



## Aviation Forum Meeting Wednesday 7 February 2018

<b>Location:</b>	ICIBI, 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PN
<b>Chair:</b>	(ICI) David Bolt – Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
<b>Attendees:</b>	<p>(CT) Chris Thompson – ICIBI (DT) David Tomlins – ICIBI</p> <p>(AS) Andy Smith – SITA (AP) Andy Palmer – Gatwick Airport (DJ) David Joseph – TUI Travel (DB) Deb Barber – Cardiff Airport (HK) Henk van Klaveren - AOA *(PC) Piers Croft – London City Airport</p> <p>* - dial in attendee</p>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<p>Justine Everett – EasyJet Ceri Mashlan – Cardiff Airport</p>

Issue	Notes
<b>Welcome and Introduction from the Chief Inspector.</b>	ICI welcomed the group and explained that, while he would be writing to members formally asking for proposed topics for the 2018-19 Inspection Plan, he wanted to use the meeting to explore ideas.
<b>Update on forum relevant ICIBI inspections since last meeting</b>	<p>Report on Border Force (BF) operations at Gatwick Airport had been published (July 2017)</p> <p>Reports on BF operations at Stansted Airport and the re-inspection of BF's identification and treatment of potential victims of modern slavery had been sent to the Home Secretary and were awaiting publication.</p>
<b>General discussion points</b>	<p><u>BF Staffing Levels</u></p> <p>AP raised the issue of both BF's staffing levels and resource mix at Gatwick Airport. He felt that the scheduling of seasonal and permanent staff, coupled with brigading coverage, did not meet the demands of the arriving traffic.</p> <p>ICI stated that the Gatwick and Stansted inspections had found that neither port had a full staff complement, raising questions about BF's resource planning. There appeared to be an over reliance on the seasonal workforce and detached duty coverage.</p> <p>HK felt that the seasonality of travel was changing and that the 'high season' now extended from May to October.</p> <p>AP said that the consequences of a lack of BF staff were:-</p>

- Increased queue times
- Increased use of the E-gates

#### E-gates

ICI felt there were 2 ongoing issues with the use of E-gates at airports:-

- The safeguarding of potentially vulnerable passengers
- The roles and responsibilities of BF and airport operator staff in controlling passenger use of the gates, especially where individuals encountered difficulties in operating them

AP reported that at Gatwick the number of E-gates to be monitored per BF officer is increasing from 5 to 10, and that the role of the 'roving officer' was not well defined.

AS thought that Frontex limited the number of E-gates monitored by 1 officer to 8. He would check.

DB stated that Cardiff Airport had been told that they were no longer getting the new generation of E-gates. The existing ones had been replaced with 4 PCP desks. DB reported that the HO had presented Cardiff Airport with a bill for £40k for running cabling to the 4 new desks, but the bill had come with no explanation or justification.

#### Chargeable items

CT thought the IA1971 was sufficiently vaguely worded that BF could look to pass on accommodation provision costs for almost any item including PCP items and E-gates.

HK concurred that there was no consistency in the charging levels for E-gates either.

ICI said he was interested in examining how BF defined the 'baseline service' ports operators could expect free of charge, and what additional services operators might be able to purchase. He was unclear whether the decisions on such charging matters were made locally or part of a national policy and would like to explore this.

#### Queue Measurements

Forum members stated that there were no standard guidelines about queue measurement (who should take the measurements and how), and a general lack of transparency.

AP said that the existing SLAs (25 mins for EU passengers and 45 mins for non-EU passengers) were seen as not good enough and 'one size fits nobody'. Gatwick Airport had 'aspirational' targets of 10 & 20 mins, but realistically tried to achieve 15 & 30 mins for the respective queues.

#### Technological Solutions

ICI wondered whether BF should be looking to more technological solutions to the problem of staffing border controls.

AS said that BF had not gone out to the market for such solutions in many years

	<p>and possibly adopted the ‘we know best, we don’t need to change’ attitude.</p> <p>HK said that the travel industry would be pleased to see BF considering technological innovations to speed up processing times, but recognised this had to be done in incrementally rather than attempting everything at once.</p> <p><u>Brexit</u>  Airport operators and airlines were carrying on with their pre-Brexit plans for now, as nobody had any real idea at this stage of what the border would look like after the Brexit transition period. A number of Forum members have been involved in the Border Planning Aviation Steering Group to assist with preparedness.</p> <p><u>Misdirected Passengers</u>  The IA2016 brought in provision for a new civil penalty for occurrences of misdirected passengers, with a maximum charge level for the civil penalty of £50,000. Public consultation ended on 19/01/18.</p> <p>Forum members expressed concerns about how the scheme would be monitored and would work in practice.</p> <p><u>HO Data</u>  ICI said he often struggled to get data in good time from the HO regarding BF performance, and asked if forum members had much direct engagement with the HO.</p>
<p><b>Any other business</b></p>	<p>ICI said he would welcome more regular engagement with members and urged them to contact ICIBI between forum meetings with any concerns or suggestions.</p> <p>CT also asked members present to make suggestions by email as to who else might usefully attend the Aviation forum.</p>
<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p>	<p>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 2pm</p>