

Seaports Forum Meeting
Wednesday 19 September 2018

Location:	ICIBI, 5 th Floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PN
Chair:	(ICI) David Bolt – Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
Attendees:	<p>(TM) Tim Morris, UK Major Ports Group (MW) Matthew Wright, UK Chamber of Shipping (MS) Mark Simons, British Ports Association (HP) Howard Pridding, Royal Yachting Association (LAH) Lamees Abu-Hayyeh, ICIBI (PD) Paul David, ICIBI (ABA) Akua Brew-Abekah, ICIBI</p>
Apologies:	None

Issue	Notes
Welcome and Introduction from the Chief Inspector.	ICI welcomed the group, including HP representing RYA as a new member, and explained that he would like to use the meeting to outline what is in the inspection pipeline and what is currently planned, and to hear from the group what they would like to see covered. Attendees were also encouraged to contact the ICI outside the meeting if there were any issues and the ICI is open to being invited to their meetings.
Update on forum relevant ICIBI inspections since last meeting	<p>ICI explained that the seaports inspection programme had developed following discussions with the former Director General Border Force (DGBF), who had suggested that the inspectorate might look at the resourcing of seaports and the coastline in light of changing threats e.g. displacement of clandestine arrivals.</p> <p>ICI gave an overview of The East Coast Ports (ECP) inspection and touched on the South Coast Ports inspection, which is with the Secretary of State awaiting publication. The key issues were around BF's resources being stretched and the ability to be agile (moving staff to where they were needed) to cope with demands and challenges.</p> <p>TM commented that the above resonated with his members and, though they could work well with front-line BF staff, there was a prevailing feeling that behind the scenes there were resourcing issues. MS agreed.</p> <p>ICI said that in due course he would inspect West Coast Ports, taking in the Common Travel Area (CTA). However, it was not sensible to do so while post-Brexit arrangements remained unresolved. In the meantime, BF should have implemented improvements identified in the ECP and SCP inspection reports.</p>

General discussion points

South Coast Ports (SCP) inspection

MS enquired as to when the SCP report would be available. ICI did not know as it was matter for the Home Secretary but hoped it would be published by the end of October. ICI confirmed that the inspection had covered the coastline from Falmouth to Dover.

ICI talked about the interaction between BF and its stakeholders, noting that those working on the coast (e.g. harbour masters and marina managers) had told inspectors that visibility of BF officers was important.

TM felt that at times there appeared to be a disconnect between local teams and central services, with resourcing and agility of response being the two key issues.

ICI gave the group a flavour of the SCP recommendations:

- review of port services and the better use of staff
- having the right kit and technology
- thinking about issues strategically
- testing assumptions about threats

ICI also touched on the contrast between Dover and other ports in terms of resources, and the capacity of SC ports to deal with clandestine arrivals.

Customer service/SLA

The group discussed the levels of service provided by BF, and the importance of understanding what the BF standard 'offer' was before being able to consider what additional services industry might be prepared to pay for.

MS and TM indicated that they have a good dialogue with BF. MW commented that the relationship with the Home Office had been difficult and needed to improve. HP said that improving communication with the Home Office this was a key part of his role.

Charging for services/ Illegal working

ICI flagged up that the inspectorate was currently working on these topics and he would be interested to hear from members if they had anything of relevance.

Brexit

ICI noted that the NAO had been looking at Brexit preparedness, including BF, and he had fed into this work.

West Coast Ports (WCP)

MS said that WCP were very different and any inspection would need to be broken down into several areas.

TM felt that there may be a need for a different emphasis, but he did not see a huge difference between the issues affecting ECP and those affecting WCP.

	<p><u>Freight</u></p> <p>ICI noted that the inspection plan included an inspection of freight in 2019-20.</p> <p>TM asked for regional differences to be highlighted. He also said that off-site freight inspection needed to be considered. MW commented that HMRC would need to be part of this equation.</p>
Future business	<p><u>Other matters</u></p> <p>MS felt that ICI was covering most of the issues that concerned the BPA, but that following publication of the SCP report there may be a need to look at other issues.</p> <p>TM welcomed these meetings and the opportunity to discuss issues with ICI.</p> <p>HP had found his first meeting useful.</p> <p>MW mentioned that his members were aware that the Home Office was looking to develop some trials on passenger registration.</p> <p>The group invited ICI to attend the Ports/Security and Resilience Working Group on 31 October – details to be forwarded</p>
Date of Next Meeting	To be scheduled for February 2019 to inform the 2019-20 inspection plan.