



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

Chief Executive's Report

April 2018

Introduction

As the GLAA approaches its first year anniversary the pace of activity, both operationally and strategically, continues unabated.

Operationally, it continues to increase its reach by taking the lead on more and more investigations. A total of 17 criminal investigations were opened in March, meaning it now have 99 ongoing in total.

A number of these currently sit with the CPS for charging decisions and the GLAA's aim is to convert its successful enforcement activity into successful outcomes (convictions, sanctions etc).

In early April the first two Labour Market Enforcement Undertakings (LMEU) were issued to two unlicensed gangmasters in the Wolverhampton area.

And Operation Brewer in the Liverpool area saw three people arrested for offences of modern slavery including forced labour. This was the biggest GLAA-led operation so far and attracted sizeable media coverage.

The GLAA's new interim chief executive Roger Bannister started on 16 April. This coincided with the authority's annual staff seminar and allowed Roger to meet and address colleagues.

The seminar saw colleagues come together for a two day event aimed at building better cohesion, enhancing engagement and morale. The GLAA is grateful to board chair Margaret Beels and members Bill Butler and Linda Dickens for their visible support and participation.

Strategically, the GLAA's prevention agenda activity continues at a pace with the authority increasing its engagement with key stakeholders in government, private sector and third sector areas.

Detailed work has been done to finalise the business plan for 2018-19 setting out the GLAA's priorities. This document will underpin and drive GLAA activity over the coming year.

The GLAA also finalised and is preparing for the release (at the time of writing) of its assessment regarding the nature and scale of the threat of labour exploitation across the country. This data will be shared with operational partners and used to further promote the work and role of the GLAA.

Finance

The GLAA underspent by around £1m on its revenue budget. This underspend had been projected since September and was as a result of delayed recruitment of the new Labour Abuse Prevention Officers. These staff have now been fully recruited but they were appointed later than initially expected when the budget was initially set.

The GLAA has developed a savings plan to deliver five per cent efficiencies in 2018-19 and is working on a plan to deliver a further five per cent in 2019-20.

The GLAA continues to be supported through Home Office funding for the development of a new licensing system and the transfer of its IT infrastructure to the Home Office.

Human Resources

Recruitment and selection activity has resulted in eight new appointments – seven of which sit in operational roles. These are all due to join by the end of May.

In preparation for the transition to the Home Office IT platform we have been proactively submitting applications to the HO Vetting team to ensure that all GLAA colleagues have accounts to enable them to have IT access.

Work is also ongoing regarding the implementation of a new HR system along with collating end of year performance reviews for all colleagues.

Strategy/Prevention

The GLAA has been working closely with the HSE and major supermarkets regarding hand car washes on their forecourts. The authority is assisting the development of a code of practice, which also covers environmental and local authority issues, as well as issues crucial to the treatment of workers. The GLAA has agreed an approach where it will test this approach with the code potentially starting in September, across the East Midlands.

The authority will use the pilot area to link into the research by Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham.

The GLAA has met with BABTAC, one of the industry bodies that has an interest in the nail bars industry. The GLAA has outlined the approach it has taken with the Textile and Construction industries, regarding protocols for closer cooperation.

Having successfully created protocols with both the construction and textile industries, work continues to engage with stakeholders and develop their support to detect and prevent forced labour. The GLAA has agreed the textile information sharing protocol between the industry and public sector bodies and is now working with the industry over accessing what intelligence exists from their own audits. Some operational activity has already taken place and further activity will follow. Similarly, the construction protocol developed by the GLAA has an action plan in place for the industry on how it expects them to practically support and expand support for the protocol and assist in preventing forced labour.

Communications and Engagement

The GLAA continues to support and promote its operational activity by engaging with both traditional media and interacting through social media channels.

Coverage over the last six weeks has focused on this along with the first use of Labour Market Enforcement Undertakings (LMEUs) by the GLAA, the announcement of our new interim chief executive, the inquest into the death of former CEO Paul Broadbent, contributing to the Modern Slavery Helpline's Annual Assessment and a planned Government probe into hand car washes.

The GLAA is now an active participant in ongoing cross-Government communications activity, with the aim of building cohesion around the modern slavery agenda.

A new short film aimed at helping people better understand the current scale of modern slavery and labour exploitation, along with an enhanced understanding of the role of the GLAA, has been produced and was premiered at the staff seminar. This film will be shown at regional seminars before being rolled out further for use by partners etc.

Freedom of Information Requests FOIs

2018	FOI Totals	Subjects				
Quarter		Capital budget	Staffing & salaries	Licensing	Operations and tactics	IT
1 ST Mar - 25 th April	7	2	1	0	3	1

- Breakdown of IT hardware support contracts
- Details of referrals/inspections involving Home Office Immigration Enforcement.
- Courier service contracts (x 2)
- Number of Bangladeshi workers involved in any cases of exploitation over the past 10 years
- Statistical and operational performance of GLA/GLAA 2013-2017
- Staff pay and executive emoluments

Parliamentary Questions*

2018	PQ Totals	Subjects				
Quarter		Finance	Operational	Powers	Staffing	Board
1 Mar - 25 April	3	0	3	0	0	0

- Number of cases of illegal working passed from GLAA to Immigration Enforcement in each of the last five years
- What information on labour rights and access to advice and remedy routinely provided to workers during labour inspections conducted by GLAA
- Amount of compensation received by victims of trafficking identified by GLAA in each year since 2014.

***The GLAA has also recorded and published the following PQs that have been answered directly by the Home Office but which are of relevance to the GLAA.**

- Which Government department leads on the enforcement of regulations against illegal car washes?
- What steps the Home Secretary has taken to identify a new Chief Executive to oversee the operations of GLAA?
- What recent discussions held with GLAA on exploitation of labour in the car wash industry?
- What recent discussions held with GLAA on exploitation of labour in the nail bar industry?