

Improving the response to organised immigration crime. May 2025

Report: [Improving the response to organised immigration crime](#)

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

I welcome the HMICFRS report *Improving the response to organised immigration crime*, which provides critical insights into the current challenges and areas for development in tackling organised immigration crime (OIC) across the UK. This issue has profound implications for national security, community safety, and the protection of vulnerable individuals exploited by criminal networks.

Key Observations and Concerns

The report identifies several significant concerns:

- **Limited Intelligence Gathering:** Frontline officers often prioritise immediate welfare and safeguarding checks over conducting interviews that could yield valuable intelligence. This approach results in missed opportunities to gather information on OIC networks.
- **Inadequate Access to Critical Databases:** Border Force officers lack access to essential tools such as the Police National Database (PND) and facial recognition technology, hindering effective screening and identification processes.
- **Low Prioritisation of OIC:** Many enforcement agencies categorise OIC-related offenses as low priority, leading to insufficient resource allocation and a lack of proactive investigations into organised crime groups (OCGs) involved in immigration offenses.
- **Legal and Operational Gaps:** There is an absence of robust legal powers to examine mobile phones and other devices for evidence, limiting the ability to disrupt OIC activities effectively.

These issues are particularly pressing given the record number of migrants crossing the English Channel—12,699 so far this year, a 33% increase compared to the same period last year.

Recommendations for Improvement

In alignment with the HMICFRS recommendations, the following actions are proposed:

1. **Enhance Intelligence Collection:** Implement protocols to ensure that frontline officers conduct debriefings with migrants upon arrival to gather actionable intelligence on smuggling networks.
2. **Expand Access to Databases:** Provide Border Force and relevant personnel with access to the PND and facial recognition tools to improve the identification and tracking of individuals involved in OIC.
3. **Prioritise OIC Investigations:** Reassess the prioritisation framework within enforcement agencies to ensure that OIC is addressed with the urgency and resources it demands.
4. **Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Advocate for legislative changes that grant policing the authority to examine electronic devices for evidence in OIC cases.
5. **Foster Interagency Collaboration:** Establish clear roles and responsibilities among agencies involved in combating OIC to enhance coordination and effectiveness.

Our Commitment

In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, we are committed to addressing the challenges outlined in the HMICFRS report:

- **Operational Initiatives:** Our Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime team has conducted targeted operations, such as the recent activity in Southampton, focusing on

identifying and safeguarding individuals exploited by OIC and modern slavery, in collaboration with Immigration Enforcement and other partners.

- Resource Allocation: We will ensure that adequate resources are dedicated to OIC investigations, including specialised training for officers and investment in necessary technological tools.
- Community Engagement: We will work closely with local communities to raise awareness of OIC issues and encourage the reporting of suspicious activities, recognising the vital role that public intelligence plays in combating these crimes.
- Continuous Improvement: We will regularly review our strategies and operations to adapt to emerging threats and incorporate best practices in the fight against OIC.

By implementing these measures, we aim to enhance our capacity to disrupt OIC effectively, protect vulnerable individuals, and uphold the safety and security of our communities.

Donna Jones
Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Response from: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary

In July 2025 HMICFRS conducted an inspection into how effectively the police and National Crime Agency (NCA) tackle organised immigration crime (OIC) in England and Wales.

The inspection covered five main areas:

- How the response of law enforcement agencies to OIC was led
- The initial response to suspected immigration crime incidents
- The management of information and intelligence
- How OIC groups were targeted by law enforcement; and
- Organisational learning and training for officers and staff
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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary (HIOWC) proactively works with law enforcement partners to ensure a collaborative approach to tackling modern slavery and organised immigration crime (MSOIC), including the National Crime Agency as the lead UK law enforcement agency for this crime type.

HIOWC has already participated in a peer review in 2024 and have been implementing improvements following the review findings. Furthermore, the HIOWC lead for OIC has closely considered the above inspection alongside the NCA Section 5 Crime and Courts 2013 Act letter to Chief Constables dated 6th of June 2025. The force strategic lead has taken the key points from those documents and distilled them into 9 areas of action; this will be delivered in collaboration with all forces within the region and with consideration of the peer review findings in 2024.

The recommendations requiring action from HIOWC are:

Recommendation 2: By 30th April 2026, Chief Constables should make sure that every time a member of their force reports a case to the Immigration Enforcements National Command and Control Unit, the reporting officer completes and submits the required intelligence document.

Working with regional colleagues, forces are seeking clarity with the National MSOIC teams on the requirement of this recommendation to enable the form to be disseminated to the forces across the

region. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary are committed to ensuring that the procedure will be embedded as soon as the details available.

Recommendation 4: By 31st December 2025, Chief Constables should make sure they have clear plans to collect, analyse and share information related to OIC.

HIOWC is actively increasing disruption of OIC and continues to train officers in modern slavery and organised immigration crime, including training for the use of the Agency and Partner Management Information System (APMIS) to enable the appropriate recording and sharing of information.

Working with regional partners and the Force Intelligence Bureau and analyst teams, the force will ensure a consistent and planned approach to the collation and analysis of intelligence and information relating to OIC. This intelligence collection plan is being developed and will be tracked as a part of the continuous improvement plan.

Recommendation 8: By 30th April 2026, Chief Constables, working with the Modern Slavery and Organised Crime Unit, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the Hydra training package on OIC.

HIOWC benefit with access to two Hydra facilities with further plans to ensure the system is used to its full capacity. Current training provision is offered quarterly to key personnel and shared with partners in the region. HIOWC are satisfied that this recommendation is already achieved with continued improvements planned alongside ongoing prioritisation of key personnel to attend. This will be overseen by the Training Prioritisation Board chaired by ACO of People and development Services.

Recommendation 9: By 30th April 2026, Chief Constables, working with Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Unit and the College of Policing, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the four modules of the OIC e learning package.

HIOWC are working with CoP and the force Learning and Professional Development team to deliver the OIC e-learning. There is ongoing work to ensure this training is mandated.

Rob France
Acting Deputy Chief Constable, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Recommendations:

Recommendation 2

By 30 April 2026, chief constables should make sure that every time a member of their force reports a case to Immigration Enforcement's National Command and Control Unit (NCCU), the reporting officer completes and submits the required intelligence document.

OPCC response:

As PCC, I am committed to holding the force to account for delivering improvements in this area. Timely and accurate intelligence sharing is a key pillar in protecting borders, disrupting organised crime, and ensuring our communities remain safe. I will be seeking regular updates on the implementation of a robust internal process that:

- Ensures all frontline officers and investigators understand their duty to complete intelligence submissions following referrals to the NCCU;

- Monitors compliance through routine audits and supervisory oversight;
- Provides training and support to officers so they are confident in recognising what constitutes valuable intelligence and how to submit it correctly.

Recommendation 4

By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure they have clear plans to collect, analyse and share information related to organised immigration crime.

OPCC response:

I will continue to work closely with the Chief Constable to ensure this recommendation is delivered in full, and that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight contributes effectively to the national response to organised immigration crime and strengthens its role in the national intelligence picture.

Recommendation 8

By 30 April 2026, chief constables, working with the Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime Unit, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the Hydra training package on organised immigration crime.

OPCC response:

I support the mandatory completion of the Hydra training package on OIC. This specialist training is critical in equipping officers and staff with the knowledge and decision-making skills required to respond effectively to this complex and often hidden area of criminality. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary already has a dedicated team addressing modern slavery and organised immigration crime, and I am confident that any further training will only further strengthen their capability.

Recommendation 9

By 30 April 2026, chief constables, working with the Modern Slavery & Organised Immigration Crime Unit and the College of Policing, should make sure that relevant personnel in all Home Office police forces complete the four modules of the organised immigration crime e-learning package.

OPCC response:

I will seek assurances from my Chief Constable that all relevant police personnel complete the four-module e-learning package on organised immigration crime. This training represents a vital step toward building a consistent, informed, and proactive approach across UK policing in the fight against OIC. OIC continues to pose a growing threat, not only to border security but to vulnerable individuals trafficked and exploited by criminal networks. To effectively respond, officers must be equipped with the right knowledge, skills, and tools to identify, investigate, and disrupt these offences.