

SFO USE OF RESTRAINT ORDERS DOUBLES

8 Nov 2017

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has doubled its use of restraint orders in the past financial year.

Research has shown that the SFO has become more proactive in the use of such orders, which allow it to freeze assets (pending an investigation or proceedings) that it believes are derived from money laundering or other fraudulent activity. If a person is then convicted, the confiscation process begins and the convicted person loses those assets.

The SFO has issued eight restraint orders in the past financial year – twice the amount for the previous year. Proceeds recovered by the SFO under such orders can be used to reimburse victims of fraud.

Aziz Rahman, founder of Rahman Ravelli, said that the rise in their use indicates the SFO's increasing willingness to use them - and the importance of responding appropriately.

He said: "The SFO tends to focus on the larger cases and it is very keen to act swiftly to freeze and seize the assets of those it believes have committed wrongdoing.

"While this is understandable, it can be the case that people are unfairly targeted when they have done nothing wrong. And it can be a huge shock when people find out their assets have been frozen.

"But what anyone in this situation has to remember is that these orders can be contested. With the right legal help, someone who is the subject of a restraint order can succeed in having it varied or discharged.

London Office
36 Whitefriars Street
London
EC4Y 8BQ
+44 (0)203 947 1539
enquiries@rahmanravelli.co.uk

Midlands Office
3 Brindley Place
Birmingham, West Midlands
B1 2JB
+44 (0) 121 827 7985

Northern Office
Roma House, 59 Pellon Lane
Halifax, West Yorkshire
HX1 5BE
+44 (0)1422 346 666

Rapid Response Team
24 Hour Emergency Contact
0800 559 3500
Fax +44 (0)1422 430 526
DX16001 HX1

“The SFO sees restraint orders as a useful tactic when looking to hold people to account for alleged wrongdoing. But there are plenty of examples where the SFO has not got it right and there is always the potential to challenge a restraint order.”

Read our article: [IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY](#)

London Office
36 Whitefriars Street
London
EC4Y 8BQ
+44 (0)203 947 1539
enquiries@rahmanravelli.co.uk

Midlands Office
3 Brindley Place
Birmingham, West Midlands
B1 2JB
+44 (0) 121 827 7985

Northern Office
Roma House, 59 Pellon Lane
Halifax, West Yorkshire
HX1 5BE
+44 (0)1422 346 666

Rapid Response Team
24 Hour Emergency Contact
0800 559 3500

Fax +44 (0)1422 430 526
DX16001 HX1