

TACKLING ORGANISED

# EXPLOITATION

PROGRAMME

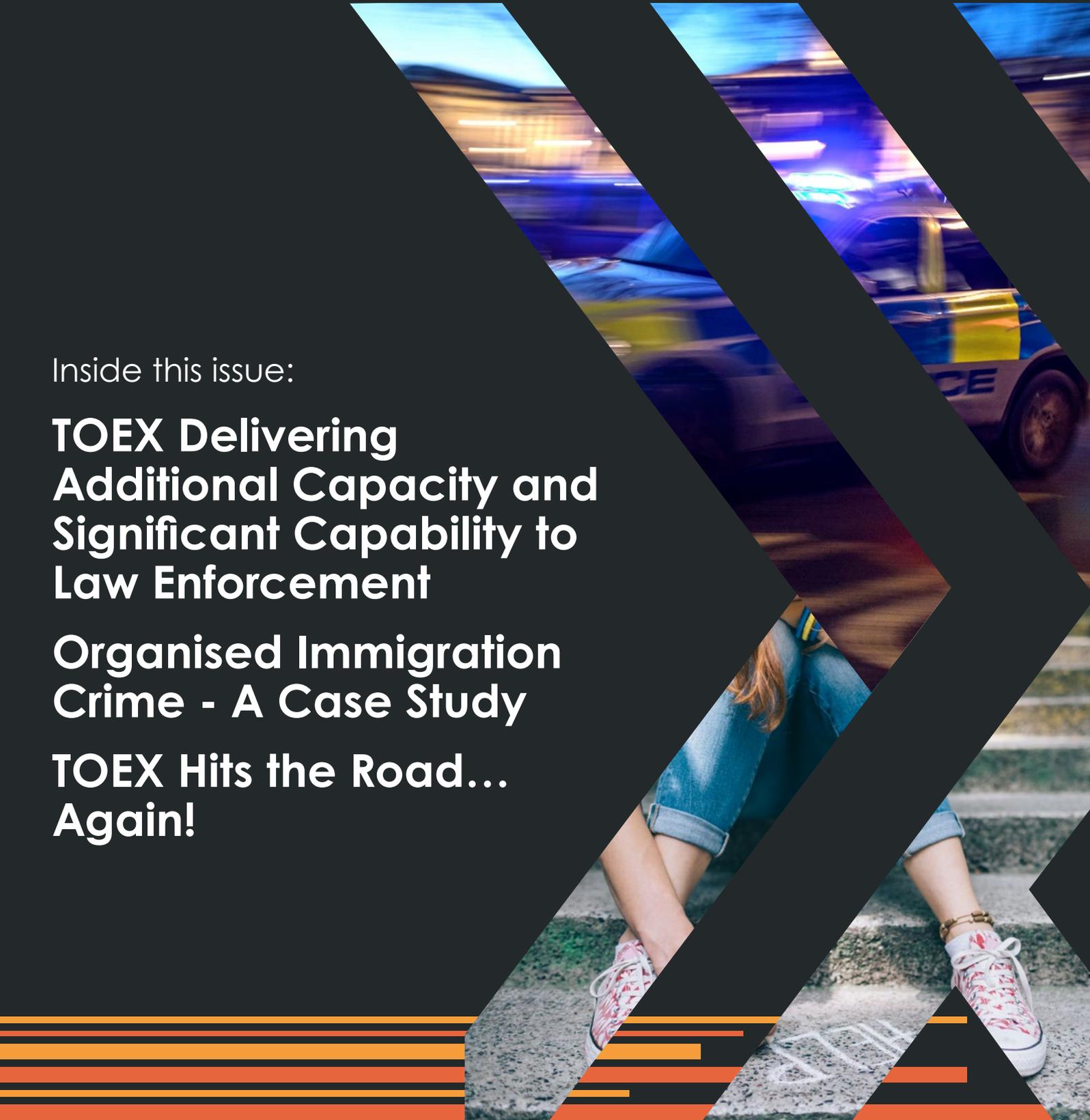
Issue 5 | April - June 2023

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**TOEX Delivering  
Additional Capacity and  
Significant Capability to  
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**Organised Immigration  
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**TOEX Hits the Road...  
Again!**



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## Strategic Update



TOEX continues to deliver against governmental and policing priorities in support of the investigation and disruption of high-harm threats. This is evidenced by the launch of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Taskforce in April, which has been established to enhance the policing response to group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse.

### Child Sexual Exploitation Taskforce

TOEX is already working hard to support forces and bring perpetrators to justice as part of tactical activity across the national network - currently, TOEX are supporting five of the Top 10 Highest Risk CSE Operations on the national Serious and Organised Crime Master List. However, it's clear there is much more to be done.

Led by the Hydrant Programme, TOEX, alongside the VKPP, will support the implementation of the CSE Taskforce, to identify and protect vulnerable children, whilst also improving national support for police forces in tackling sexually exploitative crime against them. TOEX's role is to develop intelligence opportunities in support of force safeguarding and crucially to identify and disrupt the activity of CSE perpetrators, breaking the cycle of abuse. As key partners and stakeholders, we will endeavour to update you on the work of the taskforce in future editions.

Finally, the operational delivery continues to go from strength-to-strength with TOEX colleagues supporting more than

**300 separate intelligence investigations, across 51 forces/organisations,**

with

**141 disruptions**

made against 54 operations. Crucially, more than

**300 safeguarding referrals**

have been made and

**18 separate organised crime groups (OCGs)**

have been identified and adopted that had not been recognised elsewhere in law enforcement, generating a unique opportunity to investigate and disrupt this criminality.

Whilst the majority of that effort to date has centred on modern slavery and human trafficking threats, emerging trends in child criminal and sexual exploitation, plus organised immigration crime have secured dedicated TOEX assets to enhance the tactical response in several investigations. These complex and serious investigations are found in every region, in every force, but TOEX is there to provide expertise and capacity in pursuit of timely and positive outcomes. So, 'Think TOEX'!

**T/Detective Chief Superintendent Kate Thacker**

TOEX Programme Director

# TOEX Delivering Additional Capacity and Significant Capability to Law Enforcement



The final report, following an independent evaluation of the Tackling Organised Exploitation (TOEX) Programme, has concluded that it is delivering additional capacity, significant capability, and improving the UK's understanding of the threat from organised exploitation as well as making significant savings to both law enforcement and wider society.

The evaluation has been carried out by Crest Advisory, who were commissioned as independent evaluators for the programme in February 2021 and are specialists within the field of crime and criminal justice. The team developed a framework to ensure the evaluation was objective and robust and it was subsequently extended in early 2022 to cover the first year of TOEX national implementation.

During the evaluation, Crest spoke to around 75 people (TOEX and non-TOEX) and drew upon a large range of TOEX and partner data sources to assess the programme.

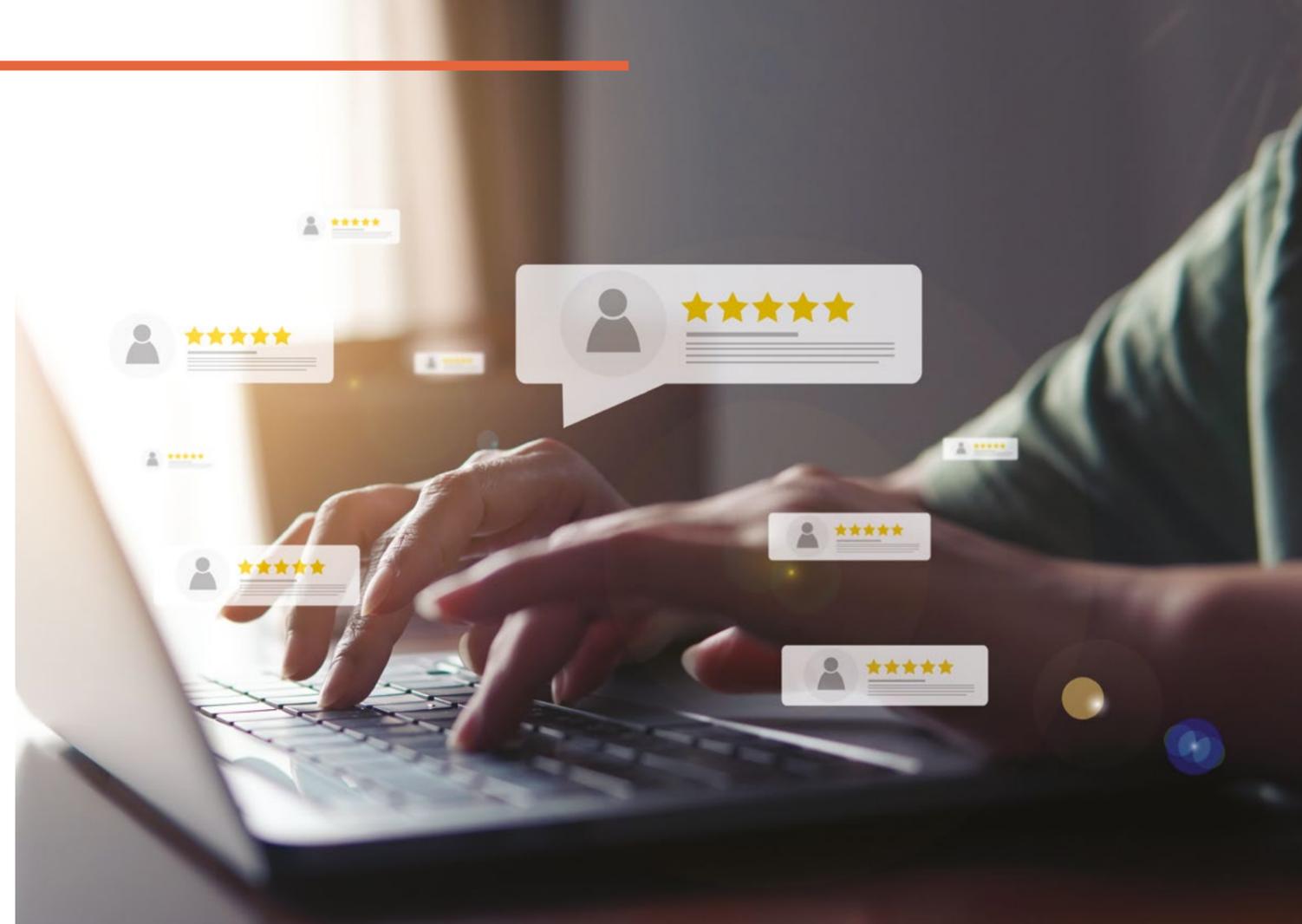
In evaluating the work of the embedded TOEX teams within each of the Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU), who provide dedicated intelligence and analytical expertise in support of forces, Crest concluded that "TOEX has provided vital capacity to the SOC system, supporting a growing number of investigations and ensuring they are moved forward and then closed down

when appropriate" and the programme "continues to identify hidden harm through proactive investigation of OE". In addition, "national stakeholders are confident that TOEX is having a positive impact on the SOC system through its whole-system approach and nationally coordinated, regionally delivered model".

Crest also evaluated the technical innovation across the network, the cloud-based capabilities environment in particular, which will house a number of data tools and apps to support forces and regions in tackling complex investigations and serious and organised crime. The report concluded that "the technical capabilities developed by TOEX are innovative and possess significant potential for the programme, wider law enforcement, and the state of police technology" and the "tools already developed for use within the capabilities environment have demonstrated significant value and efficiency".

Previously, Crest also published a report analysing the economic and social value of the TOEX model. It concluded that the TOEX operating model had uncovered £156.3 million worth of annual social and economic costs to the UK from organised exploitation - not recognised elsewhere in the policing system - of which £30.8 million is cashable.

The report also highlighted that the resulting TOEX response had significantly reduced the time taken to identify, prioritise, and disrupt high-harm threats - saving a total of £1.27 million per year in resources, compared to what would have been required to identify the same threats without TOEX.



TOEX Programme Director, T/Detective Chief Superintendent Kate Thacker, said: "This two-year evaluation has been a robust and detailed assessment of the programme; delving into all aspects of process, impact, outcomes, and economics. It offers useful insight into operational delivery, including the views of force-level service recipients who have worked alongside TOEX when tackling these complex cases.

**"I am extremely proud of what the team has achieved to date, both operationally and technically, and I also offer my thanks to the numerous partner organisations and individuals who have supported and collaborated with us along the way."**

"The TOEX model is responding to threats that may otherwise fall through the gaps in law enforcement, supporting organised

exploitation investigations across all tiers of policing and making a fundamental difference to the way policing understands and ultimately disrupts these SOC threats.

**"Not only is the intelligence and analytical service TOEX provides being very well received by investigators, it is financially viable and represents a blue-print for whole-systems policing."**

"The technical innovation being developed in collaboration with industry partners is ground-breaking and with the imminent launch of the NPCC Capabilities Environment, the first step has been taken to provide a central cloud-hosted digital environment to policing. This 'app store' will change the way we approach digital and analytical services for all threats and has huge potential for growth across the law enforcement community."

# Organised Immigration Crime - A Case Study

The summer of 2022 saw the highly publicised arrival of migrants crossing the channel on small boats. Amongst those migrants were a significant number of children. These children were housed in hotels on the south coast, including at one hotel in Eastbourne and one in Hove.

Over those summer months several of these unaccompanied child migrants went missing from the hotels. There was a concern that these children were being exploited, and that there was a level of organisation behind that exploitation.

The TOEX team, within the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU), had just been established, and took this operation on as their first job. The overarching aim was to establish if there was organised exploitation of these missing children.

As a starting point, the team planned to wash all the available data for commonality, produce subject profiles for those of particular interest, and focus on a number of missing children who had been found in exploitative circumstances.

Between the two hotels more than 160 children were reported as missing. As part of routine enquiries, the local force had submitted data requests for a large proportion of those missing. In addition, several individuals had also been arrested generating additional material.

The volume of data available was the single biggest challenge for this operation. To progress, the team needed to identify, collect, and review this and plug any gaps which may exist.

In one case, a child migrant was suspected

of recruiting other children at the hotel for illegal activities. He was observed interacting with other persons in a suspicious manner. He was arrested and whilst the investigation team focused on the offences surrounding him, TOEX looked at links with organised exploitation.

Detailed analytical reports were able to link him to other persons suspected of being involved. Together with subject profiles, and engagement with other ROCUs this highlighted a potential OCG in another part of the country.

Whilst this operation was being progressed the plight of the missing children became national news. A number of media outlets ran stories commenting on the high number of missing children from these hotels, that many were still missing, and in some cases stated that children had been kidnapped. The coverage led to the issue being debated at Prime Minister's questions in Parliament.

In turn, this increase in national scrutiny led to regular Gold Group meetings with the superintendent heading the force side of the enquiries. During these meetings the SE TOEX team provided regular updates for their work, and what had been uncovered to date.

This operation is now drawing to a close. Many data requests have been submitted, together with subject profiles, liaison with multiple police forces, collection and review of seized phone data, liaison with law enforcement agencies outside the UK, intelligence reports as well as analytical reports to help understand the situation.

Detective Sergeant Alan Poland from the SE TOEX team said: "The input from TOEX

has been beneficial to the local force, as through our work we have helped the local force demonstrate they are taking all proportionate steps to address the issue and we have provided them with detailed analytical and intelligence reports."

"As we draw the investigation to an end, we will look to provide a detailed closure report covering our findings and general thematic trends to assist with any future incidents. We will score the new OCG (uncovered as part of our work, but not

linked to organised exploitation of children) and break out additional intel logs.

**"This was our first operation and as well as assisting the local police force, we have created and streamlined working practices, which will make future operations smoother and more efficient."**

## TOEX Launches New Animations

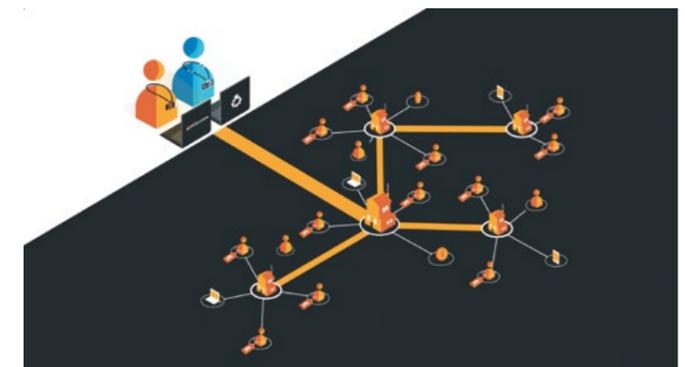
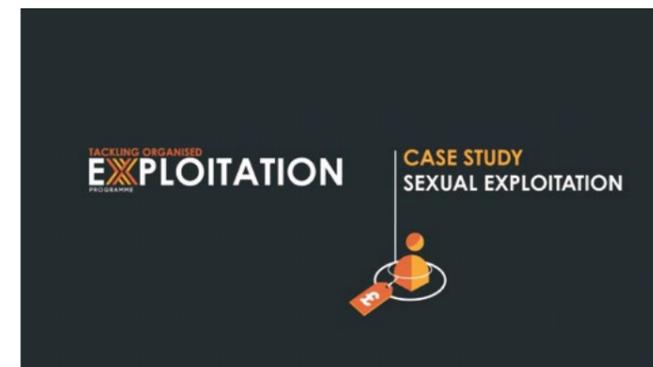
The TOEX Programme has launched three short animations to highlight how it can help local and regional policing to investigate and disrupt serious and organised crime.

Produced by an external agency, the animations explain how the embedded TOEX teams in each of the Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs) provide dedicated intelligence and analytical expertise in support of forces undertaking organised exploitation investigations, such as modern slavery & human trafficking,

organised immigration crime, county lines, adult & child sexual exploitation and abuse, and in doing so is delivering enhanced and far-reaching outcomes.

The three films - an awareness animation alongside two case study animations, encourage officers to 'think TOEX' when faced with any investigation involving organised exploitation.

You can watch the series of animations by clicking [here](#).



# PIER Conference

The Policing Institute for the Eastern Region (PIER) Conference took place in May, which brought together leading international and national speakers, who are responsible for tackling the threat and implications of online child sexual abuse for victims, their families, and offenders.

The hybrid two-day event, which was held at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford and was available for delegates to attend online, saw sessions cover the impact of child sexual abuse, how law enforcement around the world is tackling it, and how technology can protect children and assist policing.

TOEX Director, T/Detective Chief Superintendent Kate Thacker, and Detective Inspector Pat Thompson had the opportunity to present on the first day, as part of the 'Big Tech session', alongside our technical industry partner, Simpson Associates and their Data & AI Solution Lead, Dave Kerby. During the session,

the team gave an overview of the TOEX Programme and how it is supporting forces as well as explained how technical enablers, particularly the development of VAWG, Missing Persons and Violence & Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) force profiles, are being used to safeguard more victims.

Delegates heard how these profiles use cloud-based analytical tools to conflate the full crime, intelligence and custody data held by nine forces (Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Warwickshire, and West Mercia) against the information in the TOEX Data Platform to produce strategic and tactical products informing local teams of small-scale action they can take against the high-harm offenders identified.

As well as presenting, members of the national team were also on hand in the exhibitor's hall to meet delegates and answer any questions they might have about the programme.



# Operation Ravensbourne

Back in February, an operation by Lincolnshire Police, with support from the EMSOU TOEX team, targeted an organised crime group in relation to drug dealing and child sexual exploitation.

Believed to be active since at least 2018, evidence gathered suggested the group posed a significant threat in relation to sexual offences, violence, and drug offences with links to Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, London, and Torquay.

The TOEX team developed a package to fill intelligence gaps regarding several offences the victims reported last summer, in order to build a sequence of events, how the victims were being transported around the UK and whether there were additional suspects or further victims connected to the group.

In December 2022, one of the suspects was charged and remand for Class A and B drug supply -

**he pleaded guilty and was sentenced in March 2023 to 51 months imprisonment, while another was convicted of possessing drugs.**

In February 2023, Lincolnshire Police executed warrants in Lincoln and Reading, and two arrests were made in connection with rape, drugs, trafficking, and money laundering offences. A third man was arrested and interviewed after being produced from HMP Lincoln.

**The team is now in the process of applying for Civil Orders against the men, in the form of two Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPO) and a Sexual Risk Order (SRO).**

Head of EMSOU's TOEX Team - DI Dan Smith, said: "This enforcement was a culmination of hard work from the TOEX team to uncover a whole load of criminal activity.

**"We worked tirelessly to ensure that the girls being sexually exploited by these two men were safeguarded and will now have further restrictions placed on them for their futures. This is likely to be much more effective and even more disruptive to them."**

DC Maria Ryder from Lincolnshire Police said: "With the help of TOEX we were able to secure convictions for drugs supply and possession, as well as achieve significant and welcome disruption, and safeguarded a number of vulnerable young people thanks to the help of the Victim Navigator.

"We are now in the process of seeking civil orders in the form of a Sexual Risk Order for one of the men, and Sexual Harm Prevention Order for him and another.

**"Working with TOEX, we were able to conduct an extremely thorough investigation and uncover a wealth of other material thanks to their expertise."**



# National Intelligence Awards

This year, the National Intelligence Conference was held on the 5 and 6 June, with an award evening - celebrating and recognising the exceptional work of individuals from across the intelligence community. The TOEX Award is one of the categories recognised.

**Congratulations to this year's winner, Beth Baxter (ERSOU), who has been awarded for her outstanding contribution to intelligence in disrupting organised exploitation:**

"Beth has been congratulated for her exceptional work in the disruption of organised exploitation threats... Her work represents the very best of the TOEX Programme ethos."

In addition,

**congratulations to our Intelligence and Analytics Lead, Lucy Rogers, from the national team, for winning the NPCC National Analysis Capability Board (NACB) Nicola Prince Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Analysis':**

"The fundamental core of the TOEX Operating Model has been Lucy's design and delivery. It is her drive, understanding, networking, and design that have brought the TOEX Operating Model such success."

Please see below for those who received commendations and good work recognitions from the NPCC Intelligence Lead, Chief Constable Lisa Winward - congratulations to everyone nominated!



## Chief Constable's Commendation:

DI Kerrie Martin - Exploitation Lead, ROCUWM

Lydia Stoneman - Senior Analyst, ROCUWM

Meg Kardasz - Intelligence Analyst, ROCUWM

Lexie Collins - Intelligence Development Officer, ROCUWM

Jordan Rix - Intelligence Analyst, NWROCU

DI Gary Pemberton - Exploitation Lead, ERSOU

The individuals are commended for their development of Operation Headdress - a vast, complex investigation into international sex traffickers.

## Chief Constable's Good Work Recognition:

Jordan Rix - Intelligence Analyst, NWROCU, is congratulated for her tenacious and high-quality intelligence analysis - notably within Operation Cylinder.

Ellie Cowles - Researcher, SWROCU, is congratulated for her proactive and high-quality research - notably her work to understand and disrupt organised exploitation threats associated with hand car washes.

James Hand - Intelligence Development Officer, ERSOU, is congratulated for his diligent and high-quality intelligence development - notably within Operations Bardsey, Alsation and Volvox.

Sophie Fowler - Intelligence Analyst, ROCUWM, is congratulated for her diligent and high-quality intelligence analysis - notably within Operation Dylamic.

Theresa Bosque - Intelligence Development Officer, Tarian, is congratulated for her focus and high-quality intelligence development - notably within Operation Yeovil.

Tom Burnett - Intelligence Analyst, Yorkshire & Humber, is congratulated for his high-quality intelligence analysis - notably within Operation Branston.

Gary Sayer - Intelligence Manager, ERSOU, is congratulated for his high-quality intelligence management - notably within Operation Bardsey and Operation Alsation.

LeeAllen - Senior Intelligence Analyst, Tarian, is congratulated for his outstanding contribution to the TOEX Programme, where he has bridged both the data analysis and intelligence workstreams.

Holly Alexander - Intelligence Analyst, ERSOU, is congratulated for her diligence and high-quality intelligence analysis - notably within Operation Volvox.

## NEROCU TOEX

DI Alfie Keane - Exploitation Lead

DS Dave Green - Intelligence Manager

Nicola Grimes - Senior Analyst

Courtney Farrar - Intelligence Analyst

Charlotte Carey - Researcher

DC Natasha Wilson - Intelligence Development Officer

The individuals are congratulated for their development of Operation Nightstar - an investigation into vapes stores and potential grooming / sexual exploitation.



# TOEX Hits the Road... Again!

Members of the national team hit the road again in May to visit the teams in NEROCU, YHROCU and NWROCU.

As with the southern roadshows, it was valuable to hear the teams' implementation stories, to share successes and case studies as well as any challenges they may have faced.

What came through particularly, is the networking that is happening across all our TOEX teams and alongside the crucial knowledge sharing. The teams told us that this has generally come from relationships forged at training courses where staff have been brought together, and this is something we are going to look to foster and develop going forward, whether this be virtually or face-to-face.

TOEX's HR Capability and Development Manager, Rona Murray, said: "The northern roadshow of the NEROCU, YHROCU and NWROCU didn't disappoint - hearing how our amazing teams are doing exceptional work.

"Thank you to everyone who presented at each visit - your knowledge, talent and expertise were showcased, and we see a bright future for the programme.

**"We left each team visit feeling more and more impressed, energised, and confident that the operational model is delivering against our programme aims."**

With the newly formed northern and southern teams visited, the national team will look to meet with the London region and ROCUWM in July, with EMSOU and ERSOU shortly after.



# Interesting Reads and Useful Links



A report by Baroness Casey of Blackstock into the culture and standards of the Metropolitan Police Service



The VAWG Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (STRA) has been published, which aims to support police forces to better understand the influences and levers that contribute to violence against women and girls



The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre) has published a literature review of key messages from research on child sexual abuse in institutional contexts



Unseen has published an annual report for its UK modern slavery and exploitation helpline



ONS has published statistics in relation to 'Sexual offences in England and Wales overview: year ending March 2022'



The UK Government has published its response to the final report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) in England and Wales



Research has highlighted a shortfall in specialist services for children who have experienced child sexual abuse



Researchers from the University of Portsmouth are carrying out two online consultations to better understand the barriers to protecting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities from traffickers within the UK: Internal trafficking and exploitation of CYP with SEND



Multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm



The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published their 2022 annual report on child sexual abuse imagery online

# Upcoming Partnership Events



**Westminster Insight - County Lines Digital Conference**

**Westminster Insight - County Lines Digital Conference - 18 July 2023 from 9am - 1.30pm: County Lines Digital Conference - Westminster Insight**



# Notes

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