

**SCD9 Human Exploitation and
Organised Crime**

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Dear Editor,

As you will be aware, the Metropolitan Police Service is committed to reducing human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Recent investigations have demonstrated our commitment to ensuring London remains a hostile environment to those engaged in this type of criminality and a number of these investigations have resulted in successful prosecutions.

It is clear from a considerable number of these operations that advertising in newspapers can play a key role in facilitating the exploitation of trafficked victims. The adverts in question often purport to be massage parlours, saunas or escort agencies, but are in reality a front for criminal networks to advertise trafficked victims for sexual services. Consequently it is vital that we tackle this area as part of our overarching strategy to reduce trafficking in London.

I am therefore seeking your support to help us address this issue by ensuring that your publications do not allow advertising space to be utilised to promote these practices. Advertisements that offer multi-national or young women; or which are sexually suggestive in tone are often the type found to be linked to the provision of sexual services and / or the presence of trafficked women. It is these types of adverts I am seeking your support in preventing. I would ask that you put in place a system to satisfy yourselves that those seeking to place advertisements are genuine concerns or businesses and not a cover for the types of criminal activity highlighted above.

As you will appreciate, criminal liability can arise in certain circumstances where evidence clearly shows that the advertising in question supports or promotes offences associated to trafficking, exploitation or proceeds of crime.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss any matter arising from this letter. I would also be very happy to meet with you to explain matters further should you so wish.

Yours faithfully

**Richard Martin, Detective Chief Superintendent,
OCU Commander
SCD9 Human Exploitation and Organised Crime Unit**