



SFO

SERIOUS FRAUD OFFICE

Business Plan 2023-24



Foreword



In 2023/24, the SFO will balance delivering its day-to-day mission with implementing long-lasting change.

In recent years, we have seen some of our greatest successes – such as securing the UK’s largest ever financial penalty following a guilty plea in the Glencore case – and some disappointments, including the unsuccessful end of cases against former Serco and G4S senior employees. We are committed to using the lessons from our victories and our setbacks to prioritise permanent, impactful improvements.

For the long-term, we know that we need to keep pace with the changing face of complex economic crime. We must work with others to keep adapting our own investigation and prosecution methods and co-ordinate efforts to reform wider parts of the criminal justice system, such as the disclosure regime.

At the same time, we cannot and must not be distracted from our daily mission: delivering justice in serious fraud, bribery and corruption cases. We must continue to implement the business-as-usual actions

that we have built into our work following the Altman and Calvert-Smith reviews and the recommendations from HMCPST inspections.

This business plan will help us to balance our daily and long term needs over the months to come. As we deliver on our day-to-day casework, these priorities will support us to plan for the future: giving our cases the resource they require, giving our people the culture and skills they need and investing in the right tools for the job – whilst taking steps to permanently improve our casework.

In the autumn, the SFO will welcome a new Director who will bring their own vision, experiences and insights to the role. As they develop their understanding of our operating environment, the business plan will inform their assessment of where we should ruthlessly focus, including on what matters most to our staff.

We know that this plan is ambitious. But we have confidence that we will be able to rise to the challenge; we have rooted it in what we know needs to change and what is most important to our staff, based on feedback gathered throughout the year and in the annual Civil Service People Survey. Together, we will be able to keep the right balance between what the SFO needs today and what it will need tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Ososky".

Lisa Ososky
Director
Serious Fraud Office

22 June 2023

Our Plan in Context

Our Mission

The Serious Fraud Office fights complex financial crime, delivers justice for victims and protects the UK's reputation as a safe place to do business.

Our Objectives:



To investigate and prosecute the most serious or complex cases of fraud, bribery and corruption.



To uphold the rule of law, deliver justice for victims and recover the proceeds of financial crime.



To deter criminals and require offending companies to reform in order to protect the UK's economy and global reputation as a safe place to invest and do business.

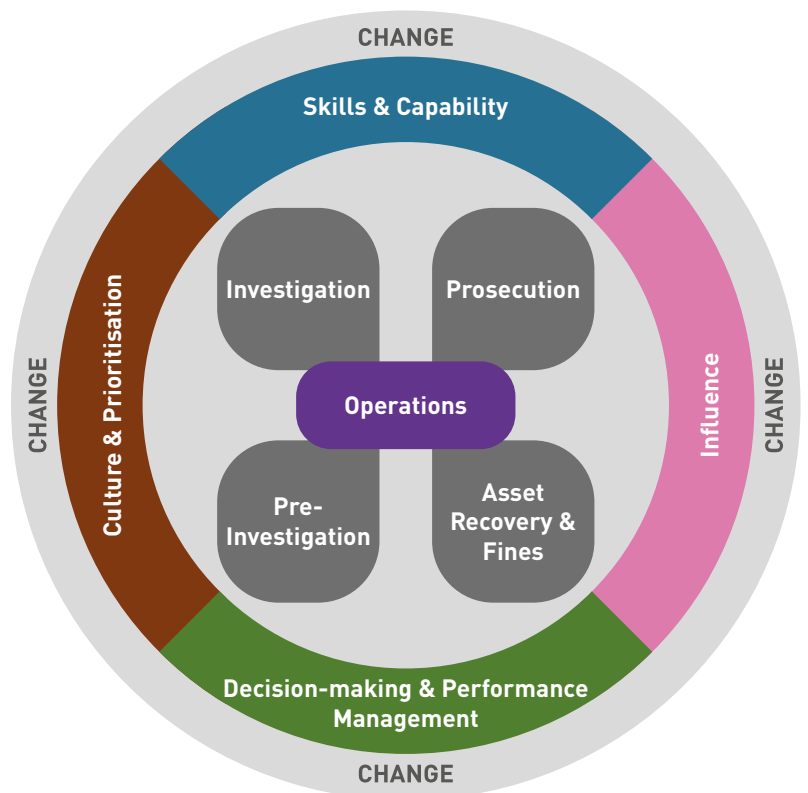


To collaborate with partners in the UK and overseas to ensure there is no safe haven for those who commit serious financial crime.

Our Strategy:

In 2022, the SFO set out a three-year strategy identifying the four areas that we wanted to change by 2025.

Our 2023/24 business plan supports these ambitions by focusing on the in-year priorities which will bring them to life over the next 12 months.



Our Operating Environment

Since 1988, the SFO has managed highly complex cases which require years of careful and precise investigation – often on a global scale.

Today, we face new and growing challenges

In the last 35 years, the world has changed dramatically. Lives and business are increasingly conducted online, with digital footprints increasing every day as a result. Financial arrangements have become more complex, spanning continents, types of individual and corporate legal accountability and regulatory systems. In all jurisdictions, criminal justice systems are struggling to keep up; in the UK, the disclosure regime in particular has struggled to keep pace with the impact of mass digital data on how crimes are committed, investigated and prosecuted. At the SFO, this can mean reviewing millions of documents in each case and describing them all. This drains resource, slows cases and can create barriers to justice and holding criminals to account.

Data and technological skills, along with traditional investigative and prosecution expertise are in short supply across law enforcement and the criminal justice sector. In many areas, agencies are unable to recruit and retain the permanent staff that they need. For the SFO, this issue is particularly acute; the unique nature of the cases that we take on means that they require a range of specialised skills which can be difficult to find.

We recognise the need to meet those challenges head on in 2023/24

We will respond to the additional demands of pursuing fraud, bribery and corruption in today's world by reducing our vacancies and building up our most important resource: people.

Alongside recruitment, we will work hard to give new and existing staff the opportunities they deserve. By investing in technical and operational skills, leadership capabilities, and an inclusive culture we can develop the talent that we need in-house – and retain it for years to come.

And we will make sure that our staff have the tools that a specialist law enforcement agency requires. Given the complexity of our cases, it is right that we should explore new ways of working, enhanced by emerging opportunities such as automation and AI where appropriate. By building our access to the right technology and creating the right working environment, we will make sure we can adapt to our changing world.

Our 2023/24 business plan sets out the steps we need to take to rise to the challenge of investigating and prosecuting serious fraud, bribery and corruption in today's world.

2023/24 Outcomes

Outcome 1: Our permanent staff headcount increases

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
A comprehensive recruitment plan, supported by external resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of vacancies filled ▪ Time taken to hire and on-board new staff ▪ Feedback on SFO induction 	We have the resources and culture we need to effectively deliver our mission
Timely and effective campaign delivery		
A refreshed induction process which is fit for purpose and sets clear cultural expectations		
Updated SFO values and behaviours that reflect the inclusive culture we need		
A detailed assessment of our current operating model		

Outcome 2: Staff receive the right mix of training on leadership and technical skills

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
Learning and development strategy reviewed and updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Civil Service People Survey feedback ▪ HMCPSI recognition of progress 	We have the skills we need to deliver our mission effectively
A new, bespoke training package for staff in operational and enabling functions (HMCPSI recommendation)		

Outcome 3: Staff recognise that the SFO employee value proposition utilises all available funding and benefits to their maximum

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
New compensation options are developed and explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exit interview feedback 	We have the skills we need to deliver our mission effectively

Outcome 4: We are ready for our accommodation move to Canary Wharf

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
Commercial arrangements completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed relocation date and milestones agreed for move 	We can work flexibly and collaboratively, in line with the Government estates strategy
Bespoke fitout and security measures put in place		
IT services and specialist facilities available at the new office		
Reassessment of office attendance requirements		

Outcome 5: We make targeted, evidence-based interventions to improve our casework

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
Opportunities for continuous improvement in our casework identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of case improvement steps is ready for rollout in 2024/25 HMCPST recognition of progress 	The quality and efficacy of our casework improves
Resourcing model for cases developed (HMCPST recommendation)		
Casework assurance process finalised (HMCPST recommendation)		
Ways to reduce the turn-around time for overseas evidence explored		
Continue to build resilience in our evidence review software		
Ways to get the most out of our evidence review software identified		

Outcome 6: Our office systems and technology are reliable, up to date, and enable effective collaboration

2023/24 Outputs	Measuring success	Long-term impact on the SFO
A new document management system which enables collaboration and better record management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased user satisfaction with IT services reported 	<p>Our technology enables us to be more effective, efficient and collaborative</p>
A faster, resilient and future-fit intranet		
New enterprise resource planning system		
Updated hybrid working technology		
Rollout of new hardware		
Updated MS Teams capabilities		



