



Border Force



Partner Bulletin

Essential information for Border Force's partners

April 2014

This month marks the passing of the 30 million milestone for passengers using the ePassport gates. Currently the system processes more passengers using ePassports and facial recognition than any other country in the world. This month also saw the re-launch of Project Pegasus, a joint initiative between the National Crime Agency, Border Force and police forces across the country. It aims to encourage the public to report any suspicious or illicit activity around airfields.

Operational successes this month included the conviction of two women who had attempted to smuggle 13 rare Iguanas into the country, joint working between Border Force and Cleveland Police leading to the interception of drugs and weapons at international postal hubs. Seizures included over 30kg of heroin discovered in one day at Manchester Airport and 100 kilos of cannabis concealed in a lorry at Portsmouth Port. You can read more about these operations in this bulletin.

The Partner Bulletin is now available on [GOV.UK at Border Force/Publications](http://gov.uk/borderforce/publications).

Please continue to give us your feedback by emailing the [Border Force Partners inbox](mailto:BorderForcePartners@borderforce.gov.uk).

[[Subscribe](#) to this Bulletin]

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

Index

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

Operational updates

▶ **Project Pegasus**

Smugglers and terrorists who use airfields for illicit purposes are being targeted in a cross-agency campaign that was re-launched this month. Project Pegasus encourages people who are close to small airports to report any unusual or suspicious activity. The campaign will cover all aviation with the exception of commercial passenger flights and large-scale airfreight.

It is hoped that more intelligence can be gathered on how organised criminals and terrorists exploit general aviation and strengthen the industry's ability to deal with threats. The project is a re-launch of a joint initiative between the National Crime Agency (NCA), Border Force and police forces across the country. Read more about the operation [here](#).

▶ **Heathrow Terminal 2 is getting ready for business**

Heathrow's new Terminal 2 will now open its doors on 4 June 2014 with the first aircraft, a United Airlines flight from Chicago, scheduled to land early that morning. It is anticipated that Terminal 2 will eventually serve 20 million passengers a year and be home to 23 Star Alliance airlines, as well as Aer Lingus, Virgin Atlantic, Little Red and Germanwings.

The terminal will open in phases, with the 26 airlines moving in over a period of six months. Just 10 per cent of flights will operate for the first three weeks of June before gradually building up to full operations. Advance information about which airlines or flight destinations will be switching terminal can be found [here](#).

▶ **Restricted airspace through the Commonwealth Games**

With the Commonwealth Games taking place in Glasgow this summer, the Government has developed a set of temporary airspace restrictions from 13 July 2014 to 6 August 2014 to help protect the games venues from potential airborne risks. There will be six sets of regulations that will cover the airspace, including the Commonwealth Games venues and athletes' village.

All the regulations have been designed to allow aviation business to continue as usual as far as possible, while ensuring the safety and security of the Commonwealth Games. Further details of the planned airspace restrictions, including maps, will be published on the Airspace Safety Initiative web site [here](#).

[top of page](#)

Border technology and transformation

▶ **ePassport gates hit the 30 million mark**

This month Border Force has passed the 30 million milestone for passengers using the ePassport gates. There are currently 79 in place in 15 airport terminals, the most in operation for arriving passengers anywhere in Europe. The system processes more passengers using ePassports and facial recognition than any other country in the world, handling nearly 12 million people in the last 12 months alone.

The Border Systems team are currently installing the next generation of ePassport gates across the country, with Manchester Terminal 2 set to go live in May and the new Heathrow Terminal 2 in June.

▶ **Air passenger fast-tracking pilot extended to summer 2014**

The registered traveller service, which was introduced by Border Force for frequent flyers from qualifying countries to the UK, is to be extended until the summer. The service, which is available to air passengers from the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, is designed to improve the way high value, repeat travellers pass through the border. Once full members, registered travellers can be processed at the EEA controls at Heathrow or through a dedicated Registered Traveller lane at Gatwick.

The Home Office-led scheme is one of 25 'exemplar' projects across government, all of which, as part of the Government Digital Service programme, are aimed at achieving the transformation of government services to digital channels.

[top of page](#)

Detections and seizures – highlights 

▶ **Women jailed for smuggling endangered Iguanas**

Two women have been jailed for 12 months each after pleading guilty to smuggling 13 iguanas into the country. The Romanian nationals were arrested after the lizards were found by Border Force officers carrying out customs checks at Heathrow Terminal 5 in February 2014. The Iguanas were each wrapped in an individual sock and had been stuffed into suitcases. Twelve survived their journey but one died in transit.

The reptiles were identified as San Salvador Rock Iguanas, a species so rare that only a few hundred are known to be in existence. As such they are controlled under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). You can read more [here](#).

▶ **Cocaine smuggler jailed after successful conviction**

A man who swallowed packages containing cocaine with an estimated street value of £400,000, was jailed for five years at a hearing at Isleworth crown court on 14 April 2014. The man from Thamesmead was stopped by Border Force officers at Stansted airport on 17 January 2014 after he arrived on a flight from Amsterdam. After questioning he admitted swallowing around 100 packages of the drug.

▶ **Detector dog sniffs out huge drugs haul at Dover**

Border Force officers at Dover used a detector dog to seize approximately 48 kilos of heroin and 34 kilos of cocaine. On Wednesday 9 April 2014 officers at Dover's Eastern Docks stopped and searched a British-registered lorry and its load of roofing materials, when the drugs were found. A 36-year-old man from the Romford area was arrested and has been bailed until 4 June 2014. Following the seizure, the investigation and prosecution are being carried out by the National Crime Agency.

▶ **Two heroin hauls in one day at Manchester Airport**

At Manchester Airport officers made two seizures of heroin weighing more than 30 kilos on 7 April 2014. The first discovery of 16 kilos of the drug was found concealed in a suitcase from a flight that had arrived from Pakistan. A 25-year-old woman and a 27 and 28-year-old man, were arrested. Later that day officers made checks on a flight from Pakistan, when they discovered just over 16 kilos of heroin inside a suitcase. A 47-year-old man was arrested, pending further investigations and forensics, and was bailed until 8 July 2014.

▶ **100 kilos cannabis resin uncovered at Portsmouth Port**

At Portsmouth Port a search of a lorry full of a consignment of fruit from Spain, uncovered around 100 kilos of cannabis. Officials had stopped and boarded the truck and found an estimated £300,000 worth of the drug hidden inside. The search took place on 14 April 2014, where a 41-year-old British man was arrested and has now been bailed pending further enquiries.

▶ **Drugs gang sentenced for smuggling £140m of Cocaine**

A gang of drug dealers who attempted to bring £140m of cocaine into the country have been sent to prison this month. Border Force discovered the drugs hidden inside a container of frozen meat. Some 16 holdalls full of high-quality cocaine were intercepted by Border Force officers in May 2013 at Tilbury Docks in Essex.

The cocaine was found in 400 compressed blocks, then removed after the find by officers and replaced with dummy packages of bricks. The gang was apprehended shortly afterwards. They were all found guilty of conspiracy to import cocaine following a three-week trial and were each given sentences between four and 22 years in jail.

[top of page](#)

Partnership Working

▶ **Joint initiative with Cleveland Police leads to postal drugs arrest**

A joint investigation involving the Border Force and Cleveland Police Community Drug Enforcement Team has led to a seizure of illegal drugs and weapons. Border Force officers based at international postal hubs at Heathrow and Coventry seized the parcels that were intended for the Cleveland area. The parcels were handed to Cleveland Police who then began enforcement action.

A 19-year-old woman was arrested after police intercepted a parcel containing around £6000 of cannabis. Also a 20-year-old man was arrested and cautioned for importing two stun guns. Further seizures of postal goods included two pepper sprays and a knuckle duster.

▶ **Maritime Sector Group**

The first meeting of the Maritime Sector Group (MSG), chaired by Border Force Chief Operating Officer Philip Duffy, took place on 23 April 2014. A good discussion took place with port fluidity and exit checks garnering most interest. Minutes will be available shortly, although more information can be obtained through the Home Office MSG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#)

▶ **Air Carrier Group**

The sixth meeting of the Air Carrier Group (ACG) is due to take place on 5 June 2014. For more information you can contact the Home Office ACG secretariat [Daniel Smith](#).

News Round-up 

▶ **Responding to Independent Chief Inspector's report**

Border Force has accepted the recent recommendations of the Independent Chief Inspector's (ICI) report into 'Baggage Searches in the Absence of Passengers.' The report highlighted that Border Force Officers were using these powers proportionately and with high levels of success. It also identified occasions where the standard of work by Border Force officers was exceptional. Following the inspection, the four recommendations that were made have been accepted and an action plan put in place. You can read more about the report and Border Forces' response [here](#).

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.

[top of page](#)

▶
[Subscribe](#) to this Bulletin

[Please pass this bulletin on to anyone else who you think might want to subscribe]

▶
[Unsubscribe](#) from this Bulletin

[If you don't want to receive this bulletin anymore, you will need to unsubscribe]

Contact Us

Border Force Communications

Email: BorderForcePartners@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Phone: 020 8196 3763

For all the latest Home Office news, photos and video visit the media centre:
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre. Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ukhomeoffice>.
