the turnover threshold, the legislation is having a knock on effect with many large businesses, including supermarket chains, providing support and advice to smaller businesses in their supply chains to improve standards.</p>				
Paul Blomfield (Sheffield Central)	157130	To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding has been allocated from the public purse to the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority for 2018–19; and how many staff that authority plans to employ in 2018-19.	See below	http://www.gla.gov.uk/media/3624/blomfield-250618-glaa-funding.pdf
<p>The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority has been allocated a resource expenditure budget of £6.55m and a capital expenditure budget of £0.650m for 2018-19. The Authority has budgeted to employ up to the equivalent of 127 full time staff in 2018/19.</p>				

