



Home Office

The Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector's report:

An inspection of the Home Office's management of non-detained Foreign National Offenders

December 2016 – March 2017

The Home Office thanks the Independent Chief Inspector for his report.

The Home Office is grateful to the ICI for highlighting potential areas for improvement, including recommendations to improve the management of non detained foreign national offenders. Work is already underway to take forward the recommendations in this report.

Of the eight ICI recommendations, the Home Office accepts six, partially accepts one and rejects one.

The Home Office should:

In respect of the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) December 2015 report, the Gold Group Summary Report of July 2016, and the Operation Zincs Refresh Report of October 2016:

1. Produce a clear, single account of what has been done to satisfy each of the Recommendations and Action Points, indicating which are ‘closed’ and which remain ‘open’, with milestones/completion dates for the latter, ownership of actions, and oversight/sign off arrangements.

Accepted – Immigration Enforcement Assurance Management and Risk Assessment team has produced a refreshed action log of all recommendations for the Gold Group with clear milestones/completion dates for the latter, ownership of actions, and oversight/sign off arrangements. This will be regularly updated/reviewed to ensure that the recommendations are progressed.

2. Confirm that the explanations of the figures quoted in the Gold Group documents are accurate, and that all non-detained Foreign National Offenders are ‘flagged’ and known to Immigration Enforcement Directorate’s Criminal Casework unit (CC).

Accepted – The figures in the dataset produced for the Gold Group are correct and are a deliberate sub set of the published data. The figures in the dataset provided to the inspection team are consistent with transparency data and the methodology for published data which includes the subset used by the Gold Group.

All non - detained FNOs are flagged and are known to Immigration Enforcement’s Criminal Casework Unit. The Home Office has assurance processes in place to mitigate any potential risk of errors in a large scale recording system.

In relation to Home Office records for Foreign National Offenders:

3. Prioritise the development of the Person Centric View (PCV) for non-detained Foreign National Offender case working records, fixing a date for its delivery, and ensuring in the meantime that CC’s information management is not reliant on disparate spreadsheets.

Accepted – Core elements of Person Centric View were rolled out to Criminal Casework in June 2017. This will be followed by iterative improvements and additional functionality until the closure of the Casework Information Database (CID) in 2019. In the meantime, Criminal Casework’s Management Information is sourced from CID data provided by the Home Office Performance Risk and Analysis Unit (PRAU) and also from Criminal Casework’s case progression tool, Pathfinder. The use of any local spreadsheet is strongly discouraged where PRAU data or Pathfinder functionality can be used. However, there are particular circumstances, such as charter removal operations, where local spreadsheets will continue to be used.

4. Systematically quality assure all case notes in respect of Foreign National Offenders to ensure that accurate, up to date records are being maintained.

Partially accepted – alternative solution proposed. The recommendation to systematically quality assure all case notes would be disproportionately onerous and time consuming, however, Criminal Casework is committed to the extension of the existing Quality Assurance Framework checks by September 2017 which will dip sample case notes to ensure CID records are up to date and accurate.

5. Analyse, and continue to monitor, re-offending rates for Foreign National Offenders, distinguishing between those released to a specified address and those released to no fixed abode, to ensure that measures introduced to create a ‘hostile environment’ for individuals with no right to remain in the UK are not having a perverse effect on FNO re-offending.

Not accepted - This work would partly duplicate work by MOJ who already monitor proven re-offending rates. Further, few Foreign National Offenders are released to no fixed abode and those who are required to provide their address to the Home Office at their first reporting event in order that the Home Office can maintain contact.

In relation to guidance:

6. Ensure that Home Office guidance about Foreign National Offenders is kept up to date, including any links and cross-referencing (and liaise with the owners of MAPPA guidance to remove obsolete references to the UK Border Agency and ensure that the guidance is otherwise up to date).

Accepted – The updated MAPPA guidance has been published on Horizon, the Home Office intranet. Criminal Casework is conducting a thorough review of all Foreign National Offender guidance and updating as required. A new IT programme for Criminal Casework staff (i-Manage) introduced in July 2017 will improve accessibility and maintenance of Foreign National Offender guidance.

7. Ensure that the necessary training, internal communications and assurance measures are in place to guarantee that staff are aware of and comply with guidance in respect of Foreign National Offenders.

Accepted - Criminal Casework has an established Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) that has improved the quality of case working and compliance with guidance in respect of foreign national offenders. Furthermore, terms of reference have been agreed with Immigration Enforcement’s internal assurance team who commenced an inspection and audit of the robustness of the current QAF in Criminal Casework in July 2017. The focus of this review is on identifying measures to record and improve compliance.

In terms of working relationships

8. Create and deliver an Action Plan to improve working relationships across the whole of Criminal Casework and with the other areas of the Home Office responsible for managing Foreign National Offenders, in particular staff within the Reporting and Offender Management (ROM) system, addressing as a minimum effective leadership, internal communications, and the alignment of goals and priorities.

Accepted – Since the inspection Criminal Casework has developed a People and Communications Strategy with the ROMs where we are building on the existing Criminal Casework ROMs forum. We have also and formalised the monthly meetings to include focus on leadership, internal communications, and the alignment of goals and priorities.