

Finding the money

Discussion with Perry Fawcett and Ian Cohen 06 12 2106

It is much easier to find large sums. If we are looking for relatively small amounts, eg £20k, it will be very difficult.

It is always difficult to trace money from source to end point.

The best approach is likely to be to start at the destination and see what it reveals. This is the "sonar" approach, ie look where you might expect to find something and try and get a "ping".

Realistically, it is also important to set a time frame, eg the past 6 months, so as to limit and focus the search.

If we can identify a likely target (eg a university with an anti-fracking agenda) they will run this as an academic exercise, an experiment. The behaviour of an organisation may help identify it as a suitable target to investigate. Universities can sometimes be very untransparent re their funding.

A parallel approach could be to look at organisations we are interested in through a financial lens. Surprising how this is rarely done, and what it can turn up.

Money coming out of Russian corporations is likely to reach its destination through a blue chip company. Look at which Russian companies have shares in which UK companies.

Also look at eg Russia buying the port in Herzogovina; the potential for it becoming a Naval base. Or Russian funding N African countries' buying Russian military equipment. A different kind of influence.

The biggest danger is making the answer fit the question, ie finding what you are looking for when it really isn't there. Would damage our reputation.