



Home Office

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

## **“An Inspection of the Intelligence Management System”**

**February – April 2014**

## **The Home Office thanks the Independent Chief Inspector (ICI) for this report.**

The Intelligence Management System (IMS) is a Home Office database used by intelligence staff for recording, processing and managing information received from the public and partners concerning immigration or customs offences.

Prior to the introduction of the IMS in September 2012 there was no system in place to centrally record information from the public and partners and assess its value and usability. Immigration Enforcement is committed to recording, reviewing and, where appropriate, acting on information supplied by the public and its partners. Immigration Enforcement welcomes the Independent Chief Inspector's view that the creation and continuing upgrade of IMS is a positive step, and in line with recommendations from the Independent Chief Inspector's 2011 thematic report on intelligence.

Immigration Enforcement accepts all four of the Chief Inspector's recommendations. The report acknowledges that there is work already underway to address the points raised. All proposed changes will be implemented during this financial year.

## The Home Office response to the recommendations:

### 1. Ensure that all allegations are properly assessed by:

- adding all the information contained within allegations (including in attachments) to the electronic form on the IMS;
- conducting relevant background checks on Home Office systems;
- cross-checking the details of allegations using the advanced IMS search facility; and
- classifying them appropriately by attributing the correct outcome.

#### 1.1. Accepted

- 1.2 It is acknowledged that processes adopted to assess and record incoming information have varied widely across intelligence units. Immigration Enforcement has introduced measures to standardise how all incoming information is handled. To achieve this, “model office” processes are being implemented to ensure practices are consistent throughout the UK and overseas. This will be supported by the introduction of best practice guidance that will mandate how all cases should be handled and managed.
- 1.3 This guidance is due for publication shortly and will also be adopted for use across Border Force intelligence teams. The guidance, when issued, will be mandatory; new staff will be trained in the revised guidance during introductory training.
- 1.4 Guidance on how to use the advanced search facility is available on the Home Office intranet within the intelligence manual. The relevant section has been re-circulated to unit leads to ensure all existing staff are aware of how to use the function correctly. In addition, the best practice guidance referred to above contains an instruction to search all new cases on receipt as part of the initial assessment. A ‘quick search’ IMS facility is also planned as part of the next IMS upgrade. The button, when pressed, will search key fields and so assist with the initial assessment phase. For new staff we have redesigned introductory training, which was introduced in April this year. This includes specific modules on how to use IMS. A comprehensive assurance framework was rolled out at the end of July to check actions (such as these) are carried out consistently.
- 1.5 Significant improvements are due to be implemented to the back office section of IMS in the next release (due late 2014 / early 2015), which will simplify how we classify outcomes. Users will be mandated to select from a range of reasons, of which they can select only one. This will be a much simpler method of recording outcomes and will result in improved MI accuracy. This instruction is contained within the new best practice guidance.

### 2. Ensure that IMS users recognise the value of information contained within allegations to other parts of the business and take appropriate action to communicate this effectively.

#### 2.1 Accepted

- 2.2 Immigration Enforcement is working to improve the links between intelligence teams and the wider Home Office. We have established clear processes within Immigration Intelligence for handling and transferring pieces of information. Rollout of IMS to

overseas (RALON) locations during this financial year will improve and widen connections further.

- 2.3 The recently created thematic intelligence hubs have casework liaison teams, and are building close working relationships with UK Visas and Immigration's (UKVI) case working units. Later this financial year an internal intelligence referral form will be rolled out across the Home Office. The form has been developed in consultation with key contributors – crime / enforcement staff and UKVI teams. The form will be available to all Home Office staff on the intranet and will allow internal teams to report intelligence and / or concerns direct to intelligence in a similar way that the public report using the online form.

### **3. Conduct the initial assessment of all allegations within the target timescales agreed by Ministers.**

#### **3.1 Accepted**

- 3.2 The compliance rate of assessing all allegations within the target timescales of two working days is not currently at a satisfactory level. Figures for the first four months of 2014 show an average compliance rate of 90.83% assessed within two working days and the most recent figure for July 2014, shows compliance at 93.89%. Targeted investigations have revealed that processes in one area of the country have adversely impacted this figure. Following identification of the issue, an interim instruction (ahead of the implementation of the new best practice guidance) has been issued to all IMS users. We anticipate that this will increase the compliance rate over the coming months and we will monitor this closely. Checking that compliance is adhered to forms part of the new assurance framework and performance in this area will be kept under review by the Head of Immigration Enforcement Intelligence, in conjunction with the Head of Border Force Intelligence.

### **4. Provide all intelligence staff with adequate training in handling sources.**

#### **4.1 Accepted**

- 4.2 A pilot Source Engagement course has already been delivered and good feedback received. The training is being further improved following feedback and will be more widely available from October 2014. Presentations on source handling have also been delivered to intelligence managers.
- 4.3 Published guidance is currently under review and will be updated and re-issued as soon as practicable along with quick reference desk aids. Once revised guidance is complete, a series of seminar style events will be rolled out to all immigration intelligence staff. Staff in regional intelligence teams are currently being encouraged to call sources where contact details are available. A quarterly newsletter will ensure all intelligence staff are kept abreast of new developments in source protection across the law enforcement environment. New staff will be trained on sources as part of their induction. The new assurance processes will ensure adherence.