



Border Force



Partner Bulletin

Essential information for Border Force's partners

February 2014

On 23 January 2014 we responded to the Independent Chief Inspector's (ICI) report on our operations at Stansted Airport. Areas of strength included: 100% compliance with the Border Force Operating Mandate across both immigration and customs work; meeting service standards for passenger queuing times; positive relationships with operating partners; good understanding of operating responsibilities; and, strong performance in safeguarding children.



Border Force have started setting up specialist teams that will be based in major ports, to identify potential victims of trafficking, to disrupt organised crime gangs, and to collect intelligence on trafficked adults and children.

In the last month we have seized 13 endangered San Salvador Rock Iguanas and an array of weapons, including stun guns and flick knives. In addition to this we apprehended 48 stowaways in the back of a refrigerated lorry.

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Key:  for information;  invitation to action

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Operational updates

Specialist teams to fight modern slavery at UK ports

Border Force-led teams will be based at major ports and tasked with identifying potential victims of trafficking, disrupting organised crime gangs, and collecting intelligence on trafficked adults and children.

The first of the specialist teams will begin work on 1 April at Heathrow. They will be replacing and extending Operation Paladin which was set up in 2004 with the Metropolitan Police to provide expertise and protection for children at risk across London. Border Force officers at Heathrow will maintain these close links with the Metropolitan Police and local children's services to ensure victims are safeguarded by the relevant agencies. [Read more...](#)

Stansted Inspection Report

The Independent Chief Inspector's (ICI) report on our operations at Stansted Airport was published on 23 January 2014. The inspection focused on the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of Border Force operations at Stansted Airport namely: decisions to grant refusal or leave to enter; consistent execution of the Operating Mandate; appropriate identification and management of risks to the border; performance against key performance indicators; and, effectiveness of customs controls. The [report and Border Force's response](#) can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's website.

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Detections and seizures – highlights

Border Force officers use hi-tech search equipment to prevent illegal entry of people and detect smuggled, banned or restricted goods. They use many search techniques including detector dogs, scanners, carbon dioxide detectors and heartbeat monitors. They also use visual searches to find stowaways, controlled drugs, firearms and tobacco products hidden inside vehicles, freight, luggage and parcels.

The following are a small number of recent operations.

Border Force seizes cocaine at Gatwick Airport

A man has been charged with importing Class A drugs after Border Force officers at Gatwick airport found approximately two kilos of cocaine in the base of a suitcase. The suitcase containing the drugs was identified at Gatwick's baggage transfer point on 5 February 2014, where it was due to be loaded onto another European flight. Two detection dogs had indicated the possible presence of drugs and the case was then taken away for further examination by Border Force officers who discovered the cocaine, which has an estimated street value of more than £250,000 in its base.

Birmingham man jailed after Border Force cocaine seizure

Border Force officers at Gatwick Airport caught a Birmingham man trying to smuggle cocaine into the UK hidden inside tins of vegetables. The cans of tinned vegetables were x-rayed and a number of tape-wrapped packages were found to be concealed inside. Tests revealed the packages contained almost a kilo of cocaine with an estimated UK street value of around £137,000. He recently pleaded guilty to attempting to import a controlled drug and taking into account previous convictions for drug importation, possession and robbery, was sentenced to eight years in prison.

Endangered Iguanas seized by Border Force at Heathrow

Thirteen endangered iguanas were seized by Border Force officers at Heathrow on 3 February 2014. The animals were discovered inside an item of luggage by officers carrying out customs checks at the airport's Terminal 5. Each was wrapped in an individual sock. Twelve survived their journey, one died in transit. The San Salvador Rock Iguanas are controlled under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and so were seized. Two people who had arrived on a flight from the Bahamas and were due to fly on to Dusseldorf in Germany were arrested on suspicion of importation offences. [Read more...](#)

Arrest follows Heathrow weapons seizure

A man has been arrested after Border Force officers at Heathrow Airport seized an array of weapons, including stun guns and flick knives. Officers carrying out customs checks in Terminal 3, on 28 January 2014, made the discovery in an item of luggage. Three stun guns, a throwing star, two knuckledusters, an extendable baton, a pair of nun-chucks and two flick knives were recovered.

Forty eight stowaways found hiding in a lorry

Following a routine checks on 21 January 2014, Border Force officers based in Coquelles, prevented 48 stowaways from entering the UK hidden in the back of a refrigerated lorry. The heavy goods vehicle, waiting to board a shuttle to Folkestone and scheduled to drive to a location in Dover to pick up a load for delivery to France, was empty apart from the Albanian nationals. It had no external lock or seal when it was checked by Border Force officers and the refrigeration unit was not turned on. The Romanian lorry driver has been arrested by the French border police who will investigate.

Casino fake coin smugglers jailed

An Italian man and woman caught by Border Force officers attempting to smuggle thousands of pounds worth of fake pound coins into the UK have been sentenced to ten months in prison each. They were arrested at Dover in July 2013 after almost 7,500 brand new coins were found in their suitcase. It was discovered that they were part of a gang involved in defrauding casinos in London's West End. Posing as tourists, they had been feeding the fake coins into gaming machines and then getting "cash out" tickets, which were being exchanged for genuine banknotes by unsuspecting casino cashiers.

► Published Border Force statistics

Border Force publishes various [statistics on GOV.UK](#) include: cost of each passenger processed at the Border; clearance of passengers at the border within published standards; drug seizures in the UK and tax revenue protected by the detection of undeclared goods.

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Partnership Working

Sex trafficking gang dismantled

Following a joint investigation, involving Home Office Immigration Enforcement, Border Force and the Spanish National Police, a human trafficking gang responsible for transporting young Nigerian women into prostitution in Europe has been dismantled, following a joint investigation. The network used London's Heathrow Airport as a transit hub to move the women, some of whom were under 18, to

mainland Europe for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The British end of the investigation began in 2011 when Border Force officers at Heathrow intercepted a number of females in transit from Nigeria to mainland Europe. [Read more...](#)

A night at the museum

Border Force officers in the CITES (Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species) team built on their already world class reputation with a remarkable collection of seizures and display stands at the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade. The event took place at The Natural History Museum on 19 February, forming part of a two day conference. It was held to raise awareness of the illegal trade in endangered species. Both events gave Border Force a platform to exhibit to the world the importance it pays to enforcing the CITES convention. There was a large amount of interest from foreign delegates regarding the international capacity building the team has done in over thirty countries. Many countries indicated that they see Border Force as a trusted partner that they can work with in tackling the illegal wildlife trade.

Air Carrier Group

The 5th meeting of the Air Carrier Group (ACG) took place on 13 February 2014, with discussion topics including updates on the: carriers' liability consultation; the service level agreement working group; exit checks; misdirected flights; and, Premium Services – including premium port services such as Fast Track and the Registered Traveller scheme. In addition there were presentations on Border Force transformation; the new pilot scheme for Great Britain and Northern Ireland citizens requiring emergency travel documents to return home; and early findings of transit immigration requirements. The date of the next ACG in April will be confirmed in due course. For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

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News Round-up

Border Force awarded International Honours

At the 51st annual, International Customs Day, hosted by HM Revenue and Customs, five Border Force teams and one individual were all presented with 'Certificates of Merit' from the World Customs Organisation (WCO), in recognition of their world-class work in protecting the UK border. [Read more...](#)

Border Force dog prevents more than 100 drug smuggling attempts

Detector dog Megan has stopped an estimated 220 kilos of cocaine from reaching UK streets. She has become the most successful drug prevention dog in UK history. On 17 January she sniffed out three parcels of cocaine on a flight from Jamaica at Gatwick Airport, meaning that the crime fighting canine has now prevented a record-breaking 102 drug smuggling attempts into the UK. [Read more...](#)

A collection of the current Immigration Rules

The second reading of the Immigration Bill took place on 10 February 2014. Members of the Lords, including a former deputy assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and a former head of administration of justice for the

Commission for Racial Equality, debated the main purpose and key principles of the Immigration Bill.

The Immigration Rules are some of the most important pieces of legislation that make up the UK's immigration law. They are updated on a regular basis and all changes can be found in the [Immigration Rules: statement of changes](#).

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