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News Briefing

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|  | For the attention of **News Desks**  | No. of pages: 2 |  |
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**Five arrested as part of £12m VAT fraud and money laundering investigation**

Five people have been arrested and charged as part of an ongoing joint investigation by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Police Scotland into alleged money laundering and VAT fraud worth £12 million.

Between Thursday 21st March and Monday 25th March, four men and a woman from Bathgate, Cambuslang and Giffnock, aged 34 to 61, were arrested in connection with the ongoing inquiry.

All were subsequently charged and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Detective Inspector Gordon Burns of Police Scotland's Economic Crime and Financial Investigation Unit said: "Money laundering and associated criminality has a damaging effect on the UK economy and impacts on organisations, communities and individuals.

"Police Scotland will robustly investigate any allegations of unlawful financial conduct and will use all available resources, working with our colleagues in HMRC, to proactively target those who seek to profit from criminality."

Joe Hendry, Assistant Director, Fraud Investigation Service, HMRC, said:

“VAT fraud is not a victimless crime; it deprives us all of money that should be funding our public services.

“HMRC will continue to pursue criminals who attack the tax system and we ask anyone with information about suspected fraud to report it to HMRC online or call our Fraud Hotline on 0800 788 887.”

ENDS

**Notes for editors**

* Police Scotland and HMRC support the work of Scotland’s Serious Organised Crime Taskforce, which brings together a range of organisations to disrupt, detect and deter criminal groups, and divert people away from involvement in serious organised crime.

Details of arrests

* A 56-year-old man, 54-year-old woman and 34-year-old man from Bathgate were arrested and charged.
* A 61-year-old man from Cambuslang was arrested and charged.
* A 47-year-old man from Giffnock was arrested and charged.
* All five were also charged with directing or being involved with serious organised crime.

**Issued by HM Revenue & Customs Press Office and Police Scotland**

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