

**Contact Philip Cox 01773 572 014 (Operation Liberal- Rogue Trader)**

Date: Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008

**POLICE AND PARTNER AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO PROACTIVELY TACKLE DOORSTEP CRIME AND ROGUE TRADERS**

On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008, police forces across England and Wales will join together in a bid to combat doorstep crime.

In a multi-agency operation, police are working with Trading Standards and partners including Department of Work and Pension, the Border and Immigration Agency, Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs and the Vehicle Operators Services Agency. Officers will work together to target so called 'rogue traders', bogus workmen and distraction burglars.

Over 500 staff from police and partner agencies will be involved in the operation on the day. Whilst tactics will vary according to each force the main activity on the day will be:

- ANPR operations in all forces.
- Intelligence led joint patrols across the country, concentrating on hot spot areas which may have a concentration of elderly or vulnerable residents who these type of criminals often target.
- Officers will be speaking to all workers and residents who are having work carried out, including people carrying out driveway maintenance, gardening or roofing jobs.

The operation is part of 'Operation Liberal' a cross force operation which was formed in October 1998. It initially started with six member forces combined with the support of the National Criminal Intelligence Service and the National Crime Squad (now SOCA). Every force in the country is now a member and the operation holds one central database which contains intelligence on all distraction burglary intelligence and crimes in England and Wales.

There is evidence which shows that the majority of distraction burglary offenders network with each other and associated rogue trader criminals while travelling large distances across several force areas, which is why it is important for intelligence on this sort of crime to be shared by forces.

The ACPO National lead on Burglary Deputy Chief Constable Graeme Gerrard said "There is an inextricable link between rogue traders and distraction burglary- since 2001, offences of distraction burglary have gradually increased and a particular concern for all forces is the significant impact upon the health of older and vulnerable victims. We are determined to continue to target 'doorstep' criminality across the country, and proactive intelligence led days such as these are crucial in targeting offenders and making communities a safer place to live"

**NOTE TO EDITORS**

For further information please contact the Press Office on

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