


# Under Cover

NCOA: Protecting those who protect the public

Issue 23 / Autumn 2025

## AN END TO NDAs



Non-  
Disclosure  
Agreement

**NEW LEGISLATION BANS CONTROVERSIAL  
NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS SILENCING ABUSE**

**WORK & WELLBEING UPDATE ■ TRiM – PEER-LED SUPPORT  
AED & CPR LIFESAVERS ■ CYBER ESSENTIALS ■ ACAS CONFERENCE**

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**Under Cover** is the official magazine of the National Crime Officers Association (NCOA), a trade union formed to focus on the needs of members of the National Crime Agency (NCA). Views expressed in this magazine are those of officers, committee members or representatives unless otherwise stated.

Contributions may be sent in confidence to the Editor at **Under Cover** Magazine, 25 West Tenter Street, London E1 8DT, or email [membership@ncoa.org.uk](mailto:membership@ncoa.org.uk)

The Editor reserves the right to amend or edit all material as necessary, and where possible, with the consent of the contributor. **Under Cover** Magazine would like to thank everyone involved in producing this magazine, especially advertisers and those kind enough to make a contribution.

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# Fond farewells and a fantastic five

Whilst it's never good to start with sad news, I cannot ignore the passing of our friend, colleague and former NCOA Rep, Dee Taylor. Her untimely death has affected all who knew her and my heart goes out to Anne and her other siblings.

With 'all change' at NCOA Head Office location, I want to wish former Administrator, Lucy Winstanley, a fond farewell in her retirement. Lucy has been more than just an employee to us for over a decade, and will be missed by many. Taking on Lucy's role is Chloe, whom I wish well in embarking on her career with us.

It's great to see that your voices have not been ignored. The Agency has reacted quickly to our 2025 member-wide Work & Wellbeing survey, providing assurance of its commitment to all NCA officers' wellbeing and to ensuring NCA staff can thrive at work without needing to sacrifice health or work/life balance.

In this edition of **Under Cover** we also lift the lid on new legislation that sees the 2025 Employment Rights Bill effectively ban non-disclosure agreements in all but the most



serious of cases, where the Secretary of State makes an order, and will see the previously overused gagging orders on victims of criminal and workplace abuse removed.

Contained within the same legislation are 28 proposed changes to employment law, which will see employers and trade unions alike having to get used to new employee protections from day one of employment. Alongside this are greater benefits linked to sickness, parental and paternity leave, and extended ET claim timelines.

Finally, hats off to the 'fantastic five' without whom Chris [REDACTED] would not be alive; well done to Jen, Will, Aaron, Jordan and Jason, who all played a part in saving Chris' life (full story on P10-11).

Enjoy the read and as always, if you have anything to say on this or any future edition, please call 0845 314 2070 or email [membership@ncoa.org.uk](mailto:membership@ncoa.org.uk)

Simon Bashford

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## Keep your NCOA contacts up to date

Although every member has received plastic cards detailing all of our emergency contact details, calls to our head office often start with the phrase, "Can you give me the number for...".

So to assist further, we've now developed a Phone Wallet Pass enabling members to access contact information from their phone's wallet.

From your phone, scan the QR Code right (this same link and QR should work on both iPhone and Android). Add to your phone Wallet, then from the Wallet click the three dots in top right corner and View Pass Details.

Links have been added to provide easy access to telephone numbers and other useful documents.



## Shift allowance increased to 30% consolidated pay

On 7 October 2025, an agreement was reached between the NCA and its trade unions to uplift the shift allowance paid to those who work 24/7 shifts to 30% consolidated pay.

NCOA members were informed that engagement was taking place in a Member's Brief on 12 September 2025. The NCOA has been consistent over several years and in numerous submissions to the NCA Remuneration Review Body in making the case for a 'building block' approach to shift pay. We have focused on making sure that those most impacted by unsociable hours receive the largest financial allowance, and those working 24/7 (including nights) receive an allowance of at least 30%.

With teams working shifts often an entry point for officers into the NCA, few recall that when the NCA was formed in 2013 it inherited a shift allowance pay at a derisory 12.5%.

While in 2018 the Agency chose to top the allowance up to 15% payment from the non-consolidated budget, it was not until 1 August 2019 that shift pay became a 15% consolidated allowance; 12 months later a further uplift resulted in 24/7 shift pay rising to 20% consolidated, but it remained at this level despite the impact on the recruitment and retention of officers being clear.

### Resolving an impasse

With a steer from the Remuneration Review Body in its 2025 report that the NCA and its trade unions ought to seek to resolve an impasse on the level of shift allowances, there was frustration that the PCS had failed to follow the NCA and NCOA lead in promoting a move to 30% allowance as part of the 25/26 pay process.

It is now clear that, had the current agreement not been reached, the

only alternative was for all those in receipt of shift allowance to remain receiving only 20% pay while the matter was returned to the NCARRB for consideration. This means that any future increase would not take place until 1 August 2026 at the earliest.

Additionally, the agreement reached in October this year also resulted in a new unsociable hour's payment for NCA Officers, set as a 20% consolidated payment to go to those officers who work unsociable shifts on a 265-day rota which does not involve working nights.

While at this stage only a small number of teams are due to receive this uplift, there is scope for many more officers to benefit as the NCA recognises the business and operational benefits of paid flexibility, with officers receiving the considerable pay and future pension benefits of unsociable working.

## Civil Service Pension Scheme – pensionable overtime

In August the NCA confirmed that HM Treasury had agreed the NCA should correct both the employer's and employee contributions and not seek to recover employee pension contributions from impacted officers entitled to have enhanced pensions because of working premium overtime.

The NCOA first raised concerns in January 2024 after a case was upheld by MyCSP's Internal Dispute Resolution Scheme Compliance Unit. It had determined that the NCA had not been applying pension contributions to the premium element of overtime worked on weekends

and Bank Holidays where this was not part of an officer's conditioned hours. It was determined that the terms of the Civil Service Pension Scheme (CSPS) did require pension contributions on the premium element.

Currently, the NCA Pensions Team are working to make the required corrections with the CSPS provider. This involves analysis of pay and pensions data of CSPS members both past and present since 2013. It may take some time for NCOA members' pensions to reflect the adjustments, especially as the administrator is expected to change from MyCSP to Capita in December 2025.

# Dee Taylor: Farewell to our much-loved friend, colleague and NCOA rep

We would like to take the time to remember our much-loved friend, colleague and NCOA rep, Dee Taylor, who passed away suddenly on 14 August this year.

Dee originated from Newry in Co Down where she lived in the family home until a recent house move. However, as a young woman she moved to London and started her law enforcement career in the Metropolitan Police where she qualified as a detective. This is where she first crossed paths with one of our NCOA founders, current CEO, Simon Boon. Dee was a mentor to a then fresh-faced trainee detective working in the CID office at Peckham, south-east London.

## Dee blazed a trail

Dee returned to Northern Ireland in 2002 to help look after her sick mother, and it was around this time that she left policing to work for the Assets and Recovery Agency (ARA) at its inception. Dee blazed a trail helping to establish the ARA and its work; she was always willing to share her experience and knowledge with new and inexperienced colleagues, helping them to become effective financial investigators.

In April 2008, the ARA was assimilated into the Serious



Organised Crime Agency which itself transitioned to become the NCA in 2013. Following the formation of the NCOA shortly after the launch of the NCA, Dee was one of the first cadre of NCOA willing reps.

As we know, this was a brand-new trade union, and Dee played a significant part in the success of the NCOA during its early days. She assumed responsibility for the representation of staff at the Belfast office, and she also guided and supported reps in the wider region. Dee was deeply passionate about her colleagues' wellbeing, and it was this passion, along with her determination and hard work, which led to the Belfast office consistently having one of the highest member densities of any NCA site.

Dee later joined the National Executive Committee but found herself yearning to focus solely on members at the Belfast office and after a single term, she left the NEC to allow her to continue in her role as a workplace rep. Despite stepping away from the NEC, she remained ever supportive to the Committee and assisted wherever she could.

Dee retired on 30 April 2021 and in recognition of her outstanding commitment to the NCOA since its inception, was awarded life membership by General Secretary Simon Boon. At the point of her retirement Dee was only the third ever recipient the NCOA Lifetime Membership Award.

Dee was very close to her family and helped look after her father until his passing just a few years ago. Dee and her sister Anne lived together and in the past few months moved to a new apartment, where she had been enjoying life, getting out and about having taken up photography.

Following her retirement Dee still kept in contact with a number of her colleagues exchanging messages and meeting for lunch where she was keen to learn about what was happening both in the office and with her NCOA friends. Dee will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

## Dick Bartlett: A great story-teller and a friend to many

We're saddened to report the passing of NCOA IBT member, Richard (Dick) Bartlett, who died peacefully at home on 27 May 2025, surrounded by family. Dick was the beloved husband of Sharon, and a father of two, grandfather of four, and friend to many.

Dick retired from SOCA in 2008 after 30 years, first serving in the Met before transferring to Norfolk. He then worked for Jersey Police before joining Cambridgeshire ERSOU, finally retiring in 2023.

His great passion was photography, and he was an avid reader of crime novels. Dick enjoyed socialising and playing cribbage with friends in his local pub. He is best known and remembered for his amusing great story telling of lived experiences.

Our condolences go to Sharon and family.



## Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum shows the history of trade unionism

If you find yourself in Dorset, perhaps en route to the Exeter Office, General Secretary Steve Bond encourages you to visit the Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum.

Tolpuddle is seven miles east of Dorchester just off the A35, and has long been a place of pilgrimage for trade unionists and other visitors. Visitors get the chance to discover how the Tolpuddle Martyrs changed the face of social history in the UK.

### Trumped up charges

The Martyrs were six farm labourers who were sentenced in March 1834 to seven years transportation to a penal colony in Australia for organising trade union activities. Their leaders, George and James Loveless, had established a lodge of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers during the wave of trade union activity which was taking place across the country at that time.

The Whig government were alarmed at the level of working-class discontent and arrested the Loveless brothers and four other



farm labourers on the trumped-up charge of 'administering unlawful oaths'. In reality, it was for having the audacity to collectively organise and to protest about their meagre wages.

Following their conviction, the six men became popular heroes among the working class. There was an immediate public

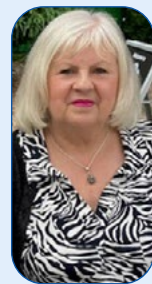
reaction in all parts of the country and in London there were large scale demonstrations. At first the government ignored the protests, but in March 1836 they remitted the sentences and the Martyrs returned to Dorset as heroes.

The museum was originally a library which was part of the Tolpuddle Martyrs 'Memorial Cottages', which were built in 1934 to mark the centenary of the Martyrs' convictions. The Museum now houses a display of artefacts which tells the story of the Martyrs and their role in establishing trade unionism in the UK.

For those with a sat nav, the address is DT2 7EH.

## NCOA members knew the voice and name even though they'd never met!

Any member calling the NCOA Head Office in the last 11 years would almost certainly have been greeted by the cheerful tones and recognisable voice of Lucy Winstanley. Lucy first stepped into our office to take over the reins of Office Administrator early in 2014 and has been a constant ever since.



It's fair to say that picking up the phone as a members' first point of contact can be a daunting task and one which always required a calm head and a sympathetic voice. Lucy managed all of this, and while many callers didn't know her last name – or even where they were phoning – they all knew the name 'Lucy'.

The NCOA Reps Annual Delegates Conference will also miss Lucy welcoming them to their yearly event and many would have taken Lucy under their wings for the 'after work' networking events which saw the relaxed and social side to her character.

Sadly, not everything remains for ever, and the office move from Warrington to London earlier this year saw Lucy unable to relocate with the business.

From a personal point of view [Editor], I know that Lucy, like me, will miss our daily catch-ups when all too often we would put the world to rights! From all at the NCOA, we wish Lucy the very best for her retirement and that the long promised new pet dog is not too far away. Take care – we thank you for your service.



NCOA General Secretary Steve Bond on a recent visit to the Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum

# The NCOA is accredited!

Barely a day goes by without details of the latest cyber attack hitting the news, some with significant consequences – see Jaguar Land Rover for details. Worryingly, 7.7 million cybercrimes were experienced by businesses over the past year: that's equivalent to around half of all UK businesses.

In truth (sadly) there is no such thing as a completely protected IT system that can declare with certainty that it is impervious to attack. From technically sophisticated criminal groups to the lone 'bedroom' computer geek, when hellbent on paralysing organisations for financial gain, spite, fun – or 'just because' – the impact is almost always devastating.

While the NCOA may not be a huge organisation or one which fundamentally relies on IT to deliver its core business and drive revenues, it is obvious that the data we hold is pretty sensitive, given the intrinsic link with the National Crime Agency.

You won't be surprised to hear that we treat the data we hold very seriously, which is why we carry out regular security reviews and invest in upgrades that help us to better respond to threats as they evolve.

Having a degree of confidence in your own system is one thing, but what would a credible independent assessment of our IT say? Well, as part of our 2025 IT security review, the NCOA decided to put it to the test by applying for Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation, which has the full endorsement of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

The NCSC was formed by combining separate parts of government, MI5, and GCHQ no less, to create the National Technical Authority for cyber security. It leads the UK's defence against the most advanced cyber threats, including those from nation states, hackers, and cyber criminals.

**92%** **More resilient**  
92% fewer insurance claims made by organisations with Cyber essentials controls in place

**89%** **More trusted**  
89% of organisations would recommend certifying to other organisations like theirs

**69%** **More competitive**  
69% of those with Cyber Essentials believe that it has increased their market competitiveness

**88%** **More informed**  
88% believe Cyber Essentials has improved their understanding of cyber security risks

Since 2016, the NCSC has safeguarded the UK's critical systems and online services, delivering world leading guidance, tools and frameworks for business and citizens alike. When cyber attacks occur or services are disrupted, the NCSC can provide incident response support to minimise harm, restore operations, and help organisations get back on their feet.



Cyber Essentials Plus is the highest level of certification under the NCSC scheme, requiring independent technical testing to verify organisational IT security controls. The five technical controls for the accreditation are boundary firewalls and internet gateways, secure configuration, access control, malware protection, and patch management.

The key features of Cyber Essentials Plus include:

- rigorous testing and hands-on evaluation by independent, accredited, security professionals
- protection against common threats – the certification ensures organisations have baseline security controls to defend against cyber attacks
- following changes in 2022, the scheme now also brings all cloud services into scope
- government contract eligibility – holding this certification allows businesses to bid for government contracts that involve handling financial or personal data.

Like the constantly evolving threats, the audit and programme change each year to ensure IT systems can keep pace with both existing and emerging risks worldwide.

While we are pleased to report on our recent accreditation, the story does not end here. We recognise the constant evolving threats to IT systems like ours and commit to regular reviews and investment to ensure we continue working to protect those who protect the public, by taking our systems and your data seriously.

# NCOA voice is heard at the ACAS conference

NCOA officials joined a cast of employment lawyers, judges, sister trade unions and employers at this year's ACAS Conference. The event was facilitated by BBC World News presenter Maryam Moshiri, alongside Justin Madders MP, the Minister for Employment Rights, Rupert Soames, Chair of the CBI, and Paul Nowak, General Secretary of the TUC.

All delegates were there to host fresh thinking on big ideas shaping the future of employment relations. The conference addressed the nature of disputes at work and increasing polarisation in society, including insights on 'disagreeing better'.

ACAS echoes the thoughts of the NCOA, which believes that at the heart of an effective employer lies effective employment relations. Employers with a healthy approach to employee relations will always deliver more than unhealthy ones.

For some, it's a matter of equality issues, for others, it could be fairness of opportunity, and some may think that health and safety and good work-life balance is the answer to good employee/employer relations rather than a 'one size fits all'. The NCOA was present to inject our experiences and take away good learning practices.

## How can we work well and disagree well together?

The NCA – like many other public sector employers – has seen skills, knowledge and understanding of employment relations and conflict management, noticeably reduce. ACAS research also demonstrates that collective industrial relations have reduced significantly year on year, to the extent that the skills, knowledge and confidence required to underpin effective collective relationships have in some areas almost disappeared.

Similarly, there is a clear shortfall in individual collaboration, conflict management and dispute resolution



Employment Rights Minister Justin Madders alongside BBC News presenter Maryam Moshiri at this year's ACAS conference (© ACAS)

in the workplace, particularly in line management. The NCOA sees this all too often when early informal intervention is avoided in favour of unnecessary escalation to formal procedures.

Understanding proper negotiations and how to deal with colleague complaints requires skill. A shortage of these capabilities impacts on the levels of conflict and dispute.

The NCOA took to the floor during the debate when General Secretary Steve Bond challenged the panel on what more could be done by large organisations where there are clear and persistent gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps. The discussion that followed, recommended among other ideas that good employers should implement a comprehensive strategy which would include:

- 1) undertaking regular analysis compensation data to identify disparities based on gender, race and other factors, which would build trust and demonstrate a commitment to address pay disparities
- 2) establishing clear salary ranges and transparent criteria for promotion and salary increase to

minimise the influence of bias

3) ensuring that all employees are compensated fairly, creating an environment where diverse perspectives are valued

4) encouraging flexible working opportunities to staff who are disadvantaged to progress at work

5) providing equitable pay practice training to employers when recruiting, to mitigate bias during recruitment and performance evaluation processes.

## A critical year

It's clear that 2025/6 will be a critical year for employment relations. Once passed, the Employment Rights Bill could bring in no fewer than 28 major reforms to employment law. Key to those changes include unfair dismissal rights from day one, enhanced sick pay, limits on zero hours contracts, flexible working as a default position of recruitment, and extended Employment Tribunal claim deadlines from three to six months.

The NCA and the NCOA must be prepared for these changes and embrace the challenges collaboratively.

# New legislation bans controversial NDAs that silence abuse

Employees who are subject to harassment or discrimination at work will no longer be silenced by controversial non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), as part of amendments to the Employment Rights Bill.

Victims and direct witnesses of crime who sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) will no longer be silenced under new plans announced by the UK Government. An important amendment to the Victims and Courts Bill was revealed on Monday, 20 October, aiming to eliminate the misuse of NDAs that often serve to conceal criminal conduct.

This significant change ensures that victims and witnesses, including those still working within the workplace, can openly discuss their experiences with anyone, including family, friends, and the media, without fearing legal consequences.

## Welcomed by campaigners

The reform is a crucial part of the Government's broader 'Plan for Change', which is welcomed by campaigners and intended to restore public trust in the justice system and increase efforts to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), and noticeably follows on from the damning Angiolini Inquiry findings.

Changes set to be introduced to the Employment Rights Bill will void NDAs used by employers against employees who have been subjected to harassment – including sexual harassment or discrimination in the workplace – no longer forcing them to suffer in silence.

With effect from 1 October 2025 the Employment Rights Bill now bans any NDA used for this purpose, so that no one is forced to suffer in silence.

This Bill sends a clear message that inappropriate behaviour in the workplace will be dealt with, not



Picture © Vitalii Vodolazskiy / Shutterstock

hidden, allowing employees to have confidence to get on with building an otherwise successful career.

'NDA' is a catch-all term to describe any agreement containing confidentiality or non-disparagement clauses or used to describe those clauses themselves. These contracts or clauses restrict what a signatory can say about something, or who they can tell.

Their original purpose was to protect intellectual property or other commercial or sensitive information, but reports have shown they have become commonly used to prevent people speaking out about horrific experiences in the workplace, often forcing women and vulnerable individuals to feel stuck in unwanted situations through fear or desperation.

While the Government acknowledges that confidentiality may be desirable in some cases, the amendment will also grant the

Secretary of State the authority to set criteria for "excepted NDAs" in specific, legitimate situations.

Importantly, the changes will not alter existing laws protecting sensitive information, such as the Official Secrets Act 1989 and whistleblowing provisions under the Employment Rights Act 1996, and NDAs entered into before 1 October 2025 won't be impacted by these new rules.

## How does this affect NCOA members?

The NCA will need to recognise what can and cannot be subject of an NDA. The NCOA expects them to review and update all measures post 'incident' to ensure compliance with the Act within employment and any post-employment agreements or settlements.

# AEDs & CPR: One member's story

The NCOA wants to highlight the fantastic work carried out by some of our members including workplace rep Jordan [REDACTED], when they saved a colleague's life.

On 12 May, some of our members were attending a routine Monday morning meeting for managers at Slough Branch, when Chris [REDACTED] became extremely unwell. Chris had been in the middle of speaking at this meeting when he suddenly became unresponsive, and it was clear that he was experiencing a medical emergency.

Chris was placed on the floor, and Will [REDACTED] checked Chris' pulse, where it quickly became apparent that Chris had stopped breathing, and was unresponsive. Jen [REDACTED] called 999 to request urgent assistance. Will and Aaron [REDACTED] commenced CPR together.

An automated external defibrillator (AED) was taken to the office, but despite officers' efforts, they could not get the AED to work. After seeking assistance from colleagues, Jordan [REDACTED] and Jason [REDACTED] attended the scene with a second AED and oxygen from an operational vehicle on site; this AED also did not work.

Jordan and Jason then took over from Will and Aaron with CPR and also administered oxygen until the paramedics and HEMS arrived.

Throughout all of this, Jen remained on the phone to 999, providing them with a constant update as to Chris' condition.

When the paramedics and HEMS team arrived they took over from Jordan and Jason, using their own AED to administer a shock to Chris manually. Chris was then taken to hospital where he was placed in an induced coma for 72 hours.

Chris is recovering well, and is now

response, and said that they were unlikely to have appreciated how much their swift actions impacted on Chris' recovery.

The NCOA is incredibly proud to have these officers as members, and wanted to take the time to formally recognise their efforts in saving the life of Chris who is also one of our members. We want to wish the best for Chris and his continued recovery.

**“I hope that this reinforces how important I believe it is that people know how to administer CPR. Personally, I have felt that CPR instruction within Operational First Aid delivery has been delivered with less importance in the last few years, but it was vital to my survival and should never be underestimated as a life skill.”**

on a phased return to work. The paramedics and HEMS team made it clear that Jen, Will, Aaron, Jordan and Jason all played a part in saving his life.

Jen received credit for her clear and calm communication which enabled the paramedics to know exactly what they were walking into. The hospital A&E team praised the efforts of Will, Aaron, Jordan and Jason for their immediate

Chris has praised his colleagues, saying: “I have no memory of this event, only what I have since been told. I have a blank from about 2000hrs the night before until waking up very confused in hospital several days later – even now it sort of feels like it happened to someone else.

“The whole thing came as a total shock to me (unlike the AEDs which didn't for some reason). I am, or was I believed, very healthy and trained regularly including cycling usually three or four times a week. For a football analogy I guess this was my Christian Eriksen/Tom Lockyer moment, both professional athletes who suffered similar cardiac events.

“I have absolutely no doubt that the actions of Will, Aaron and Jen initially, followed by Jordan and Jason, and then finally by the paramedics, saved my life, and nothing I can say or do will ever repay the debt of gratitude that I



Picture © PanuShot / Shutterstock

# of their life-saving qualities

have. While I obviously did not want this, it happened in the right place at the right time, anywhere else (I rode my motorbike into work that day!) and the outcome could have been completely different.

"I hope that this reinforces how important I believe it is that people know how to administer CPR. Personally, I have felt that CPR instruction within Operational First Aid delivery has been delivered with less importance in the last few years, but it was vital to my survival and should never be underestimated as a life skill.

"My main take from this is that if you see someone having a cardiac event, do something; even doing it a bit wrong is better than doing nothing at all!"

**Image not available on website version**

Lifesavers: Chris [REDACTED] (centre) with two of his first aiders, William (left) and Aaron

## Police Mortgages for NCOA members

ADVERTORIAL

Police Mortgages are delighted to be able to offer our 5\* service to all members of the National Crime Officers Association – including their extended families. Whether you are looking for a mortgage or simply wish to seek some advice, we pride ourselves on being there for you when you need us.

Police Mortgages was launched in 2014 by our CEO Chris Schutrups while he was a serving police officer with Hampshire Police. Seeing the need to help his colleagues this idea quickly developed into a valued service for the police service and criminal justice providers across the UK.

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- **Advice:** Even if you are just exploring your options and wish to ask us a question, we are happy to help.

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# WORK & WELLBEING –

CEO Simon Boon shares the Agency Response to the critical 2025 Work &

Earlier this year, the NCOA ran its first ever Work & Wellbeing Survey in response to the repeated messaging received at HQ on workload and the associated pressures.

The survey received a significant response across all grades, and the findings were reported in the Spring Edition of **Under Cover** for everyone to see for themselves the widespread issues affecting staff at all grades and all locations.

Given the depth of feeling, it was only right that we presented the result of this ‘warts and all’ survey to the NCA to see how they felt, and whether or not work could be done to reduce the pressure on staff and improve wellbeing linked to working as a member of the NCA.

Following a constructive meeting with Naomi Amor, Deputy Director HR, we invited her to provide us with a written response which we could share with you all via Under Cover. Here’s what she had to say.

## ‘A shared mission’

“In the NCA, we recognise that the health, safety and wellbeing of our people is at the heart of everything we do. When we feel healthy – both mentally and physically – we can give our best, support each other and deliver on our shared mission of protecting the public from serious and organised crime.

“I am grateful to everyone who took the time to share their experiences through the NCOA’s 2025 Work & Wellbeing Survey.

Your insights are helping us to shape real, tangible improvements to how we support you in your day-to-day work and to ensure we have a safe and positive workplace environment.

“Your feedback revealed a few themes that we must address:

- Many of you know where to go for help with wellbeing matters, but you aren’t always confident that the support offered will actually make a difference.
- Workloads and time pressures are leading some of you to work through your breaks or outside of your working pattern.
- It’s perceived that concerns raised through our line management chains don’t always result in change.

“These are important issues that NCA senior leaders need to act on to resolve. We’ve reviewed the Top 10 Fixes that the NCOA has proposed in response to your feedback.

“There is significant activity already under way against some of these Fixes, for example, transforming our technology with the roll out of BLUE Windows 11, and the expansion of our GREEN devices to ensure greater efficiency and better collaboration across the Agency. We’ve expanded our Mental Health First Aid Network, and we’ve introduced G1 Wellbeing Champions within Commands.

## Refreshed strategy

“But there is more we must do, and we will be

launching our refreshed Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy

which sets

out our Vision

of ‘Creating

and maintaining

a healthy and safe

working environment

by promoting a positive

health, safety and wellbeing culture’.

“Some of the planned initiatives include better training

for line managers to identify and address early warning

signs of stress; better

training in facilitating wellbeing conversations;

updating our Attendance Management policy to make

clear the actions that line managers need to take; and

tracking and monitoring compliance to ensure officers’

health is not impacted when working remotely or away

from an office.

“I hope these actions provide assurance of our

commitment to all our officers’ wellbeing and to ensure

you can thrive at work without needing to sacrifice

your health or your work/life balance.

“Looking after ourselves and each other isn’t

just the right thing to do; it’s key to building

strong teams and achieving great results.

It’s important that everyone makes their

own wellbeing, and that of their teams,

a priority.”

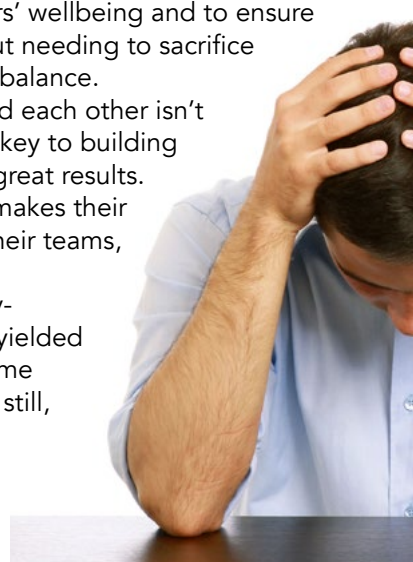
Historically, tackling Agency-

identified ‘Top 10 Fixes’ has yielded

disappointing results with some

taking years to fix – or worse still,

BUREAU  
PAY  
RESPECT EXPECTATIONS  
UNDERSTAFFING  
TECHNOLOGY  
REALISTIC  
MENTAL  
TECHNO  
WORKL  
TRAINING  
SUPPO



# WHERE ARE WE NOW?

## Wellbeing Survey

stalling entirely through an obvious lack of appetite to deliver change. It's important to understand though that the Top 10 NCOA Fixes presented to the Agency came to light through survey engagement with you, our membership, who tell us directly (and in volume!) that you are feeling stressed and overworked – across numerous grades and roles within the NCA.

Given the source of the information, it is significant that the Agency recognises that the health and wellbeing of staff (our members) sits at the heart of all NCA activity, whether that be operationally or otherwise.

It is also important to acknowledge the Agency's commitment to work to resolve work and wellbeing issues

linked to perceptions that support offered to staff will actually make

a difference, and that when concerns are raised up through the chain of command they may not always result in change. Most importantly though, the Agency commits to address workloads and time pressures which have pushed many of you to breaking point.

### Results speak volumes

Alongside this, the various initiatives mentioned suggest a positive outlook for work and wellbeing within the NCA – but as always, the proof is in the pudding. Results really will speak volumes for the Agency's commitment to its staff, and the NCOA will play its part by continuing to engage and provide support in any way we can to deliver the changes required at this time.

We thank Naomi for her detailed response, and have our fingers crossed that the impetus which you created delivers positive and long-lasting change – watch this space.

Given the importance attached to the issues raised, we will revisit this issue in a year's time to see exactly what has happened within the NCA to improve the key areas identified in the 2025 NCOA Work & Wellbeing Survey.

## Top 10 wellbeing fixes



**1: Better IT to enable efficient day-to-day working**



**2: More frontline staff and resources to deliver core business**



**3: Better pay**



**4: Reduced workload and pressure**



**5: Better support for staff**



**6: Cultural change – recognising and responding to mental health concerns**



**7: Less micromanagement and unnecessary bureaucracy**



**8: Management training linked to staff wellbeing**



**9: More realistic expectations of staff at organisational level**



**10: Recognition and proper response at organisational level when problems exist**

# TRiM: A peer-led lifeline for

NCOA member Janine [REDACTED] recognised the challenges officers face within the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) threat area. "I felt TRiM would be really beneficial to having a further peer support network in place that was there for work-based trauma events," she said. "The Agency had an influx late last year of a type of offending which has a lot of suicide of victims, self-harm and hurt core/gore type material." Janine successfully gained access from an external funding stream to create a pilot for CSA officers, using this evidence-based peer support programme. This peer

Let's be honest, working in law enforcement isn't just tough, it's emotionally demanding. Whether it's investigating harrowing crimes, viewing distressing imagery, or responding to tragic incidents, the psychological toll can be heavy.

While we're trained to be resilient, we're also human. Traumatic stress is not a choice, or a reflection on character or personality.

We're biologically designed to react to stress but sometimes an event can overwhelm a person's ability to cope.

I've worked in the NCA for 11 years, and eight of those have been within CSA intelligence functions. About 18 months ago, I suffered my own mental health breakdown caused by work-related trauma and stress, and from this I suffered acute mental health symptoms relating to the years of viewing CSA material.

I never thought I'd be impacted in this way and very much had the British resolve of a 'stiff upper lip' and 'carry on and get on with it'.

I knew very quickly though that I couldn't just carry on and found myself impacted by not only mental health issues but extreme physical health issues that left me unable to carry out basic tasks, like walking more than 10 paces.

**Image not available  
on website version**

From this, we're seeing more officers exposed to extreme and disturbing content, from violent assaults to degrading imagery. The emotional impact isn't always immediate and sometimes it can creep in days, weeks or even months later.

Due to this, I wanted to understand what the Agency could add to their range of support services that could focus on officer wellbeing in this area.

**“We're seeing more officers exposed to extreme and disturbing content, from violent assaults to degrading imagery. The emotional impact isn't always immediate and sometimes it can creep in days, weeks or even months later.”**

Reflecting back, I think this was my body, and brain, just wanting and needing to rest.

Recently we've seen the CSA threat evolving, with an increase of financially motivated sexual extortion (FMSE), and 'community group offending', where an online sub-culture of individuals engage in deviant behaviours, ideology and offending.

I was aware of trauma risk management (TRiM) due to its wider use in the military and emergency services and could see the positive impact it had on individuals who had used it.

That's why the NCA is piloting TRiM – a peer-led support programme that's not about therapy but about looking out for each other. TRiM helps us catch it early.

# officers facing **trauma**

support model will not only help CSA officers, but all teams where work-based trauma may be found; this could be a press officer listening to a case where a victim committed suicide, or a tasking officer who reads an emotive update. Janine explained to Under Cover the need for the peer support programme, and how it will work.

Although the pilot is being funded by a CSA external funding stream and has come about due to CSA growing threats, the support service is available for all officers across the Agency to use.

We see our operational officers attacked when going through doors, we see them attend RTCs and we as an agency deal with the highest harm offenders. TRiM is there to support us all.

## What really is TRiM?

TRiM is a structured way for colleagues to support one another after exposure to trauma. It's not counselling. It's not a clinical diagnosis. It's a conversation, albeit a structured one, between trained peers who understand the job and the emotional weight it can carry.

Originally developed by the UK military, TRiM has made its way into policing and security services because it works. It's about early intervention, spotting signs of distress, and helping people access the right support before things spiral.



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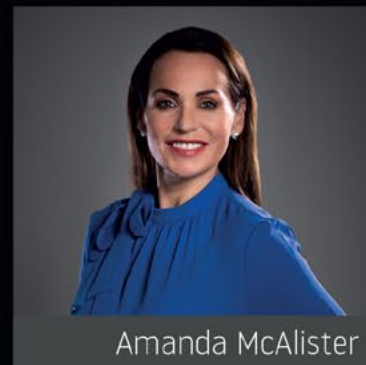
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The NCA pilot, which runs until March 2026, has trained 20 TRiM practitioners from across investigations, intelligence, and other operational areas. These officers are equipped to carry out assessments within 72 hours of an incident and, if suitable, follow up after 28 days.

This gives colleagues time to process, reflect, and recover from the event. If recovery is hindered, TRiM practitioners can highlight suitable clinical interventions and signpost to areas of support. It's also about breaking the silence. Too often, we bottle things up. TRiM encourages open, honest conversations in a safe space. And because it's peer-led, it feels more like talking to a friend than sitting in a formal session.

### The human impact

As TRiM has been active for over 20 years, it has a wide evidence base and it's found that it doesn't cause more harm to the individual. This is one of the reasons I was keen to bring it into the Agency.

A report from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office found

### Looking ahead

As the pilot unfolds, success will be measured through feedback, referral rates, and wellbeing outcomes.

But even now, TRiM is proving to have a positive impact, a way to support officers not just as professionals, but as people. TRiM will be woven into Post-Incident

**“If you've been through something tough, or know someone who has, don't wait. A traumatic event is defined as a distressing or shocking experience that overwhelms a person's ability to cope. It doesn't need to be a large 'traumatic event', TRiM is here for anything that makes you react differently to your 'norm'.**

that TRiM helps people feel reassured and understood, reducing the risk of long-term psychological harm. It shifts the focus from 'victim' to 'survivor', empowering officers to take control of their recovery. The Gov.uk definition of trauma-informed practice also supports this approach, highlighting the importance of recognising trauma's impact and creating safe, supportive environments. TRiM does exactly that.

Research finds that officers appreciate the informality of TRiM. It's not about ticking boxes; it's about being heard. One practitioner described it as "a chat with someone who's walked in your shoes". That kind of empathy can make all the difference.

Line managers also play a key role. They're encouraged to support TRiM by allowing time for assessments, checking in with staff, and removing barriers to access help. It's about creating a culture where mental health is taken seriously, not sidelined.

Procedures (PIP) and as the TRiM co-ordinator, I'll work alongside the Post-Incident Manager (PIM) to look at offering TRiM at the right time to support our officers following a death or serious injury event.

We can also provide wellbeing debriefs to highlight what signs and symptoms officers should look out for to consider seeking further support.

For members, TRiM represents a shift in how we approach mental health. It's proactive, compassionate, and grounded in the reality of our work. It's not about weakness, it's about strength through connection to our peers.

So if you've been through something tough, or know someone who has, don't wait. A traumatic event is defined as a distressing or shocking experience that overwhelms a person's ability to cope. It doesn't need to be a large 'traumatic event', TRiM is here for anything that makes you react differently to your 'norm'.

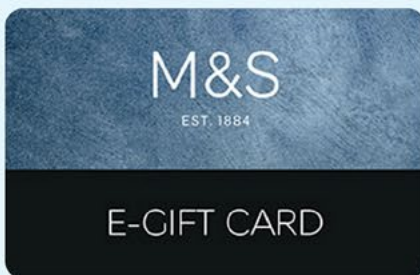
I didn't reach out for support early, but I think if TRiM had been in place, I might have. So please, reach out; TRiM is here to support you through the tough times.



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ADV CI P 0169 NCOA September 25

# Personal Injury Claims Service



**Did you know that pursuing your claim through the NCOA could save you up to 30% of any compensation that you are entitled to?**

If you suffer an injury on or off-duty the NCOA will assist you to pursue a claim through its appointed solicitors, Ralli.

The scheme also extends to claims for family and dependants. Claims can range from on and off-duty RTAs to accidents in the workplace, injuries resulting from occupiers and public liability, holiday accidents (home and abroad), and injuries arising from clinical negligence.

All claims are funded on the basis that there must be reasonable prospects of success and the legal expenditure must be proportionate to the likely compensation payable at conclusion of the claim.

In many instances it is necessary to submit a claim to the alleged negligent third party before a full assessment of prospects can be made. That might include consideration of detailed document disclosure.



The claims process requires that if a defendant denies liability, they must serve any documents that they intend to rely upon in connection with that denial.

Ralli have been working with the NCOA for many years and have unrivalled experience of representing NCOA members. Ralli are also on the National Panel of

the Police Federation of England & Wales, which often works closely with the NCOA.

Ralli's experience is invaluable in terms of ensuring that your claim is fully explored and the compensation received adequately reflects the extent to which the injury has affected you.

As well as compensation for the injury, you are also entitled to claim for any additional out-of-pocket losses, and loss of earnings/overtime etc. If you use a high street solicitor, the likelihood is that they will act on a conditional fee basis ('no win, no fee') and then seek to deduct up to 30% of the compensation received at the conclusion of the claim and also deduct a legal expense premium.

Ralli's friendly and knowledgeable Personal Injury Team will explore any other existing funding arrangements and if necessary can deal with your claim on a 'no win, no fee' basis; all you pay is the legal expense premium.

That premium would only be deducted from your final damages at the successful conclusion of the claim and insures against any costs and disbursements that are not recovered at the conclusion of the claim, giving you peace of mind.

**If you have a claim, contact the Ralli team directly on 0161 207 2020 on a no obligation basis. The NCOA will verify membership and approve instructions if you wish to proceed.**



**Ralli Directors James Reilly and Farhanah Ismail, who run the personal injury department**



# NCOA

National Crime Officers Association  
The Trade Union of the NCA

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Total Loss of one or more limbs	£50,000
Total Loss of hearing in both ears	£50,000
Total Loss of hearing in one ear	£12,500
Total Loss of speech	£50,000
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Emergency Dental Treatment ( <i>due to accident</i> )	Up to £500
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No Pay up to 26 weeks	50% Scale Pay
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FWI2891 - 09/24 v1

# Up, up and away!

Partner of NCOA President, Michele decided on a high-flying way to support a charity so close to both of them... ChemoHero.

ChemoHero is a North Devon-based charity gifting boxes of kindness to people starting courses of chemotherapy, along with extra support including counselling.

Its founder, Lisa Wallis, wanted to support patients as they started their treatment cancer journey. So, she created a box of kindness for men and women, packed with over 35 items to help with side effects, the time spent at the hospital, and of course a few treats.

As a community nurse, with Lisa as one of her patients, Michele had the privilege of caring for Lisa. Michele said: "During the six years we spent so much time together, Lisa often talked about me doing various stunts for her charity. These included me shaving my hair off in support, and running a full marathon – as well as a half marathon inside of a replica ChemoHero box.

The final comical demand was to do a wing walk in Lisa's memory, and after three years of saying 'goodbye' and seven failed



attempts due to wind and weather restrictions, Michele finally took off from Dunkerswell Airfield to honour the last request.

Michele said: "This one was especially meaningful as it was to carry on Lisa's fearless spirit and support the charity benefiting so many who are starting their cancer treatment."

Anyone wishing to support this wonderful charity can do so by visiting <https://chemohero.enthuse.com/pf/michelewingwalk>



  
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\*Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality, by Danielle Gaucher, Justin Friesen and Aaron C. Kay



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