

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Leading Vetting Agency Powerchex supports the launch of PREFIT**

Powerchex, the leading vetting and pre-employment screening agency for Financial Institutions supports the efforts of the Met Police to raise awareness on the importance of Vetting and Screening through the launch of PREFIT.

**London, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009.** In the past 3 years the Met Police, through its Operation Sterling has established a number of forums in key business sectors as part of its approach to combating fraud. PREFIT which is to be officially launched on June 19th at the New Scotland Yard, is the Vetting and Screening Industry's Counter-Fraud Forum.

Recent high profile cases have brought vetting in the forefront of HR policy but due to the specialised nature of the searches, it is not practical for most organisations to conduct the full spectrum of checks in house. "For the past five years Powerchex has worked side by side with HR professionals in assisting them to strengthen their pre-employment screening policy. A wider independent forum such as PREFIT will provide further guidance and best practice in our efforts." states Alexandra Kelly, Director of Powerchex.

Even though PREFIT currently represents a very small number of firms in the industry Powerchex has been assured that it is the full intention of the Metropolitan Police to make it an industry wide forum designed to support employers in their effort to prevent fraudsters entering the organisation through the false pre-text of seeking employment.

"PREFIT is a great initiative by the Met Police which Powerchex supports. The Vetting/Screening Industry has been gaining awareness amongst employers who have been the victims of economic crime. This initiative will strengthen and further support employers in their battle against fraud." says Alexandra Kelly, Director of Powerchex.

In the financial services industry, screening has been the norm for several years. The FSA which is the industry regulator for financial firms has provided guidance as to the level of checks that organisations must perform prior to employment. In other sectors, screening is still very new and HR departments need support with policy.

In an email to Powerchex, Russell Day Detective Superintendent of the Specialist Crime Directorate Metropolitan Police stated: "PREFIT is designed to be complimentary to the NAPBS (the official industry body for the screening industry) and to enable an interface with the other industry forums to raise awareness and good practice to target harden businesses. It is an essential part of the emerging MPS Fraud Strategy 2009-2013 and compliments the recently launched National Fraud Strategy. The forums have additional

benefits because it allows access to a target audience to provide counter-terrorism awareness training and to shape our response to the London 2012 Olympics.”

Employers and recruiters are increasingly expected to protect their organisations from potential fraudsters through screening, both at the hiring stage and periodically once employment has started. PREFIT in conjunction with NAPBS Europe will give them the tools to succeed in this goal.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Powerchex

Powerchex is the UK's premier pre-employment screening firm for financial institutions. Based in the City of London, Powerchex checks the background, employment history, criminal records and professional qualifications of applicants on behalf of financial institutions. It sets the industry benchmark of 5 days for a background check.

[www.powerchex.co.uk](http://www.powerchex.co.uk).

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