

Police Scotland & Europol combine to target cross-border criminality



Police Scotland and Europol joined forces today to further strengthen combined efforts to keep people safe through tackling cross-border international criminality.

Deputy Chief Constable Iain Livingstone met Europol Director Rob Wainwright during a two-day visit to Scotland.

Mr Wainwright visited the home of the Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh in North Lanarkshire to see first-hand how collaboration between law enforcement agencies in Scotland is helping keep our communities safe through increased sharing of intelligence, joint investigations and multi-agency operations.

DCC Livingstone, who leads on Crime and Operational Support, said: “Police Scotland works closely with a wide range of other organisations and agencies to prevent criminals attacking the wellbeing and safety of our communities. Europol is a key partner in how we achieve that.

“Criminals do not respect boundaries – whether those are local, national or international. Law enforcement locally, nationally and internationally is becoming smarter and stronger in how it operates to target criminal networks which present risk to the public.

“Those networks may span many jurisdictions, nations or continents – but the harm they can cause to communities here in Scotland is considerable.

“Police Scotland and the Metropolitan Police are the only two

police services in the UK to have a full-time dedicated liaison officer working with Europol in The Hague.

“That helps sharpen our focus and information-sharing to allow us to take action where and when it’s needed to stop criminals.

“Since the inception of Police Scotland and with it, the creation of the Specialist Crime Division two years ago, we have targeted a broad range of criminality including human trafficking, firearms, drugs, money laundering and cybercrime, in collaboration with Europol and other partners.

“The threat posed by terrorism is also ever-present. Police Scotland’s focus is on keeping our communities safe, but our reach is international and working with Europol helps us achieve our goals.”

Prior to the creation of Police Scotland legacy forces across Scotland contacted Europol around 300 times a year, since the legacy forces combined this number has risen to approximately 2,000 per year.

The Police Scotland Fugitive Unit was established in March 2013 to investigate and execute both European and International Arrest Warrants relating to a variety of crimes including Murder, Rape, Fraud, Domestic Abuse, Armed Robbery and theft.

The 6 officers, based at The Scottish Crime Campus have so far arrested 172 individuals from countries across Europe including Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Sweden and Portugal.

With the assistance of Europol colleagues and law enforcement across Europe another 31 individuals have been arrested in relation to warrants issued by Scottish Courts.

Speaking after a meeting with Chief Constable Sir Stephen

House and Deputy Chief Constable Iain Livingstone, Europol Director Rob Wainwright said:

“We welcome the opportunity to speak with senior police and law officers on our joint efforts to tackle the threat of organised crime and terrorism, as this affects Scotland and the wider EU.

“Since its inception in 2013, Police Scotland has improved its interaction with Europol, which has meant a threefold increase in the amount of information shared with and through Europol.”

Focusing on human trafficking, firearms trafficking, cybercrime and counter terrorism, the Director stressed the unique added value Europol can bring to Police Scotland.