

Have you got what it takes?

Working with the UK Border Agency and Border Force

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Important facts

Controlling migration

The Home Office is responsible for controlling migration to the UK, through the work of Border Force, which applies immigration and customs controls on passengers arriving at the border, and of the UK Border Agency (UKBA). UKBA

- **processes visa applications overseas and applications for further stay from those already in the country, including students, workers, family members and asylum seekers;**
- **processes citizenship applications; and**
- **takes enforcement action against those found to be in the UK unlawfully.**

This represents a continuum of control activity that extends from UK diplomatic posts across the world through our air and sea ports and into our communities.

Partnership with our counterparts overseas supports our drive to undermine terrorism, fight smuggling and tackle immigration crime.

The public will see their police and crime commissioner (PCC) as someone who should be working closely with other law enforcement agencies to ensure that local communities are protected from the harmful effects of illegal immigration, illegal working and human trafficking.

Background

On 1 March 2012 Border Force was split from UKBA to become a separate law enforcement command, led by its own Director General, and accountable directly to Ministers.

UKBA will protect the border and ensure that Britain remains open for business, checking people travelling to the UK before they arrive through visa checks, intelligence and the use of the e-Borders system.

At an operational level, Border Force ports have local arrangements with the police, in particular Special Branch, and, in Northern Ireland, the C3 Ports Policing Branch, for closer working and joint activity at the border. Representatives from the Border Force regions will also either sit on or participate in Regional Intelligence Units, which are generally made up of the police, the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), UKBA and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

UKBA works with key partner organisations to address key threats to the UK. These are the threats from:

- **terrorists;**
- **criminals enabling illegal immigration through fraud, forgery or other organised attempts to cheat the immigration system;**
- **organised illegal immigration to the UK; and,**
- **a crisis in another country that could lead to false or unfounded claims for asylum alongside legitimate refugee claims.**

We continue to take tough action against people who are in the UK illegally. We prioritise enforcement against those who threaten national security, have been convicted of serious crimes, or are involved in activities such as drug trafficking and human trafficking.

More information

A high-level memorandum of understanding was signed between UKBA and the police in 2008, when the agency was created, to provide a framework for joint police and UKBA action to strengthen the UK border, and to enable better co-ordination on security arrangements at ports and airports.

In the UK, the UK Border Agency Crime Directorate targets its resources where it can make the most difference: against those involved in organised immigration crime. UKBA is working with other law enforcement agencies in the UK and abroad, to share intelligence, plan practical solutions and run joint investigations.

Why does UKBA need to tackle immigration crime?

Illegal immigration puts pressure on public services, local communities and legitimate businesses. UKBA works to cut illegal employment, sham marriages and tackle organised illegal immigration.

Illegal working undercuts wages and can exploit vulnerable workers. Every year we impose civil penalties on hundreds of companies that fail to carry out proper right-to-work checks on staff.

UKBA works closely with other government departments, including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA), and HMRC to withhold from illegal migrants the benefits that legal UK residents are entitled to.

What is UKBA doing to remove foreign national offenders?

UKBA is starting the deportation process earlier and removing foreign criminals quicker than ever. We removed 4,500 foreign national offenders in 2011.

We believe foreign criminals who pose a risk to the public should stay in detention. Foreign criminals in the community awaiting deportation have to report to the police regularly; meanwhile every effort is made to remove them from the country.

How does UKBA work with other agencies to tackle crime?

UKBA plays a key role in supporting the joint effort by law enforcement agencies to tackle organised crime networks operating for profit at a huge cost to our economy. By building our relationships with other law enforcement agencies, exchanging information and pooling our resources operationally we can have the biggest impact on reducing harm to individuals and our communities. We have partnership agreements in place with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), SOCA and HMRC. There are agreements in place between the Home Office's Crime Directorate and other law enforcement partners at each air and sea port. There is an established ACPO migration lead for the police at assistant chief commissioner level.

There are many examples of immigration crime teams working closely with police colleagues on investigations in areas such as sham marriage, human trafficking and bogus colleges.

How is the police and crime commissioner (PCC) likely to be involved with working with UKBA?

UKBA Crime Directorate is responsible for the investigation of organised immigration crime and the illegal importation of drugs, firearms, and prohibited and restricted goods. These investigations are often conducted in partnership with police forces and SOCA, and they contribute directly to reducing the harm caused by organised crime in the community.

Organised crime, including organised immigration crime, is one of the key strands of national policing reflected in the strategic policing requirement. As the PCC must have regard to [the strategic policing requirement](#) in carrying out their responsibilities, they may need to work with UKBA partners in their area when planning their use of police resources.