



Border Force



Partner Bulletin

Essential information for Border Force's partners

September 2013

This month saw the launch of the Registered Travellers scheme at Heathrow and Gatwick airports and the decommissioning of IRIS at Heathrow airport.

The first General Aviation (GA) Forum also took place, with key partners from the GA community attending, including airfield owners, carrier operators and flying associations.

You can read about a new pilot programme, started in mid September, to capture crew and passenger information from commercial shipping and about how Border Force officers at the new London Gateway port dealt with an emergency.

This month's largest seizures included wine, cigarettes, cannabis, cocaine and heroin.

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

Index

- ▶ [Operational updates](#)
- ▶ [Detections and seizures – highlights](#)
- ▶ [Border technology and transformation](#)
- ▶ [Partnership working](#)
- ▶ [News round-up](#)

Operational updates **i**

▶ **Registered Traveller Scheme launched **a****

The Registered Traveller scheme was launched on 24 September. Initially available at Heathrow and Gatwick airports, the scheme will improve the way eligible non-EEA regular visitors can pass through the UK Border. We are also working towards

enhancing the ePassport gates so that from April 2014 registered travellers with biometric passports will be able to use this option. [Read more...](#)

▶ **IRIS decommissioned at Heathrow**

The IRIS Border Control System at Heathrow Terminals 3 and 5 has been decommissioned because it is no longer economically viable to keep it operational. The overwhelming majority of IRIS users will still have convenient alternatives to the conventional border control process.

Passengers with a UK or EEA biometric passport can use self-service ePassport gates while eligible non-EU travellers who have previously used IRIS can sign up for the new Registered Traveller Scheme.

More information on alternatives to IRIS is available on [GOV.UK](#).

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

NBTC alerts issued to the border agencies (Border Force, Police and SOCA) were a total of 416 in August, resulting in 287 arrests.

[top of page](#)

Border technology and transformation

Border Force is responsible, on behalf of the Home Office, for passport control checks at all UK airports. Key performance indicators are established for maximum queuing times at UK immigration.

▶ **Heathrow operations**

Operational performance at Heathrow over the summer peak period was strong, with service standards consistently exceeded. The operation's ability to predict, respond to and prevent breaches to queue times has improved considerably indicating that Heathrow is achieving its goal to become more planned and engaged. We are now looking at improving the 'Border Experience', in collaboration with Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL), and are working to define and better understand our passenger segments in order to improve the end-to-end passenger journey.

[top of page](#)

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:

▶ **Cigarettes and alcohol seized by Border Force**

Border Force officers in Hull and Immingham discovered nearly 17,000 litres of wine and over 87,000 cigarettes in two separate seizures at the ports. The wine – which equates to nearly 18,500 bottles – was discovered by officers in a container that arrived from the Netherlands. The paperwork was found to be false and the delivery address was fictitious. The cigarettes were found on 15 September. They were hidden inside a specially-adapted fuel tank of a lorry cab. Additionally, over 10,000 cigarettes were seized from a passenger at Leeds Bradford International Airport on 17 September.

If the three attempts had not been intercepted it would have cost the treasury nearly £80,000 in unpaid excise duty. [Read more...](#)

▶ **Gillingham man jailed for cannabis smuggling attempt**

A Kent man has been jailed for three years after pleading guilty to attempting to smuggle approximately 35 kilos of cannabis into the UK. Border Force officers at the Channel Tunnel entrance in Coquelles, France, stopped a UK-registered Mercedes van on 9 July. Officers then searched the van and its load and found the drugs inside three boxes hidden within a large piece of wooden furniture. The drugs had an estimated street value of around £718,000.

▶ **Two charged with cargo ship cocaine seizure**

Border Force officers are investigating after they seized approximately 47 kilos of cocaine from a cargo ship at Dover on 8 September. Officers from Border Force's national deep rummage team found the drugs when they searched the hold of the MV Lady Korcula which was carrying bananas from Ecuador. The drugs are being examined but it is believed once cut and sold on the streets they could have had a potential value running into millions of pounds.

▶ **Heroin smuggler jailed**

A man who was caught at Manchester Airport trying to smuggle heroin with a street value of over £4 million has been sentenced to eight years in prison at Manchester Crown Court. Border Force officers emptied his larger suit case and noticed that it weighed far more than expected. An x-ray then revealed drugs hidden in the lining of the case. In addition following an inspection drugs were also found hidden in the base of his smaller case.

▶ **Heroin found sewn into handbags at Manchester Airport**

Border Force officers uncovered and seized 500g of heroin that was sewn into the lining of a shipment of handbags. The package containing the bags was being processed at Manchester Airport's freight terminal when officers made the discovery on 3 September. It is estimated that the heroin in the parcel sent from Pakistan has a street value of £125,000 and Border Force investigators are continuing to investigate the seizure.

[top of page](#)

Partnership Working

▶ **Pilot begins to record arriving crew information**

A new pilot programme to capture crew and passenger information from commercial shipping started in mid-September. The pilot will involve selected commercial shipping companies and agents operating in Scotland.

Border Force receives many different forms of crew and passenger information from commercial shipping and will trial the Collaborative Business Portal (CBP) system as a way to gather details consistently and process them quicker.

Partners involved in the pilots will submit their information via a website designed specifically for the industry. Once running, it will be connected permanently to the CBP, which in turn will run background checks on arriving crew and passengers.

CBP offers the opportunity to make it easier for these businesses to report their journey, crew and any passengers. It will automate part of the risk assessment process. It will also make it easier to manage by providing accurate information that can be cross-checked against Semaphore and other systems.

The pilot is being run in parallel with the present International Maritime Organisation (IMO) reporting regime. Border Force will ensure the online system will be compatible with Declarations under IMO.

▶ **Borderpol 2013 Congress**

Border Force is hosting the 2013 world Borderpol congress which takes place 3-4 December in London. Minister of State for Immigration, Mark Harper MP, and Border Force Director General, Sir Charles Montgomery, will give keynote speeches in a programme that includes leading experts and senior border agency personnel presenting some of the challenges and border protection issues from around the world. [Read more...](#)

▶ **London Gateway Container Port**

Border Force's central region implemented a local critical incident plan after a major fire broke out on board a container vessel, the MV Zim Rotterdam, which was en route to Felixstowe. Due to the emergency, the vessel had to dock at the new London Gateway port - which is yet to receive its formal designation. Border Force dealt with this under emergency procedures and brought in officers from a variety of other ports to help with making the required checks on the cargo.

▶ **Maritime Operations Customer Service Excellence**

Border Force Maritime Operations is putting the finishing touches to a nomination that will hopefully reward them with a Customer Service Excellence Accreditation (CSE).

This is the first time Maritime Operations has entered the CSE, an accreditation which praises business for their customer insight, understanding experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

Maritime, which includes the fleet of cutters, will be assessed by the independent body in October. The assessment will focus on a number of categories including partner engagement, customer service and communication. In each category Maritime has to provide evidence of good level of service to people and businesses in the general maritime community (GM).

▶ **Dream team**

Border Force officers at Heathrow and their British Airways (BA) colleagues from the International Airlines Group (IAG) were all smiles after a successful border checks test run at one of the BA maintenance bays. The team joined forces in preparation of LBA's first A380 superjumbo and Boeing 'Dreamliner' which touched down at Heathrow airport recently.

▶ **General Aviation Forum**

The first General Aviation (GA) Forum took place on 6 September. The event was well attended with key partners from the GA community including airfield owners, carrier operators and flying associations present. The purpose of this forum was to look at new ways to deliver value-added services to aviation operators and airfield owners while ensuring we continue to provide a safe and secure border - specifically the provision of immigration and customs controls for passengers and goods that arrive through general aviation. For more information you can contact [Sean Gigg](#).

▶ **Air Carrier Group (ACG)**

The next meeting is due to take place on 19 November. For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

[top of page](#)

News Round-up 

▶ **Home Office response to National Audit Office report on Border Force.**

Immigration Minister Mark Harper said: "The UK operates one of the most secure borders in the world and I am pleased the National Audit Office recognises the success of Border Force in implementing full passenger checks while also reducing queue times."

The response to the report is on [GOV.UK](#).

[top of page](#)

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