



**THE UK BORDER AGENCY RESPONSE TO
THE INDEPENDENT CHIEF INSPECTOR'S REPORT
ON AN UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF
LOUGHBOROUGH REPORTING CENTRE**

THE UK BORDER AGENCY RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INDEPENDENT CHIEF INSPECTOR'S REPORT ON AN UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF LOUGHBOROUGH REPORTING CENTRE

1. Recommendation 1:

People reporting have access to interpretation facilities where necessary.

1.1 Accepted in principle.

1.2 The UK Border Agency does have accessible interpretation facilities but these must be pre-booked. This type of service is unsuitable for the reporting centre due to the unpredictable nature of its work and only an occasional demand for interpreters.

1.2 We accept the Chief Inspector's findings that it is unacceptable to use other customers as interpreters and staff have been instructed accordingly.

1.3 We are considering setting up an account with a telephone interpreting service and purchasing handsets to facilitate the use of this service on the counters. Once costings are known, a decision on affordability will have to be taken. We are also undertaking a review of interpretation facilities at all of the UK Border Agency's reporting centres with the intention of standardising access to interpretation facilities across all 15 sites.

2. Recommendation 2:

All staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to recording complaints; and provides up-to-date literature advising people how they can make complaints

2.1 Accepted in principle.

2.2 We accept the Chief Inspector's findings that there is a lack of understanding among staff on how they should respond to a complaint and that there should be up-to-date information available. At present there is a government-wide restriction on the reprinting of literature which includes complaints posters and leaflets. We are seeking to apply for a Cabinet Office exemption on this matter but as an interim measure UK Border Agency branded posters advertising the Regional Customer Service Team and their contact details are being displayed.

2.3 It is accepted that staff need further training on their responsibilities with regard to the recording and handling of complaints. Arrangements are being made for that additional training to be provided by the Regional Customer Service Manager.

3. Recommendation 3:

All relevant factors are considered (in line with published policy) when assessing people's eligibility for travel expenses.

3.1 Accepted.

3.2 We accept the Chief Inspector's findings that all relevant factors are considered in making a decision on exceptional needs and eligibility for travel expenses. A full review of staff understanding has taken place and staff are now clear on the application of the policy.

4. Recommendation 4:

All people using the centre have access to drinking water.

4.1 Not Accepted.

4.2 We do not accept the Chief Inspector's finding that customers using the centre should have access to drinking water. The Chief Inspector has noted that waiting times in the centre are on average less than 20 minutes. Customers are allowed to bring drinks with them to the centre. If they are unsealed in reception security staff will ask the customer to take a sip before allowing it through the security process.

4.3 If a customer asks for a drink of water, this will be provided by a member of staff or the security team. A UK Border Agency branded poster has been placed in the designated information area advising of this.

4.4 In light of the very short waiting time in the Loughborough Reporting Centre and the fact that customers can bring their own refreshments with them, subject to the above, we do not intend to install a water fountain at this time.

5. Recommendation 5:

Information on display is up-to-date, consistent with the UK Border Agency's branding and informs people that private interview rooms are available if required.

5.1 Accepted.

5.2 We accept the Chief Inspector's findings that information should be displayed with the correct UK Border Agency branding. Designated information points have been established where all current and correctly branded literature can be easily accessed, which includes information about the use of private interview rooms.