

TACKLING ORGANISED

EXPLOITATION

PROGRAMME

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Talking Technical

**Case Study - Sexual
Exploitation of Children &
Adults**

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#ThankTOEX



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Strategic Update



This quarter has seen significant programme engagement with senior leaders across government, policing, UK law enforcement and the third sector, as we work together collaboratively to address growing demand within a challenging financial climate and ensure TOEX remains well placed to respond to priority threats. With over 80% of TOEX demand being VAWG-related, it has never been more important to support a borderless response to exploitation threats.

I have had the honour to meet the Safeguarding and VAWG Minister, Jess Phillips MP, on three separate occasions to discuss her priorities in the vulnerability space and showcase what TOEX continues to deliver towards those goals.

I also note the dedication and expertise of our intelligence and analytical colleagues, who continue to secure resounding approval from force investigators and safeguarding leads, with all 108 survey responders to date agreeing they would recommend TOEX to a colleague. The timeliness, quality and responsiveness of the programme response is explored after each significant operation comes to an end, with any returned surveys helping to shape the onward refinement of the service. So, thank you both to TOEX staff supporting force disruptions and to investigators that take the time to help us continually improve.

This edition features a short update on the progress of the TOEX Capabilities Environment (CE), which is now expanding access direct to forces. With ten forces onboarding so far and others positively engaging, the progress of the TOEX technical team and our industry partners is bringing time and efficiency savings to the over-stretched frontline.

In support of this effort, the Home Office National Police Capabilities Unit has increased our grant to cover all transactional costs of TOEX Translate and TOEX Transcribe this financial year, meaning that those forces using the tools will do so completely free of charge until at least April 2025. Deputy Director, Monique Wrench, affirmed her desire to support the onboarding of more forces to the CE platform and noted its alignment to the NPCU aim to 'make best use of technology to improve criminal justice outcomes and improve public confidence in policing'.

A new government administration setting its expectations, a period of civil unrest triggering unprecedented collaboration, and the policing reform agenda underway - I have no doubt that 2025 will be another interesting year and TOEX will be rising to those challenges.

**Detective Chief Superintendent
Kate Thacker KPM**

TOEX Programme Director

Case Study - Sexual Exploitation of Children & Adults

TOEX were tasked to support a force investigation into a group of males suspected of trafficking young vulnerable British females for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and to facilitate county lines drug supply. Some of those affected were children still at risk.

The TOEX Response

The team provided specialist analytical and intelligence development to identify potential upstream offending, enriching and collating intelligence across force boundaries, and utilising TOEX networking capabilities.

TOEX support has resulted in an enhanced and expeditious intelligence capture, leading to the identification of a further suspect, who was subsequently recalled to prison for VAWG offences against an ex-partner.

The team assisted with the identification of a priority, previously unknown, male suspect, who was only recorded with the force by his nickname and description. TOEX were able to utilise specialised

analytical techniques to establish who the suspect was, supporting his prompt arrest.

In addition, TOEX were tasked with identifying a potential victim associated to three phone numbers, but as yet unknown to investigators. Analytical techniques allowed TOEX to attribute these numbers and formally identify a further victim, enabling the host force to conduct appropriate evidence-gathering and safeguarding, thus preventing further harm.

Following TOEX intelligence development, numerous lines of enquiries were identified resulting in timely outcomes such as further arrests, safeguarding, and intelligence submissions, enabling local resources to successfully progress and prioritise all investigative opportunities.



Case Study - Sexual Exploitation of Adults

TOEX supported a force with intelligence development of alleged sexual exploitation of Chinese women in multiple UK towns and cities by members of an organised crime group (OCG). At the time, this criminal network was the highest scoring threat in that region.

The TOEX Response

The team facilitated the prompt translation and keyword searching of 21 phone downloads, involving millions of lines of data. TOEX Translate enabled the translation and bulk triage of this large-scale data source in a way that simply would not have been achievable via manual review.

This led to 12 phone downloads being highlighted as being of evidential value - identifying bank details and addresses of interest, plus messages revealing the facilitation of sexual services.

In addition, the team were able to identify large social media groups, that appeared to be acting as a marketplace 'hub' with adverts and responses - including services of women working in brothels; illegitimate visa/document services; and sales of property, tobacco, and food.

As a result of TOEX findings, the team assisted the force to liaise and escalate the

threat to the National Crime Agency (NCA), who supported with further intelligence development.

The Detective Inspector leading the investigation said:

“The support from TOEX was vital in ensuring the lines of investigation were progressed in a timely manner, maximising evidential and safeguarding opportunities. [...].

“Without the support from TOEX the investigative team would have encountered significant challenges in reviewing the substantial amounts of material together with undertaking the subsequent translation and evidential product to be provided to the Crown Prosecution Service within a timely manner.”



#ThankTOEX

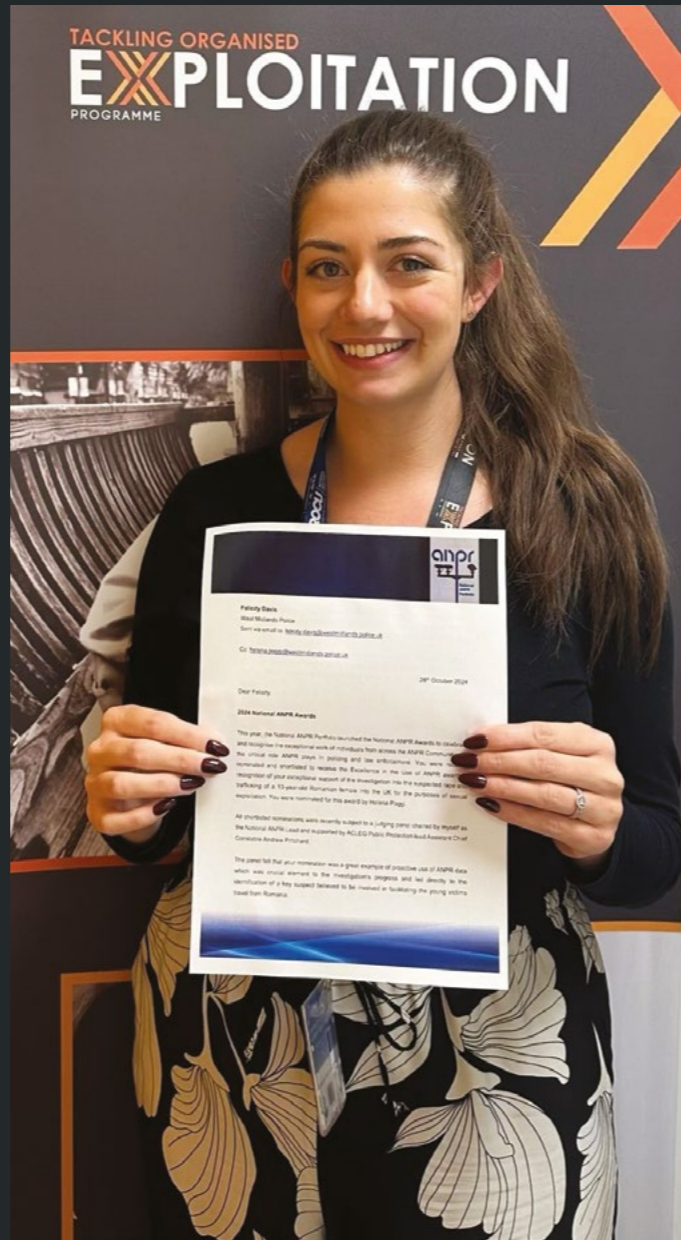
Programme Director, DCS Kate Thacker, is to be awarded the King's Police Medal (KPM), for services to policing, following announcements made in the 2025 New Year Honours list. As a career Detective, DCS Thacker has fulfilled numerous roles in her 28 years' service, however the award comes because of her leadership in the fight against organised exploitation.

Recognised for working collaboratively to deliver a new intelligence capability within each region, in support of complex force investigations, and for realising frontline efficiencies via the delivery of technical enablers to force users, her dedication is commended.

DCS Thacker said

"I am both humbled and grateful to receive the KPM for my service but do so in the sure and certain knowledge that it has only been possible because of the exceptional colleagues around me. TOEX will always be the pinnacle of my career and I am blessed to work alongside some exceptionally talented and dedicated colleagues, both within the programme, wider law enforcement, government, and industry. Once I am over the shock, I will raise a toast to you all in humble thanks for your support."

A Judge's Commendation has been awarded to colleagues investigating a group of men and women committing appalling international human trafficking offences. The case was led by the Norfolk Police Serious Crime Disruption Team (SCDT),



with support from TOEX, and saw members of the criminal network jailed for a total of over 10 years.

It follows a police investigation launched in September 2021 after safeguarding visits were made by the Norfolk Missing, Adult Sex-working, Slavery and Trafficking (MAST) team and support workers. Several addresses in Norwich were visited with the aim of protecting vulnerable sex workers identified in online adverts. Working alongside officers, members of the national

TOEX team, including Senior Intelligence Analyst **Lyndsey Hoy**, supported investigators by developing compelling intelligence products using telecoms, network analysis, and financial data. This attention to detail uncovered contact between the suspects and victims, a pattern of flights between the UK and Hungary, and the posting of adverts to a website offering sexual services at known locations.

HHJ Bate commended the officers and staff for "diligent investigation, preparatory and presentational work" and the significant contribution it made to the prosecution in a complex case.

The investigation was also highlighted nationally by the Anti-Slavery Commissioner's Office as an example of 'good practice' for this type of operation.

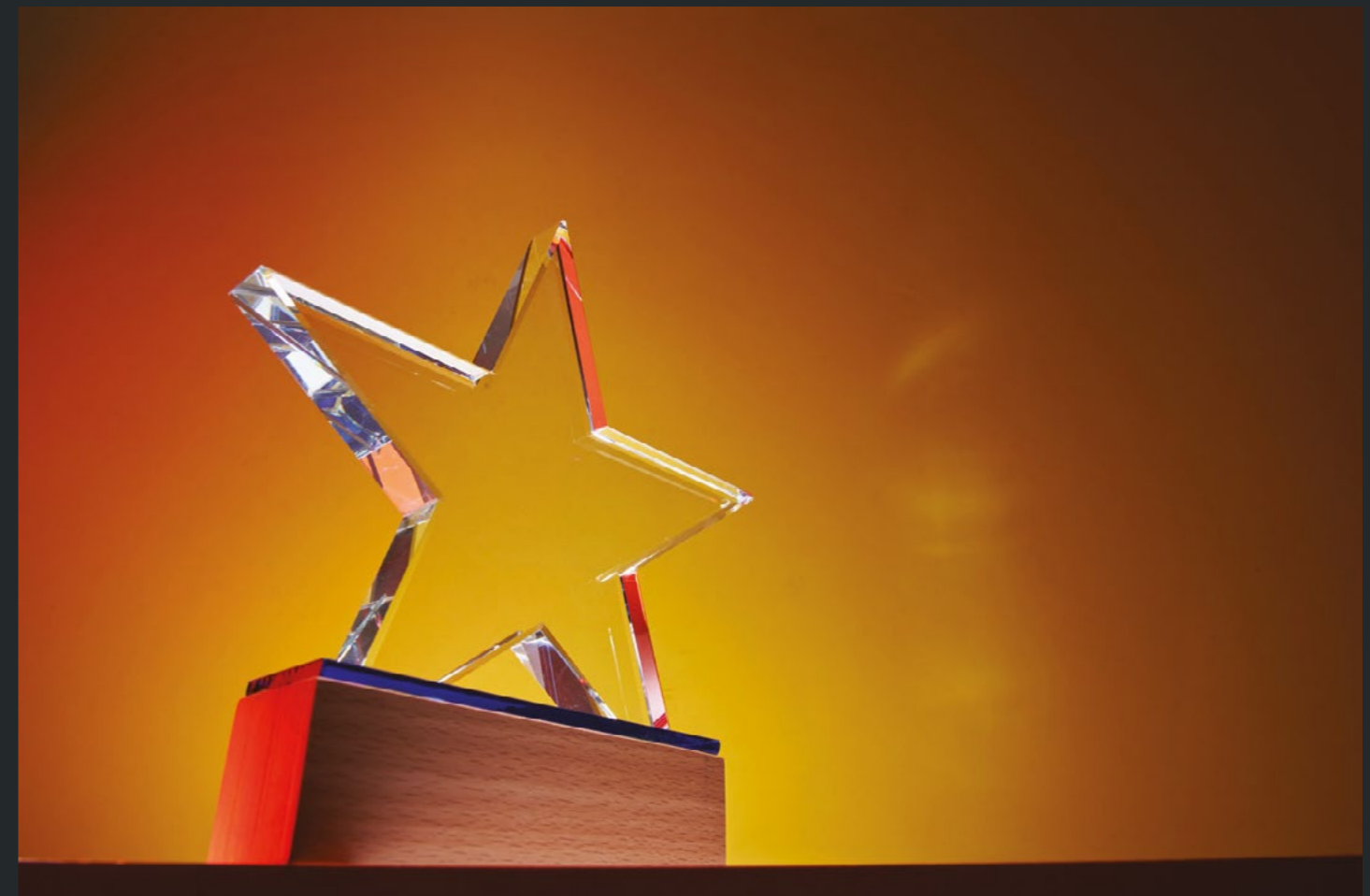
In addition, **Felicity Davis**, Intelligence Development Officer for the ROCUWM TOEX team, was nominated for the National ANPR Awards for her support of an investigation

into the suspected rape and trafficking of a 13-year-old Romanian female into the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Felicity received a letter of thanks from policing's national ANPR lead, Chief Constable Charlie Hall. In the letter, he says: "The panel felt that your nomination was a great example of proactive use of ANPR data which was crucial element to the investigation's progress and led directly to the identification of a key suspect believed to be involved in facilitating the young victims travel from Romania.

"To be nominated for such a significant award reflects your dedication and professionalism and is highly creditable in its own right. I would like to congratulate you on this achievement and thank you for all your continued hard work and commitment."

Well done to you all!



'When You Are Ready' Campaign



As part of the work of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Taskforce, which is supported by TOEX, the Hydrant Programme and the VKPP, a new national campaign was launched in October to encourage victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and exploitation to reach out for support.

'When You Are Ready', which has been fully informed by those with lived experience from start to finish, hopes to make victims and survivors feel seen and heard, to know they're not alone and encourage them to tell a friend, contact a support organisation and feel empowered to take that step, whenever they're ready to do so.

The campaign centres on a hard hitting three-minute film which features the voices of victims and survivors who have experienced child sexual abuse and exploitation - this includes both contact and online offences. The film does not discuss the abuse experienced but details the experience each victim and survivor had in making the hard decision to disclose their abuse to a loved one, support organisation and/or the police, and the impact it had on their life thereafter.

If someone is ready to take the next step in disclosing their experience, the film signposts

victims and survivors to the bespoke campaign website directing them to a range of services and support organisations, as well as includes details on how to report to the police.

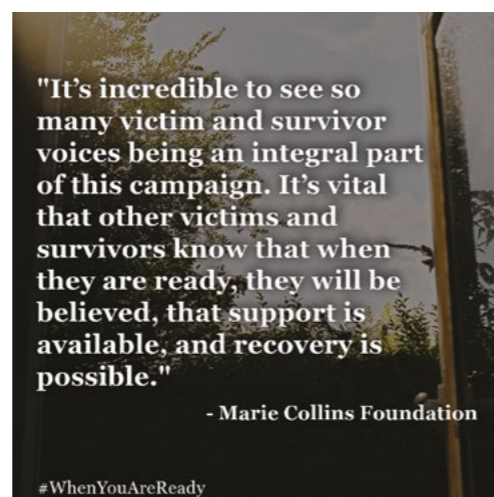
NPCC's lead for Child Protection and Abuse and Investigation, ACC Becky Riggs, said: "We want victims and survivors to feel positive and hopeful after seeing this campaign.

"From our work with victims and survivors, we understand it can take many years to process the abuse or exploitation that they experienced. For some, it may even take years just to acknowledge that what they experienced was, in fact, abuse, and not the loving or caring actions of someone they could trust.

"We also understand, from extensive research undertaken, that 'justice' for victims and survivors doesn't necessarily mean a criminal justice outcome and simply telling someone can be enough.

"However, if victims do take the hugely difficult decision to disclose their abuse, they should be reassured that there are organisations who can provide help and support, whenever they are ready."

To watch the film, please click [here](#).



Interesting Reads and Useful Links



The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA Centre) has developed a new interactive online dashboard with instant access to local and national data on child sexual abuse (CSA) in England and Wales



The CSE Taskforce have published a new report which sets out publicly a clear, detailed picture of police recorded group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation crimes across England and Wales in 2023



Barnardos has published a new report on children's experiences online, examining their understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI)



A national child safeguarding review has investigated the experiences of 193 children who were sexually abused by a family member



The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published a news story on the increase of artificial intelligence (AI) generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) being found on publicly accessible areas of the internet



Police and hospitality industry unite in fight against child sexual exploitation as national prevention programme is launched



A new guide has been published by the CSE Taskforce, for multi-agency professionals to avoid 'victim blaming' language when talking about children and exploitation

Upcoming Partnership Events



Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Digital Conference - 29 January 2025:
[Rape and Serious Sexual Offences \(RASSO\) Digital Conference - Westminster Insight](#)



Tackling Image-Based Sexual Abuse Digital Conference - 5 March:
[Tackling Image-Based Abuse - Westminster Insight](#)



NPCC Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime (SOAC) Conference - 4-5 March:
[Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime Conference 2025](#)

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