



Border Force



Partner Bulletin

Essential information for Border Force's partners

March 2014

This month we were very pleased to welcome the latest addition to Border Force's fleet of cutters – HMC Protector – which was launched in a special naming ceremony by the Home Secretary, Theresa May. HMC Protector will be based in Portsmouth and is one of five cutters operated by Border Force to protect UK waters.



We also launched the Border Force partner feedback questionnaire as we are keen to hear your views about our work and listen to suggestions about how we can work more effectively with you. The short survey closes on 4 April, so there is still time for you to share your views with us. Please click [here](#) to take part.

In the last month Border Force operations seized nearly a ton of cannabis and an array of weapons – including fifteen stun guns, seven flick knives and four telescopic batons – you can read more about these operations in this bulletin.

The Partner Bulletin is now available on GOV.UK at Border Force/Publications.

Please continue to give us your feedback by emailing the [Border Force Partners inbox](#).

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Key:  for information;  invitation to action

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Operational updates

New Border Force cutter to protect UK coastline

The latest addition to the Border Force's fleet of cutter ships, HMC Protector, has been unveiled at a special naming ceremony. HMC Protector is one of five cutters operated by Border Force to protect UK waters and coastline.

The cutter ships operate 24 hours a day, all year round, responding to intelligence-led information and patrolling high-risk areas.

Their primary function is to intercept drug shipments and other restricted or prohibited goods being trafficked by sea. One of the largest seizures by the fleet over recent years includes 120 kilos of cocaine worth £20 million, which was found on a yacht off the Isles of Scilly in 2013. To read the whole story click [here](#).

Gearing up for the Commonwealth Games travel period

The travel period for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games commenced on 4 March and will continue up until 3 August 2014.

Border Force will be implementing plans to ensure the efficient and secure entry of Games family members such as athletes, coaches, games officials and official media. UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) has also been working to ensure that Games family members travel is easy and efficient.

UKVI has been collecting biometric information from those travelling from countries that require visas to enter the UK. This means that so long as a visa national Games family member possesses a valid passport and have provided their biometric information before they travel they can use these and their accreditation pass as a visa waiver during the travel period. We will keep you updated about any further developments concerning travel and visas for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

Body found of Albanian man who jumped overboard passenger ferry

It has been confirmed that a body found on a beach in Felixstowe was an Albanian man who jumped from a North Sea ferry while being removed from the UK. Minutes after the Stena Britannica set sail from Harwich for the Hook of Holland, Thames Coastguard received a Mayday call reporting that two men had jumped from the vessel.

They were among a group being deported after arriving on an earlier ferry but refused entry into the UK. A massive air-sea search and rescue operation was launched off Felixstowe with about 20 vessels, including three RNLI lifeboats taking part. An inquest has been opened and a second man remains missing.

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Border technology and transformation

Heathrow Transformation programme makes positive progress

Further progress is being made in the Border Experience Project, which is working towards developing and implementing standard operating procedures for all delivery

partners to ensure best practice and improve passenger flow and experience at Heathrow.

A series of workshops to design operating procedures for the immigration halls has now been commissioned. The Border Force Transformation programme is committed to introducing and building on 'continuous improvement' in Heathrow. The programme is also working closely with Heathrow Airports Limited to deliver infrastructure improvements and processes to make the border experience better for passengers. We will provide information on our plans as they develop over the coming months.

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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.

Nearly a ton of cannabis seized at Channel Tunnel entrance

Nearly 900 kilos of cannabis, 66 kilos of amphetamine and two handguns have been seized by Border Force Officers at the Channel Tunnel entrance in Coquelles, France. It is estimated that the drugs have a potential street value of over £5 million. The discoveries were made when officers stopped and searched a Dutch-registered lorry and found the drugs in the vehicle's trailer. A man from the Netherlands has appeared at Dover Magistrates charged with importation.

Drug seizures at Dover

Border Force officers have made a number of drug seizures at Dover. Approximately 18 kilos of cocaine and seven-and-half kilos of heroin were discovered at Dover's Eastern Docks when officers stopped and searched a Slovenian-registered lorry and its load of acoustic panels. A Lithuanian man has also been charged with drug smuggling after Border Force officers seized approximately seven kilos of heroin and six kilos of cocaine. The drugs, worth an estimated £600,000, were found when officers searched a British-registered van and its load of wooden pallets.

In another search amphetamine and cocaine worth an estimated £400,000 were seized. The drugs were found in a British registered van in the floor of the vehicle and a British man had now been charged.

Weapons seized at Heathrow

At Heathrow Airport, Border Force officers have seized a huge array of weapons, including stun guns, flick knives and telescopic batons. Officers carrying out

customs checks in Terminal 4 on 12 March 2014 made the discovery in an item of luggage. Fifteen stun guns, disguised as torches and mobile phones, seven flick knives, four telescopic batons and five multi-tool knives were recovered. A 44-year-old man from the Dagenham area, who had just arrived on a flight from Thailand via Abu Dhabi, was arrested. He was questioned and bailed until 26 May 2014.

Five Million Cigarettes seized at Felixstowe

An attempt to smuggle five million cigarettes into the UK has been foiled by Border Force officers at the Port of Felixstowe. Officers discovered the cigarettes on 12 March 2014 when they investigated an unaccompanied trailer that had arrived at the port from the Netherlands. The smugglers had made no attempt to disguise or conceal the cargo inside the trailer. The cigarettes were of mixed brands and had the smuggling attempt been successful it could have cost the Treasury about £1m in unpaid excise duty.

Cocaine and Heroin seized at Channel Tunnel

Two brothers have been charged with drug smuggling after Border Force officers seized approximately 28 kilos of cocaine and four kilos of heroin. The drugs were discovered on 9 March 2014 at the Channel Tunnel entrance in Coquelles, France, when officers stopped and searched a Greek-registered lorry and its load of paper sacks. The pair have withheld their pleas and were remanded in custody.

In a separate case, 28 kilos of Cocaine and one kilo of heroin were also seized in Coquelles when officers stopped and searched a Belgian-registered flatbed truck and found the drugs in bags in the vehicle's cab. An Italian man is set to appear at Canterbury Crown Court.

► 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

Chance to have your say – Border Force partner survey

All Border Force partners are being encouraged to take part in a partner feedback questionnaire to let us know about how effectively we work with your organisation. The questionnaire is set up to assess how much you believe we know about your organisation, how effectively we work and communicate with you and how you view Border Force as an organisation. The short survey closes on 4 April 2014, so there is still time for you to share your views with us. Please click [here](#) to take part.

Joint initiative with National Crime Agency leads to drugs arrest

A joint investigation involving the Border Force and the National Crime Agency has led to a man who swallowed 40 packages of cocaine being jailed for more than three years.

After interviews with National Crime Agency Border Policing Command the man confessed. In total the packages he swallowed contained almost 700 grams of high-purity cocaine, which if cut and sold on the UK streets would have had an estimated value of £148,000. He stated he was expecting to be paid around £5,000 for bringing the drugs into the UK. Criminal investigations launched as a result of Border Force seizures of prohibited items and goods are undertaken by officers from the National Crime Agency's Border Policing Command.

Maritime Sector Group

The second meeting of the Maritime Sector Group will take place on 23 April 2014, chaired by new Chief Operating Officer, Philip Duffy. The group's agenda is due to include: an introduction and overview of the Border Force Freight Strategy; maintaining fluidity at port – in particular, Dover, Calais and Hull; the role of cyclamen in the maritime sector; the role of the National Maritime information Centre; and next steps around Exit Checks. For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

Air Carrier Group

The sixth meeting of the Air Carrier Group (ACG) is due to take place in May 2014. A date will be made available in due course. For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

News Round-up

Minister outlines changes to Immigration rules

In Parliament the Immigration and Security Minister, James Brokenshire has outlined a number of changes to the Immigration Rules. It will introduce greater flexibility for businesses and international students, while incorporating even more effective measures aimed at tackling abuse of the immigration system. It will help to ensure that the UK remains competitive in attracting global talent to work for British businesses, building an immigration system that works in the national interest as part of a long-term economic plan. You can find more details [here](#).

Keynote speech on Immigration The Immigration and Security Minister, James Brokenshire has given his first keynote speech on immigration, which was delivered at the think-tank Demos. At the event he explained why controlling immigration is important. He added that there will be a continued focus on reducing net migration to sustainable levels at tens of thousands.

He outlined that the challenge is to create a sustainable migration system which benefitted the country and doesn't see foreign labour as a cheap commodity for low-skilled work. You can read the full speech [here](#).

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