

Asset Recovery

Driver – Economic

Related Drivers – Counter Terrorism, Collection and Storage of Personal Information, Fraud, Organised Crime, Recession, Collaborative Working, Police Funding, Police Powers, Criminal Legislation, Advances in Technology, Data Mining, Drugs – Cocaine, Drugs – Cannabis, Human Trafficking, Prostitution, Public Confidence in the Police

Background

The Proceeds of Crime Act has given police a wide range of powers to investigate and recover criminal assets and to tackle money laundering.¹

To encourage police forces and agencies to focus in this area, an asset recovery incentivisation scheme was developed where 50% of all asset recovery receipts are returned to front line agencies.² For confiscation orders, there is a three way split with equal shares going to investigators, prosecutors and enforcement agencies. For example between October and December 2007 a total of £34 million was recovered with £17 million being shared among the police and other public agencies. The Home Office has made a commitment to recover £250 million a year by 2009-10.³

Following consultation with police and law enforcement agencies in the Asset Recovery Action Plan, police powers are due to expand. These new powers will include:

- The right to seize high-value goods from offenders when they are arrested – before they have a chance to disperse them
- Widening the kinds of assets liable for seizure
- Removing the currently 12 year time limit on seizures.^{3,4}

Police forces' asset recovery performance is currently tracked. In addition, quarterly details of asset recovery performance, broken down by type of activity, police force and agency and court area will be published.

Potential Skills Needs

Financial investigation skills – investigating and interpreting cases 'white-collar' crimes such as fraud, embezzlement, bankruptcies, and money laundering

Inter-agency working skills – to work effectively with two or more governmental agencies

Operational policing – deliver high visibility policing operations

Partnership working skills – to work effectively with other agencies to a common goal and standards

¹ [Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 \(England, Wales, Northern Ireland\)](#)

² [Home Office \(2007\) *Asset Recovery Action Plan: A consultation document*. London: Home Office.](#)

³ [Home Office \(2008\) *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our communities together*. Cm 7448, London: The Stationery Office Ltd](#)

⁴ [House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee \(2007\) *Police Funding*. Fourth Report of Session 2006-07. HC 553, London: The Stationery Office Ltd.](#)