

National Crime Agency inspection Vetting and anti-corruption part 2: How effective is the National Crime Agency at dealing with corruption? (April 2024)

Report: [National Crime Agency inspection Vetting and anti-corruption part 2: How effective is the National Crime Agency at dealing with corruption?](#)

Response from: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

The effectiveness of the National Crime Agency (NCA) in dealing with corruption has come under scrutiny as part of an ongoing inspection into its vetting and anti-corruption operations by HMICFRS. This part two review has highlighted some critical areas for improvement, which are essential for ensuring the integrity of the UK's law enforcement.

Upon implementation the outstanding recommendations from part one of this inspection, the demand on the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) is expected to significantly increase. Consequently, without additional resources, the NCA may struggle to provide the same level of support to police forces, potentially diminishing the overall effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts nationwide.

Furthermore, the inspection did not find recorded evidence of effective processes for prioritising or allocating work within the ACU at the NCA. To optimise its use of resources, the ACU must enhance its prioritisation of support and the assessment of risks associated with investigations. This improvement is crucial for making informed decisions and ensuring that high-risk investigations receive the attention they warrant. The recommendations necessitate the NCA to introduce its own IT systems, monitoring software, and a confidential reporting facility.

A significant gap has been identified in the NCA's access to corruption-related intelligence held by police forces. No single organisation currently has the mandate to coordinate this intelligence, which hampers the management of corruption threats. Establishing a national coordination centre for corruption-related intelligence could centralise efforts, providing a more accurate and comprehensive strategic threat assessment.

By 30 June 2024, it is imperative that chief constables ensure the NCA is informed about the outcomes of investigations into suspicious activity reports concerning their personnel. This information should then be summarised and included in the NCA's annual national strategic threat assessment, this approach would bolster accountability and enhance the assessment's accuracy.

Much focus has been made on the national vetting review. Whilst vetting is an important part of pre-employment checks, it is not the panacea to fixing policing issues. It is but a snap-shot in time. Recent cases of David Carrick would not have been prevented by better vetting, but by the handling of complaints quicker when they were made, rooting out any behaviour falling below policing with integrity, falling below what our communities deserve.

The effective implementation of these inspection recommendations and the provision of additional resources will play a pivotal role in enhancing the NCA's ability to combat corruption, thereby safeguarding the integrity of the UK's law enforcement agencies. In my national position as chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners I will keep a close eye on developments in this

space, ensuring a continued alliance between our 43 force areas and the NCA in tackling corrupt officers.

Donna Jones
Police and Crime Commissioner

Response from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is committed to continuing to build a strong working relationship with the National Crime Agency and working collaboratively to tackle corruption involving police officers and staff.

We are sighted on the work of the NCA and the recommendations it is implementing from part 1 and 2 of the vetting and anti-corruption inspection reports. In regard to part 2 of the inspection report the primary recommendation requiring greater emphasis for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is recommendation 4, which is as follows:

By 30th June 2024, Chief Constables should make sure they tell the NCA the outcome of investigations into Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) relating to their force’s personnel. The NCA should include a summary of this information in its annual national strategic threat assessment (STA). The Threat to the UK Law Enforcement from Corruption.’

Within HIOWC we have in place a robust system whereby if the NCA identify the subject of a SAR works for HIOWC, they send the SAR to our Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU), in these cases they will bypass the usual route of sending it to the Financial Intelligence Unit.

Within ACU we have in post 2 financially accredited staff so we can receive the SAR, assess and review it making all the necessary enquires. As part of the SAR we receive a feedback sheet and on completion of our enquiries we return the feedback sheet to NCA with updates relating to the decision and any actions taken. With regard to the actions, we do provide feedback on a case by case basis where they have determined the subject may work for HIOWC.

For all other referrals identified by the ACU at the point of allocation as not applying to a member of staff within HIOWC these are passed to the Financial Intelligence Unit where their processes will be applied or returned to the NCA

Sam De Reya
Deputy Chief Constable

Recommendations:

Recommendation 4: Investigating suspicious activity reports

By 30 June 2024, chief constables should make sure they tell the National Crime Agency the outcome of investigations into suspicious activity reports relating to their force’s personnel. The National Crime Agency should include a summary of this information in its annual national strategic threat assessment, *The Threat to UK Law Enforcement from Corruption*.



OPCC response: I will immediately seek assurances from my chief constable that there are clear and quick processes in place for informing the NCA of the outcome of investigations into suspicious activity reports relating to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary personnel.