



## Partner Bulletin

Essential information for Border Force's partners

October 2013

New legislation to reform immigration law was introduced this month. This included a proposal on the introduction of embarkation checks for carrier and port operator staff to carry out these checks.

Read about how we worked in partnership with Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) to design and build a state-of-the-art custody suite for would-be smugglers; our collaborative working with Birmingham and other universities; and how private pilots have responded to the online general aviation reporting.

There have been a number of drug seizures this month including cannabis, cocaine, heroin – found by one of our detector dogs – and five tonnes of shisha tobacco.

The Partner Bulletin is now available on GOV.UK at [Border Force/Publications](#).

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Key: **i** for information; **a** invitation to action

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### Operational updates **i**

#### ▶ **General Aviation Report (GAR) – online take up**

Border Force is encouraging all pilots and handlers to send their GARs online, rather than by fax or email. It's been six months since the online portal was launched, and we've seen a steady increase in reports being submitted using this method.

So far nearly 4,000 online reports from pilots and handlers have been received – an average of 35 forms a day. This is very encouraging and reflects the views of many

pilots that online submission is a convenient way to send arrival details to Border Force. To find out more go to [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK).

▶ **Embarkation check provisions in the Immigration Bill**

In 2010, the Government committed to introduce exit checks by 2015. When combined with data about people entering the country, exit check information helps to show who is in the country. The UK already conducts electronic exit checks on approximately two-thirds of passengers who leave the UK, with the help of advance passenger information. This allows us to target the most harmful individuals who are intending to leave the UK by those routes and informs us who has left.

We are therefore introducing a power in this Bill to enable those already involved in outbound passenger processes, such as carrier and port operator staff, to carry out embarkation checks.

To find out more go to [GOV.UK – Factsheet: Embarkation checks \(clause 58 schedule 7\)](http://GOV.UK – Factsheet: Embarkation checks (clause 58 schedule 7)).

▶ **Home Office response to John Vine report – inspection of e-Borders**

The Home Office's response to the e-Borders inspection report by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, was released on 9 October. The [report](#) outlines Border Force's responses to the inspector's 14 recommendations and can be found on [his website](#).

▶ **E-Borders – National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC) **

Between 1 October and 28 October, 2012 NBTC alerts were issued to the border agencies (Border Force, Police and National Crime Agency) which resulted in 332 arrests.

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## **Border technology and transformation**

▶ **ePassport Gates**

Fifteen new ePassport Gates are being installed at Gatwick Airport South Terminal and should be operational during November. More ePassport Gates will be installed at other sites in 2014, including the new Heathrow Terminal 2.

▶ **Heathrow transformation**

Transformation at Heathrow continues at pace. The border experience project team has been focusing on improving the passenger experience and identifying improvements in wayfinding, queue configuration, presentation and queue ‘flexing’ – which includes relocating ePassport Gates and desks. The team is also working hard to introduce ‘continuous improvement’ to Heathrow’s business – specifically reviewing management and operational functions to see what can be done more efficiently. Proposals for the new fast track product at Heathrow have been presented to airlines and there are plans for another industry event to present the product to ports and operators nationwide.

▶ **Local infrastructure improvements**

To date, improvement projects totalling £1.1 million have been identified and projects are at various stages of delivery. Improvement projects completed last month include new dog kennel facilities at Birmingham Airport; new Border Force offices and a primary control point (PCP) at Cambridge Airport; and phase 2 of the new Southend Airport. Other minor infrastructure works are being identified, reviewed and delivered on an ongoing basis.

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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 – as well as 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.

▶ **Dog detection leads to heroin seizure**

A 43-year-old man from West Yorkshire has been charged with drug smuggling after Border Force officers seized an estimated eight kilos of heroin at Manchester Airport. The drugs, estimated to have a street value in excess of £400,000, were discovered on 20 October after a detector dog alerted its handler to luggage from a flight coming from Islamabad. The drugs were concealed within the false sides of a suitcase. Following the seizure by Border Force, the investigation and prosecution are being carried out by the National Crime Agency.

▶ **Cocaine and heroin seized by Border Force at Dover**

Border Force officers have seized approximately 40 kilos of cocaine and 26 kilos of heroin from a lorry travelling through the Port of Dover. The haul, with an estimated street value running into millions of pounds, was discovered on 19 October when officers stopped and searched an Irish-registered lorry carrying bread products to an address in Daventry. The drugs were found in the cab of the vehicle.

The driver was charged with importation on 21 October, but pleaded not guilty and was remanded in custody. The investigation has been passed to the National Crime Agency for further enquiries.

▶ **Shisha smuggling gang sentenced**

Six men involved in the illegal importation of shisha tobacco into the UK were sentenced on 14 October after HM Revenue & Customs' largest-ever investigation into smuggled shisha. [Read more...](#)

▶ **Border Force seize cocaine at Gatwick**

A man has appeared in court after approximately five kilos of cocaine was seized at Gatwick Airport. The drugs, which have an estimated street value of up to £500,000, were discovered on 29 September when officers stopped a 43-year-old man who had arrived on a flight from Trinidad. After questioning him, officers searched his luggage and discovered the drugs.

▶ **Border Force seize cocaine at St Pancras**

A man and woman from Birmingham have appeared in court after approximately three kilos of cocaine was seized at St Pancras International station. The drugs, which have an estimated street value of up to £300,000, were discovered on 29 September when officers stopped a 28-year-old woman and a man, aged 24, who had arrived from Brussels. After questioning the pair, officers searched the luggage discovering the drugs dissolved in bottles of rum. They did not enter a plea and were remanded in custody. They will next appear at Uxbridge magistrates' court on 17 October.

▶ **Border Force statistics published**

Border Force publishes various [statistics on GOV.UK](#) including: the 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

▶ **HMC Sentinel – decommissioned**

After 20 years of service to HM Customs and Excise, HM Revenue & Customs and Border Force, the HMC Sentinel has been retired from service. Sentinel was commissioned in December 1993 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. She enjoyed an illustrious career which saw her deployed to enforce border security in every part of the UK in doing so visiting many ports overseas in France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. Her endurance saw her deployed on countless drug operations over the last 20 years before she made her final voyage back into Portsmouth to be decommissioned in late July 2013. Sentinel is now in the hands of the MoD Disposal Services Agency to be sold and is already attracting interest from foreign navies and law enforcement agencies.

▶ **Border Force design new purpose-built custody suite at Gatwick**

Border Force and Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) have designed and built a state-of-the-art custody suite for would-be smugglers. The suite, next to Gatwick's south terminal, includes six modern cells, contemporary video and audio recording equipment and a new CCTV system. Anti-barricade doors and wider corridors are also distinct features making the suite a safer and more secure environment for both staff and those in custody. The new building, which replaces the old suite, cost £2.5m and was paid for by GAL – part of their long-term plan to improve airport facilities.

▶ **Advanced notification of large student arrivals – Birmingham**

Collaborative working between Birmingham and other universities within the area, through the International Student's Reception at Birmingham University, enabled Border Force to obtain advance notification of large groups of students arriving together at the airport. This allowed us to deploy a dedicated student lane fully optimising passenger flow through the controls of non-EU student arrivals without disturbing the EU and non-student traffic. This dynamic real time deployment of officers across the three areas of the primary control point was a success, ensuring we met service level agreements, providing an optimum service for passengers and delivery partners. We are continuing to work with the universities and measures are in place to have more local universities involved by September 2014.

▶ **Afghan Border Police**

Heathrow Terminal 1 provided a warm welcome to a delegation of the Afghanistan Border Police consisting of a General and his two deputies, on 19 September. The event was part of a Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) initiative, aimed at sharing UK Border Force expertise with officers based at Kabul International Airport. It enabled parallels to be drawn between operations at both Heathrow and Kabul. The General stated that the visit to Terminal 1 was a highlight of their tour and that he and his team took away many ideas they would seek to implement.

▶ **'Don't Bring Me Back' film**

We are grateful to our airline partners who have been showing the 'Don't Bring Me Back' film originally developed in partnership with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The film informs passengers about what food products, such as meat and dairy products, should not be brought into the UK. The film was devised in 2008 and is now in need of updating. We would be grateful if airlines could now stop showing the film until a replacement has been developed. In between times, information on what shouldn't be brought into the UK can be found on the [Home Office website](#), while all UK airports provide clear information on goods that must be declared at the customs red channel.

▶ **Air Carrier Group (ACG)**

The next meeting is due to take place on 18 November 2013 (please note that the date has changed since the issue of the last bulletin). For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

▶ **Maritime and Rail Group**

The Chamber of Shipping (CoS) recently hosted a seminar attended by Sir Charles Montgomery, Director General of Border Force, and its maritime and rail sector partners. It was agreed that this would become a regular bi-annual meeting for the sector. For further information on this group, you can contact [Sheelagh Warde](#).

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**News round-up** 

▶ **Immigration Bill laid in Parliament**

The Home Office introduced new legislation on 10 October to reform immigration laws, ensuring our immigration system is fair to hard-working people and legal migrants, while cracking down on those here illegally.

The Immigration Bill will stop migrants using public services where they are not entitled to do so, reduce the pull factors which encourage people to come to the UK and make it easier to remove people who should not be here.

Read more about the [Immigration Bill on GOV.UK](#).

▶ **Serious organised crime strategy published**

Released on 7 October 2013, the serious and organised crime strategy sets out how we will prevent people getting involved in serious and organised crime. Serious and organised crime is a threat to our national security and costs the UK more than £24 billion a year.

The strategy can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

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Border Force Communications

Email: [BorderForcePartners@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:BorderForcePartners@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Phone: 020 8196 3763

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