

Cocaine valued at £100m recovered in joint Police Scotland operation

Two men have been arrested after around a tonne of cocaine, concealed within a consignment of fruit, was seized at Dover, as part of a joint Police Scotland and National Crime Agency (NCA) investigation.

The discovery, with an estimated value of £100 million, was made in the early hours of yesterday (Tuesday, 22 September 2020) by Organised Crime Partnership (Scotland) officers assisted by specialist Border Force search teams. The drugs were discovered in pallets which had arrived into Dover on a vessel from South America.



Police Scotland

Following the seizure, Police Scotland and NCA officers arrested a 64-year-old man in Glasgow and a 40-year-old man in Brentwood, Essex on suspicion of importing class A drugs.

Searches have also been carried out at in Glasgow and Essex as the investigation continues.

The investigation is linked to Operation Venetic, which has so far seen hundreds of arrests across the UK following the infiltration of an encrypted communications platform.

Angela McLaren, Police Scotland's Assistant Chief Constable,

said: "This seizure is undoubtedly a massive setback for serious and organised criminals. This operation and our other recent successes, underlines our unwavering commitment to working with partners, including the NCA, Border Force and SOC Taskforce to seriously disrupt this sort of criminality.

"Working together we will relentlessly pursue those who seek to bring misery to our communities whether they are in Scotland or elsewhere in the world. "

NCA Director of Investigations Nikki Holland said: "This is a huge seizure of class A drugs, made as a result of some excellent joint working between the NCA and Police Scotland under the Organised Crime Partnership (Scotland), and our Border Force colleagues.

"This operation has prevented a large amount of cocaine from making it on to our streets, we estimate that once adulterated and sold it could have had a street value of up to £100 million.

"So in making this seizure we have taken away a valuable commodity that would have been sold to fund further serious and organised criminality.

"Our investigation into this attempted importation is continuing."

The Organised Crime Partnership (Scotland) is a covert investigation team comprising of officers and staff from Police Scotland and the National Crime Agency.

Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts Chris Philip said: "This was another excellent seizure which demonstrates the work of Border Force officers who work tirelessly on the frontline to prevent Class A drugs such as cocaine from reaching the streets, where they can devastate lives and our society.

“We will continue to collaborate with law enforcement partners like the NCA and Police Scotland to disrupt organised criminal networks and ensure drugs smugglers face the full force of the law.”