



Gangmasters &  
Labour Abuse Authority

# Introduction to the GLAA

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**Senior Enforcement Officer**

- Stopping worker exploitation

# Statistics

- An estimated 50 million people are living in modern slavery globally
- In the UK in 2024, over 19,000 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office via National Referral Mechanism [NRM]
- In addition, over 5,000 Duty to Notify [DtN] referrals were made
- This shows the scale of the challenge facing statutory bodies trying to combat the issues posed which are many & complex



# Who are the GLAA?

- An arm's length body of the Home Office
- Our role is to protect vulnerable and exploited workers by investigating labour abuse and exploitation across all aspects of the UK labour market
- Partnership work to target, dismantle and disrupt serious and organised crime
- NRM first responder



# What do we do?



## **Regulation:**

Shellfish  
Agriculture  
Horticulture  
Processing and packaging



## **Prevention**



## **Enforcement**



# What is a Gangmaster?

- A person who supplies a worker to do specified work for another person or uses a worker to do work in connection with services they provide to another person.



# Offences

- A person acting as a Gangmaster commits an offence if they are unlicensed and use a worker to do any of the following work:
  - harvesting / gathering agricultural produce
  - gathering shellfish
  - processing or packaging agricultural produce (Section 12 Gangmasters Licensing Act 2004)
- A person who knowingly benefits from the services of an unlicensed Gangmaster, also commits an offence. (Section 13 Gangmasters Licensing Act 2004).



# 2017 – GLA to GLAA – New Powers

- The creation of ‘**Labour Abuse Prevention Officer**’ (LAPO).
- Investigate ‘labour market offences’ as the meaning given in section 3 of the Immigration Act 2016.



- PACE powers from Section 114B Police And Criminal Evidence Act 1984.  
(Only in England & Wales)
- Power to arrest and search in relation to offences contrary to:  
Employment Agencies Act 1973  
National Minimum Wage Act 1998  
Gangmasters (Licensing Act 2004)  
Part 1 or 2 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015



# Examples of high risk sectors

- Agriculture – Seasonal workers
- Care sector – Both care homes and domiciliary providers
- Car washes
- Nail bars
- Construction
- Textile industry



# Examples of Modern Slavery

These include Debt Bondage, Threats, Forced labour due to a number of factors such as work that is performed involuntarily and under the menace of any penalty.

It refers to situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means such as manipulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities.

Debt bondage, confiscation of ID/Documents and false contracts are the most frequent indicator of exploitation that we encounter.

Financial exploitation is by far the most prevalent type of exploitation.



# GLAA Investigations



Operation Brewer



Operation Ropewalk



# STPOs and STROs

- Slavery and trafficking prevention order
- Slavery and trafficking risk order
- Civil orders introduced by Modern Slavery Act 2015
- GLAA have obtained the most STRO's within law enforcement agencies
- Can be used as an interim measure against an exploiter while an investigation continues
- Prohibitions are wide ranging and case dependent



# The reality of labour exploitation



- The tactics of criminals engaged in this activity has evolved over time.
- Most common example we see, is someone who is vulnerable, befriended & promises made for a better life.
- Trafficked to another country where exploited, possibly over and over.
- The exploitation can take many forms such as receiving little or no wages, having to reside in sub standard accommodation, paying inflated rent, physical & verbal threats, having no control of their ID documents which essentially 'traps' them into their situation & cannot escape.
- Also conditioned to think they are not a victim or being exploited by their exploiter, that they only have their best interests at heart.



# WHY?

The cheapest resource available is: **People**



# How do we prevent exploitation and react to trends?



**DID YOU KNOW?**

**LICENCE HOLDERS**

There are currently 1,100 labour providers licensed by the GLAA.



**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

Your rights as a worker are protected by UK law

You are entitled to:

- Be paid the National Minimum Wage and receive an increased payment
- Paid breaks and time off work
- Paid holiday pay
- Safe and sound working conditions
- Safe working environment

If you are not receiving the pay and conditions you should be, please contact us  
Call our free, confidential reporting line: 0800 432 0804  
email: [intelligence@glaa.gov.uk](mailto:intelligence@glaa.gov.uk)

Find out more about your rights: [www.glaa.gov.uk](http://www.glaa.gov.uk)



# Liaison and partnership

- Regular meetings with large labour providers and labour users
- Awareness sessions across all sectors
- Close stakeholder working across the UK and other government departments



# Video: I am Bartos



# Contact us

Licensing team –

[licensing@gla.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@gla.gov.uk)

Contact team –

[Contact@gla.gov.uk](mailto:Contact@gla.gov.uk)

Partnership bulletin –

[communications@gla.gov.uk](mailto:communications@gla.gov.uk)



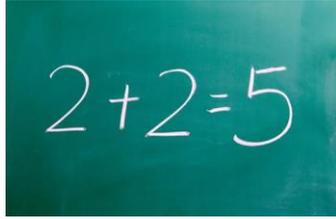
# Questions and reflections for Andy?



# Follow on group work



# What could vulnerability look like?



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# Who could be vulnerable to labour exploitation ?

- Care and support needs
- Cognitive impairments
- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Indebted or lacking financial stability
- Those who have no support network
- Those who have a lower level of education, learning difficulties, poor literacy or numeracy skills and financial capacity
- Mental health issues
- Drug and alcohol issues or other dependencies and addictions, i.e. gambling
- Asylum seekers or immigrants
- Students
- English as a second language
- Unsettled home environment
- Living in abusive environments





# Signs and indicators of concern

In groups, on the post its provided. Please write sign and indicators that may concern you in relation to a person's:

- Behaviours
- Restricted freedoms
- Working conditions
- Accommodation
- Finances
- Appearance



# Behaviours

- Victims may:
- be unfamiliar with the local language
- act as if they were instructed by someone else
- allow others to speak for them when addressed directly
- be distrustful of the authorities
- be afraid of revealing their immigration status
- have limited or no social interaction either in the workplace or at their accommodation
- believe that they must work against their will
- never leave the workplace without their employer
- show fear or anxiety
- feel that they cannot leave
- have to resort to crime in order to get food or money for food
- may need to scavenge for food
- be forced to commit crime if there is no work available for them
- have acted on the basis of false promises



# Restricted freedom

- Victims may:
- not be in possession of their passports or other travel or identity documents, as those documents are being held by someone else
- be unable to leave their work environment
- show signs that their movements are being controlled
- be unable to move freely
- be threatened with being handed over to the authorities
- be subject to security measures and controls to keep them on the work premises
- depend on their employer for work, transport and accommodation without any choice
- be controlled through religion, witchcraft, juju etc
- have limited contact with their families or with people outside of their immediate environment



- be unable to communicate freely with others
- be forced to shop at a place they would not choose
- have no access to medical care
- be in a situation of dependence
- be given only leftovers to eat
- come from a place known to be a source of human trafficking
- be subjected to violence or threats of violence against themselves or against their family members and loved ones
- be found in or connected to a type of location likely to be used for exploiting people
- have false identity documents



# Working conditions

- Victims may:
- have no contract
- be unable to negotiate working conditions
- be unable to choose when or where they work
- be forced to work under certain conditions
- work excessively long hours over long periods
- not have any days off
- not be dressed adequately for the work they do: for example, they may lack protective equipment or warm clothing
- lack basic training or professional licences



# Accommodation

- Victims may:
- not know their home or work address
- not have been able to give their address to friends or relatives
- live in poor or substandard accommodation
- have no choice where they live or who they live with
- live in groups in the same place where they work and leave those places infrequently, if at all
- live in degrading, unsuitable places, such as agricultural or industrial buildings



## Finances

- Victims may:
- receive little or no payment
- have no access to their earnings
- be disciplined through punishment or fines
- be under the perception that they are bonded by debt
- be charged for services they don't want or need
- be forced to open bank accounts
- be forced to sign documents to receive social security benefits, credit agreements or loans



# Appearance

- Victims may:
- suffer injuries that appear to be the result of an assault
- suffer injuries or impairments typical of certain jobs or control measures
- suffer injuries that appear to be the result of the application of control measures



# What can we do as organisations and individuals?

- Spot vulnerabilities
- Spot signs and indicators of concerns
- Respond
- Report
- Ensure our own policies and procedures adhere to legislative responsibilities
- Educate and create awareness, prevention



# Resources

- [Resources – GLAA](#)

[Migrant Help - Responding to Modern Slavery, Exploitation and Trauma - Ann Craft Trust](#)

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