

CV/Resume: Michael Donegan

Bio:

During my career as an investigator in law enforcement I engaged in a constant process of self-development and actively sought out opportunities to use my initiative. As a result of this I worked on investigations covering a broad spectrum of criminality at scales involving everything from local to international footprints.

This experience enabled me to build a skillset which incorporated perspectives from many subject areas. In particular I discovered a great passion for learning about the mechanics and applications of crypto assets. This involved both academic work and self-study into the subject. Further to this I was able to develop my knowledge through extensive experience of leading criminal investigations featuring crypto assets and money laundering methodologies. Fortunately this has continued since moving to the private sector. TRM Labs Inc. is a leading entity in the blockchain analysis environment and I have been involved in investigating major incidents such as the FTX compromise in November 2022.

Experience relating to virtual assets:

My first input on this subject was in 2014 when I published through the Police Knowledge Hub a report on Bitcoin and money laundering risks. From this point I became the subject matter expert in my force (Derbyshire Constabulary) and provided tactical support on any investigations involving virtual assets. Training was also a key aspect of this and I developed a working group in 2018 for operational officers wishing to progress their knowledge of virtual assets. This group met monthly and I gave presentations/practical inputs on different aspects of virtual assets. The membership of the group extended beyond Derbyshire with colleagues from a number of neighbouring forces taking part. In an attempt to provide the group with regular input on the subject I also authored and circulated a newsletter. This continued for approximately a year before a change in circumstances reduced the time I could dedicate to the group.

At the NCA I continued to progress as the operational demand exposed me to investigations involving complex money laundering typologies utilising various virtual assets. To effectively support such operations I had to carry out forensic analysis of virtual asset transactions on various blockchains and follow assets moving between protocols. Further to this I was responsible for a number of virtual asset seizures involving multiple assets including Bitcoin, Ethereum and Monero. Significantly I also completed the NCA Expert Money Laundering Witness course. This provided a holistic overview of money laundering and greatly improved my knowledge on the subject. Combining this with the knowledge I had on the technical aspects of virtual assets, greatly improved the support I could provide.

Experience

Current role:

- Investigator at TRM Labs Inc. From August 2022 - Present day
 - My duties involve supporting public sector entities in developing and progressing investigations involving cryptocurrencies. As part of this I analyse and produce reports on relevant blockchain activity across multiple protocols.
 - Further responsibilities have included working on the Demix team. Here I seek to successfully work through privacy protocols to undermine efforts by criminal actors to thwart financial investigation. There has also been time spent on the Incident Response Team providing rapid support for customers affected by criminality.
 - In addition to this I proactively provide training and produce content to develop understanding and capability in respect of blockchain analysis. This is shared internally and externally.

Previous role:

- National Crime Agency (NCA): From September 2020 – August 2022
 - Position: Senior Officer, National Cyber Crime Unit
 - My role involved providing specialist operational support to law enforcement agencies throughout the UK. In particular my focus was on criminality involving crypto assets and money laundering methodologies. The operations in question covered local, regional and national policing concerns.

Career History – in brief:

- Derbyshire Constabulary: From November 2005 – September 2020
 - Position: Police/Detective Constable
 - Operational experience:
 - 999 emergency response officer in Swadlincote and Normanton areas of Derbyshire.
 - Safer Neighbourhood officer in Normanton
 - Pro Active Drugs Investigation Unit
 - Criminal Investigation Department
 - Domestic Violence Unit
 - Cyber Crime Investigation Unit
 - Additional duties:

Provided tactical support as a qualified Digital Media Investigator. This involved developing strategies on evidential opportunities involving digital communication networks, online material and digital forensics.

Voluntary work

- University of Derby – Guest Lecturer. From January 2020 – Present day
 - Worked with lecturers on relevant courses to deliver specialist lectures in relation to all aspects of policing digital crime. The lectures are provided to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The content aims to offer an

insight into how law enforcement actually operates and the comparison of this to the theory being taught.

- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development - Instructor. From February 2020 – present day
 - Developed and delivered presentations as part of a team of instructors on the subject of financial crime and crypto assets. The courses are intensive two-week inputs and my presentations take up one or two days of the agenda. The presentations are designed to take participants from the fundamentals of how crypto assets work to the process of effectively investigating transactions.

The participants are from law enforcement agencies across the world. To date I have presented on at least 8 occasions to representatives of 60+ countries from across Africa, Latin America and Asia.
- East Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit - Cyber volunteer. From October 2023 - Present day
 - Work with the cyber and financial crime units on investigations involving cryptocurrencies. Further to this I assist in peer review/training on blockchain analysis matters.

Education

- Masters (MSc) in Financial investigation and Digital intelligence – Distinction (University of Derby). This course involved multiple modules, assessments, self-directed learning and written reports. The topics covered in the modules were all in respect of financial crime and specifically money laundering (Trends and Jurisdictions, Money Laundering methodologies, Organised Crime, Asset Recovery, and Company Law).
- Masters (MSc) in Digital Currency (University of Nicosia). As per the above this course involved multiple modules, assessments, self-directed learning and written reports. The topics covered in the modules related to all aspects of digital currency including technical, policy and economic.
- BTEC Level 3 Certificate in ICT Systems and Principles.
- TRM Advanced Certified Investigator
- Various UK policing qualifications in Serious/Complex crime investigation with a specific focus on digital and financial crime investigation involving cryptocurrencies:
 - “Professionalising the Investigation Process” (PIP) Level 2 investigator, interviewer and tutor.
 - Digital Media Investigator
 - Firebrand Level 1, 2 and 3 Cyber Crime Investigator

- National Police Chief Council: Investigating cryptocurrencies
- Chainalysis Reactor Certification.
- QA Cyber Security Essentials Bootcamp
- College of Policing Level 3 Open-Source Investigator
- Incident Handler: Cyber
- CompTIA Security+ (Now expired)
- Certified Security Testing Associate (CSTA, now expired).
- Qualified Digital Forensic examiner on Magnet (MCFE) and XRY platforms.
- Accredited Financial Investigator
- Member of Expert Money Laundering Witness cadre

Awards

- Had an article on Mandate Fraud/Business Email Compromise published in an academic journal.
- Given presentations at various national and international conferences on cryptocurrencies including UNODC and EU events.
- Nominated and received a number of awards whilst in policing including:
 - Nomination for “Exceptional work in the field of cryptocurrency investigation” at International Digital Investigation Awards 2020.