



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

GLAA69/11a Stakeholder Engagement Update

22 July 2020

Board Paper Reference – GLAA69/11a - Stakeholder Engagement update

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the Board with an overview of key stakeholder engagement activity during the last quarter.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Board note the update and consider any further steps Board members wish to take in supporting the delivery of the GLAA's stakeholder engagement objectives.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Board has a standing item to receive updates from its formal liaison groups and plays an active role in stakeholder engagement through those groups as well as more widely. However, it has also previously requested a wider update that demonstrates progress being made in line with the ambitions of the GLAA to engage effectively with its stakeholders.

4. Summary of Key Points

- 4.1 The lockdown period has not prevented GLAA from reaching out to partners; in fact it has been able to take the opportunity to reinvigorate its approach and bring some focus to engagement activity within all teams. During April everyone within the organisation was asked to consider their key stakeholders and supplied with a number of key messages to aid engagement with those they listed. Some central coordination was provided in order to avoid partners receiving multiple contacts, and following this partners at local, regional and national level were engaged by GLAA people. The contact made was aimed primarily at promoting the 'open for business' message and encouraging partners to continue being vigilant in looking for exploitation and reporting it in order that the GLAA could respond.
- 4.2 These messages were reinforced through an additional Partnership Bulletin issued in May, circulation of which now reaches 1,300 contacts, as well as through social media and the GLAA website. The bulletin has also benefited from increased engagement with partners, with the EAS now a regular contributor and other partners (including NMW team and HSE) approached to become involved. In May, contacts were surveyed to evaluate the effectiveness of the bulletin. 130 people replied and the overwhelming majority of those who replied said they found the bulletin valuable, with 84% of those surveyed saying they have a better understanding of the GLAA and/or labour exploitation and 48% saying they have changed their working practices to help prevent/identify worker exploitation as a result of the GLAA's communication.

- 4.3 GLAA has also been able to use the opportunity to bring partners together more readily through videoconference etc. to increase engagement during this period and use this to go beyond broadcasting messages. For example, a series of meetings convened by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC) were held with NGO and Trade Unions representatives to discuss the organisation's Covid response and to hear from partners with regard to issues they were seeing and concerns they had. GLAA colleagues were able to use these meetings to reassure partners with regard to some of those concerns. In particular, updates provided at meetings showed the organisation had remained operationally capable of safeguarding victims and continued to deploy. There was also an opportunity to explain the development and implementation of the temporary licensing scheme as there had been misplaced concerns this would lead to a lowering of standards in the regulated sector.
- 4.4 Technology has also been used to hold GLAA webinar sessions and speak at webinars hosted by other organisations. (including HMRC's National Minimum Wage team). As well as dedicated session for faith leaders, a wider webinar was held with Q&A hosted by Dan Scully, Nicola Ray and Frank Hanson. The organisation also hosted the IASC for a session in which she set out her priorities and took comments and questions from people across the organisation. A further session with EAS is also scheduled. A joint webinar with Boston College hosted by the Skills Education group was carried out to support the Op Aidant activity, with over 70 attendees.
- 4.5 These examples are in addition to the continuing engagement that has taken place across the organisation's operational spheres. The current Aidant activity, with operations taking place across late June and July focused on labour exploitation during Covid and further enforcement intensification scheduled for September, has been developed and delivered through engaging with partners at national and local level. Plans for Aidant have been shaped through engaging with partners and the significant mobilisation of partners in support of GLAA activity during this period demonstrates the strength of that engagement at the local and national level.
- 4.6 Within the regulation area, close engagement with partners is helping to shape the organisation's work on its compliance strategy. In particular, liaison with the Association of Labour Providers has continued following the Board's 'deep dive' session in April, with colleagues meeting with ALP to seek further views on the proposed approach and agree a process for ongoing engagement with the sector regarding this important strategic work. And close engagement with the National Crime Agency (NCA) has led to agreement to support the GLAA's intelligence function, by making available resources the NCA has secured to step up its response to Organised Immigration Crime. The resources should enable an additional two strategic analysts to work through a secondment into the Joint Slavery and Trafficking Analysis Centre.
- 4.7 The work to develop the GLAA's Single Enforcement Body programme is also being undertaken by engaging with key partners. As well as close working with Home Office, BEIS and the Director of Labour Market Enforcement's office, close engagement with the other precursor bodies has allowed the programme and its workstreams to be shaped in a more informed way.
- 4.8 Recent partnership work arising from engagement with key stakeholders also includes the awareness raising work of the organisation. In particular, a successful

Facebook campaign led by Crimestoppers has led to further work including a current campaign 'Slavery on your doorstep' focusing in particular on exploitation within the construction sector. The engagement both with NGOs in informing the Facebook approach and Crimestoppers itself has led to GLAA messages being far more widely disseminated than would otherwise have been the case.

- 4.9 Finally, the formal Liaison groups both met during June and notes are included within the Board papers. Holding the meetings via Zoom allowed for attendees to take part who may otherwise have not come to a meeting in Nottingham/London. The chairs of both meetings also used the opportunity to bring partners into the discussion more actively, with views from their perspectives proving valuable in informing the GLAA's strategic and operational approach. At the Worker/NGO meeting a proposal was brought forward following work from a number of partners and encouraged through engagement with the GLAA. This focuses on how partners can help the GLAA tackle the perennial challenge of worker reach and worker confidence in reporting the exploitation they face and has led to pilot activity being developed by FLEX.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

- 5.1 Stakeholder engagement is a key component of senior roles and therefore already provided for in terms of resources. Activities outlined above are contained within existing budgets.

6. Organisational Risks

- 6.1 The approach taken to engaging with stakeholders is designed to mitigate organisational risk, in particular reputational risk. The activity outlined above includes an example of how the GLAA was able to meet with and engage with NGO partners that had expressed concerns about the Covid response and provide assurances that the organisation remained capable and ready to protect workers despite lockdown, thus reducing reputational risk.
- 6.2 Increased engagement can increase the risk of demands that outstrip the GLAA's resources and reputational risk if partner expectations are not met. This risk is mitigated through a structured approach to dealing with partner requests and through dialogue with partners to ensure that resource limitations are understood at an early stage. The risk is also mitigated through harnessing partner resources to support GLAA objectives, as in the challenge of reaching workers as noted above.
- 6.3 There are also risks that relate to the ownership of stakeholder relationships where these are not clearly allocated and/or reach across a number of different colleagues. This risk is being mitigated through the allocation of key stakeholders within the quarterly plan and through stakeholder management featuring within objective setting for leadership colleagues.

7. Policy Implications and Links to Strategic Priorities

- 7.1 Effective stakeholder engagement underpins all of the strategic plan objectives.

8. Details of Consultation/EQIA

8.1 The Board has previously seen the stakeholder engagement strategy and tactical plans for comment. No EQIA has been carried out at this stage.

9. Background Papers and Relevant Published Documents

9.1 Minutes and notes from recent Liaison Group meetings are included with the papers.

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