

## **POLICE SCOTLAND**

### Appeal for Information and Cooperation

Across the world many countries are in the midst of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this circulation is to work together to protect and safeguard the vulnerable and those most at risk of human trafficking and exploitation.

Police Scotland National Human Trafficking Unit continue their ongoing engagement with key partners to ensure we are actively looking for and responding effectively to any incident or report of Human Trafficking or exploitation. We recognise that communities can provide valuable information which can assist us in this regard.

With restrictions on movement and activity being in place, we recognise that there are fewer opportunities for potential victims of human trafficking to be reported to the Police and partner agencies. This raises concerns about reaching out to those who are most vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

The current situation will see the demand increasing for the hiring of labour in the retail, delivery, food production and agricultural sector. We are asking our communities to be vigilant to the possibility that people are being exploited and to help us tackle it.

People may see an increase in the following:

- Groups of people waiting to be collected for work or dropped off where this was not previously apparent.
- Houses of multiple occupancy where potential victims may be living
- Sudden increase in homelessness

This list is by no means exhaustive. Communities will be aware of what goes on within their own areas. We would actively encourage any changes which raise suspicions or concerns to be reported. These reports can be reported anonymously.

### **Reports can be made by contacting the following:**

Police Scotland - 101

Modern Slavery Helpline – 0800 121 700 - [www.modernslaveryhelpline.org](http://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org)

Crimestoppers – 0800 555 111 - [www.crimstoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimstoppers-uk.org)

The information provided will assist the Police and partner agencies in identifying potential victims of exploitation and ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.