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NEWS RELEASE

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FIGHTING FRAUD TOGETHER – The Attorney General sets out the future for fighting fraudsters

Following the Government's announcement last week that over £28 million is to be invested in the fight against fraud, the Attorney General, Baroness Scotland will today be making a speech which sets out exactly how this money is to be used.

Speaking at the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Better Governance conference today Baroness Scotland will outline the following;

- £28 million of new funding has been committed to help make the UK the world's hardest target for fraudsters;
- The success story of public and private sectors working together on fraud fighting plans;
- a new National Strategic Fraud Authority, which will drive forward a comprehensive strategy for tackling fraud that brings together the Government, criminal justice practitioners, business and the public. The NFSA will have a key role in increasing the UK's resilience against fraud and ensuring the effectiveness of the UK's response;
- a new Lead Force, centred on the City of London Police, which will act as a centre of excellence to increase the UK's capability to investigate fraud offenders and bring them to justice;
- a National Fraud Reporting Centre, hosted by the Lead Force, which will radically streamline the way that cases of fraud are reported and which will analyse reports to maximise their intelligence value – informing the National Strategy and helping to target investigations and anti-fraud work in the future;

- innovative pilots to measure the impact and cost of fraud, to help identify priority areas for change and assess the impact of the anti-fraud effort;
- reforms to the criminal justice system to make sure that frauds offenders are brought to justice efficiently and victims are better able to get redress.

The Attorney General went on to say, “We are determined to tackle fraud – the “silent” crime that costs our economy and society so much: a minimum of £13.9 billion in 2005. If we can create a truly hostile environment for fraud in our society and economy, then we can reduce fraud.

We can and will provide better levels of protection for individual and corporate victims – crucially, by enlisting them in the fight”.

Notes for Editors

The Government published a major review into arrangements for tackling fraud in July 2006, which was established to assess:

- (a) the scale of the (fraud) problem;
- (b) the appropriate role for Government in dealing with fraud;
- (c) how resources could be spent to maximise value for money in this.

Following a public consultation, a shortlist of the Fraud Review’s major proposals was identified for development as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The CSR announcement this week confirmed the go-ahead for these with the provision of over £28 million of ring-fenced new funding.

A National Fraud Strategy

The Government Fraud Review identified that the economic and social cost of fraud is severe, and separate research¹ has estimated that *reported fraud alone* costs the economy and society at least £13.9 billion a year.

To tackle this threat, the Fraud Review argued for the creation of a national coordinating body – the National Fraud Strategic Authority - to deliver a comprehensive programme that attacks fraud through the entire pipeline of deterrence, prevention, detection, investigation, sanction and redress to victims. The NFSA’s anti fraud strategy will be designed to ensure that:

- knowledge of fraud is managed effectively – through proper measurement and information sharing - to drive national improvement in tackling it;
- activity between government, business, regulators, and the criminal justice system is properly coordinated for maximum impact;

¹ The Nature, Extent and Economic Impact of Fraud in the UK; ACPO March 2007

- law makers and law enforcers work together to radically change the balance of risk and reward against the fraudster.

The Review also identified:

- scope – through a National Fraud Reporting Centre - to streamline the reporting of cases of fraud and use these to build the UK's intelligence picture of the threat;
- an opportunity to establish the City of London Police as a lead force and centre of excellence to build the UK's capacity to investigate fraud;
- areas where better trial management, specifically the creation of a specialist financial court, could increase efficiency in bringing fraudsters to justice.

The CSR funding means that these key proposals will now be rolled out in the coming months.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) is one of the leading professional accountancy bodies in the UK and the only one which specialises in the public services. It is responsible for the education and training of professional accountants and for their regulation through the setting and monitoring of professional standards. Uniquely among the professional accountancy bodies in the UK, CIPFA has responsibility for setting accounting standards for a significant part of the economy, namely local government. CIPFA's members work (often at the most senior level) in the public service bodies, in the national audit agencies and major accountancy firms. They are respected throughout for their high technical and ethical standards and professional integrity. CIPFA also provides a range of high quality advisory, information and training and consultancy services to public service organisations. As such, CIPFA is the leading independent commentator on managing and accounting for public money.

For media enquiries on the Fraud Review contact Charlotte Phillips, Senior Press Officer, on 020 7271 2465 or charlotte.phillips@attorneygeneral.gsi.gov.uk.

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