

Graeme Biggar appointed NCA Director General

Home Secretary Priti Patel has appointed Graeme Biggar CBE as Director General of the National Crime Agency (NCA) to lead the fight against serious and organised crime and bring drug and people traffickers to justice.

Mr Biggar has led the NCA on an interim basis since October 2021. He has driven the UK's firm response to cracking down on kleptocracy and illicit finance, as well as abhorrent child sexual abuse.

During this time, the NCA has delivered more disruptions and targeted an increasing proportion of those criminals causing the most harm. In the past year the NCA has:

- taken decisive action to crack down on people smugglers, resulting in the arrest of 244 offenders outside of the UK
- increased disruptions against modern slavery, protecting over 900 people
- seized around 250 tonnes of Class A drugs and dismantled eight global networks facilitating the supply of illegal firearms
- increased disruptions of fraud, including working with international partners to facilitate the recovery of proceeds of fraud for repatriation to victims across the world
- frozen more than £358 million of criminal assets
- led the implementation of a cross-law enforcement ransomware threat group, protecting the UK economy from losses of at least £600 million
- helped coordinate activity across local police forces against online child sexual abuse, which is seeing about 800 arrests or voluntary attendances, and around 1,000 children safeguarded or protected every month.

He will take on the role on a permanent basis, focusing on hunting ruthless cyber criminals and dismantling serious and organised crime groups peddling drugs and illegal firearms, and exploiting vulnerable people.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Serious and organised crime, the gangs and violence bring misery to our streets. As well as exploiting children and the vulnerable, this criminality also costs more than £37 billion a year to our economy.

Going after the criminals who profit from human misery, abuse our children and citizens and show no regard for our borders and laws is what I and Graeme continue to drive.

From dismantling people smuggling networks through the biggest illegal migration law enforcement operation across Europe to bringing the monsters who sexually abuse children in the UK and

abroad to justice, Graeme and his remarkable NCA team have an outstanding track record of delivery.

I have put the right resources and skills into the NCA, including increases to the Agency's budget and additional resources to tackle new and emerging threats. The UK's National Crime Agency is world leading and in a formidable position to tackle some of the most complex global threats we face and to help make our streets and our country safer.

Mr Biggar has now been appointed for a term of five years after a fair and open recruitment process. Mr Biggar has a wealth of experience, having served as Director General of the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) at the NCA between 2019 and 2021. He has also served as Director for National Security at the Home Office, Chief of Staff to the Defence Secretary and has held senior positions in the Ministry of Defence and other government departments.

He helped to shape the response to the 2017 terrorist attacks, the Salisbury poisoning attack, and as Director of National Security in the Home Office, oversaw implementation of the Investigatory Powers Act.

Graeme Biggar CBE, Director General of the NCA, said:

I am delighted to have been asked to lead the National Crime Agency. The Agency's mission – to protect the public from serious and organised crime – has never been more important.

Serious and organised crime is chronic, corrosive and complex. The people and groups behind it have global reach, are technically sophisticated and digitally-enabled.

In response, the Agency must focus upstream, overseas and online – while continuing to work with our partners systematically to target criminals, bring them to justice and reduce the harm they cause.

It has been a privilege to lead our officers over the past ten months. I will continue to support them in protecting the public while ensuring we operate with the highest integrity and standards

As the head of the NCA, the Director General leads around 6,000 officers based in the UK and overseas. The DG determines the NCA's operational priorities and ensures that the Agency is developing the right intelligence, delivering successful investigations and driving the overall UK law enforcement response to serious and organised crime.

Although the DG is accountable to the Home Secretary, the NCA is a non-ministerial department in its own right and is operationally independent from the Home Office.