



An inspection of the initial processing of migrants arriving via small boats at Tug Haven and Western Jet Foil

December 2021 – January 2022

David Neal

Independent Chief Inspector of
Borders and Immigration

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Independent Chief Inspector of
Borders and Immigration,
5th Floor, Globe House,
89 Eccleston Square,
London SW1V 1PN
United Kingdom

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Email us: chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk

Write to us: Independent Chief Inspector
of Borders and Immigration
5th Floor, Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London, SW1V 1PN
United Kingdom

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Foreword

The number of small boat crossings in the Channel has reached such a level that it has been described as a crisis and the number one priority for the Home Office. The volume is unprecedented, and on some days the system is clearly overwhelmed. This inspection report looks at evidence from inside the locations in Dover where most migrants are brought ashore. It focuses on what I consider are the two most important factors that the Home Office needs to address: security of the border and safeguarding the vulnerable. The report has been produced in rapid time, with a large inspection team, in order that the Home Office can react to its recommendations before crossings increase, in significant numbers, once more.

The Home Office's performance in delivering an effective and efficient response to the challenge posed by the increasing volume of migrant arrivals via small boats is poor. In my judgement, this arises principally from a refusal to transition from an emergency response to what has rapidly become steady state, or business as usual. This refusal permeates every aspect of the Home Office's response. Systems, processes and resourcing pathways, which months into the crisis should be routine, codified, auditable and familiar, have been delivered at 'best effort'. This is not good enough.

Data, the lifeblood of decision-making, is inexcusably awful. Equipment to carry out security checks is often first generation and unreliable. Extreme operational conditions, where resources are stretched, will inevitably lead to some degradation in data. Staff on the ground are doing their very best, but they are tired. Volumes, at times, are extraordinarily high, and the humanitarian reality of the operation leads to patchy data collection, a characteristic of many crisis responses. Such situations demand processes that work, and from the evidence of this inspection, these processes do not work. Poor record-keeping at week 163 of the small boats response is system failure.

Biometrics, key to locking in an individual's identity, were not always recorded. The Home Office told inspectors that 227 migrants had absconded from secure hotels since 1 September 2021; not all had been biometrically enrolled. In order to move migrants quickly through Tug Haven, effective safeguarding was sacrificed, and no effective backstop position instituted. There was limited reflection by staff at all grades of the connection between vulnerability and security – that identifying a trafficking victim could reveal intelligence about criminal gangs.

The organisation charged with responding to the crisis, the Clandestine Channel Threat Command, spans the strategic, operational and tactical domains, and is pulled between delivery, developing 'pushback' techniques and future solutions, and responding to the constant requests for strategic briefings. The majority of its Campaign Plan objectives focus on strategic effects at the expense of delivering security and dealing humanely with the here and now. In simple terms, the focus on the 'Prevent' function has eclipsed the need to do simple things well on the quayside in Dover.

Sadly, nothing in this report will come as a surprise to ministers, officials, or the workforce. It is in the gift of ministers and senior officials to deliver an effective response. The workforce can do no more. They have responded with enormous fortitude and exceptional personal commitment, which is humbling, and they are quite rightly proud of how they have stepped up.

This report makes 4 recommendations and offers the Home Office a timescale to deliver those recommendations. More important is the delivery of a strategic approach by the Home Office to regularise their response to small boats, in preparation for increased numbers throughout this year. A new model for Borders and Enforcement is desperately required if our border is to be secured and vulnerability effectively addressed.

This report was sent to the Home Secretary on 24 February 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Neal', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

David Neal
Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

1. Scope and methodology

- 1.1** This inspection examined the initial processing of migrants arriving via small boats at Tug Haven and Western Jet Foil, with a particular focus on protecting the border through security checks, and the identification and safeguarding of vulnerable people. The inspection assessed the processes in use, the physical sites, the resourcing of operations including staff welfare and wellbeing, record-keeping, assurance and risk management, and senior management oversight.
- 1.2** The inspection was shaped by the ICIBI's expectations, and particularly, "Anyone exercising an immigration, asylum, nationality or customs function on behalf of the Home Secretary is fully competent".
- 1.3** Inspectors undertook the following activities:
- reviewed publicly available information about small boat arrivals
 - held a familiarisation call with the operational director from the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC), and detention and asylum intake staff on 1 December 2021
 - met with a range of stakeholders
 - formally notified the Home Office of the inspection on 6 December 2021, and submitted a request for evidence
 - received and analysed 82 pieces of evidence
 - undertook a review of 32 Home Office case files relating to migrants who arrived at Tug Haven in November 2021
 - attended Tug Haven and the Western Jet Foil from 10 to 14 January 2022 and visited the Joint Control Room at the HM Coastguard Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Dover and Frontier House in Folkstone between 10 and 14 January 2022
 - between 11 and 18 January 2022, undertook 16 virtual interviews with Home Office staff, from Executive Officer to Grade 5, from across the CCTC, National Asylum Intake Unit, Joint Debriefing Team, Criminal and Financial Investigations, Immigration Compliance Enforcement and Rapid Response Teams
 - on 20 January 2022, held a feedback session, sharing initial thoughts and indicative findings from onsite activity, with the Senior Civil Servant responsible for the Illegal Migration Strategy Team and operational directors from within the CCTC
- 1.4** The report was sent to the Home Office for factual accuracy checking on 8 February 2022 and returned on 21 February 2022.

2. Summary of conclusions

- 2.1** The volume of migrants crossing the English Channel using small boats has increased from 236 in 2018 to 28,526 in 2021. The pressure this has applied to the Home Office has been significant. The creation of the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC) in August 2020 to lead the response and the delivery of the 5 objectives of the 'Operational Campaign Plan', together with the launch of Op ALTAIR and the use of a Gold Command structure delineating responsibilities on the ground, has provided some much-needed direction.
- 2.2** The Home Office's response to small boats has been the subject of internal and external oversight, with 2 critical reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, and a cross-Home Office 'Joint review of processes at Tug Haven (TH) for dealing with small boat arrivals October 2021'. Many of the problems identified in these reports are echoed in this inspection and most are well known to managers and senior leaders.
- 2.3** The key stumbling block to addressing the challenges in the operation of Tug Haven (TH) specifically, and the wider impact on the Home Office, was the continued consideration by the Department that this was an 'emergency'. This approach meant that the Home Office was in a constantly reactive state. There was no holistic approach to the design of TH or Western Jet Foil (WJF),¹ which had expanded piecemeal, and neither the physical sites nor the processes within them consistently met operational requirements.
- 2.4** While the maintenance of border security was key to the operation at TH, and later WJF, the manner in which this was delivered was undermined by poor staff communications, inconsistent processes, poor record-keeping and potentially missed opportunities to identify persons of interest. The initial record of migrants taken on entry to TH was characterised by inaccuracies and relied on individuals pointing to a list of Roman numbers to identify their age, despite most migrants coming from countries where the Roman alphabet was not used.
- 2.5** The searching of migrants was marked by staff confusion about how to handle mobile phones, travel documents and cash, resulting in inconsistent practice across the operation. Staff used Pronto (an Immigration Enforcement database) to record a migrant's search, arrest and biographic information. This activity was completed without the use of interpreters (in person or on screen) and inspectors saw migrants being asked to enter their own information into the system.
- 2.6** The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) from Op ALTAIR, which directs operations at TH and WJF, required that "where reasonably practicable, prior to any transfers to any detention centre or initial processing centres, migrants will have their biometrics enrolled at Western Jet Foil". Full biometric enrolment only commenced on 15 December 2021 using mobile Biometric Recording Stations (BRS). Inspectors observed the use of this equipment, which did not always function smoothly. Prior to the introduction of BRS, staff used Grabba, a hand-held peripheral docked to a Home Office mobile phone used by Immigration Enforcement (IE), to

¹ TH was closed on 17 January 2022 and all activity transferred to Western Jet Foil (WJF).

search fingerprint databases. This technology does not enrol a migrant's fingerprints into the IABS fingerprint database. Staff told inspectors that Grabba was slow and temperamental, and where pressure from numbers demanded it, they would rely on police colleagues to check fingerprints against Identity Not Known (INK, the police mobile biometric device which checks an individual's fingerprints against police and immigration databases); the INK device searches against the same databases as Grabba.

- 2.7** Grabba and BRS checks had been suspended on a number of occasions, and the Home Office could not consistently explain to inspectors what mitigatory measures, if any, had been put in place to manage the risks of suspending these security checks at this point of the process (prior to leaving WJF).
- 2.8** Poor record-keeping at TH had an impact on a migrant's onward journey into either an Immigration Removal Centre or secure hotel, with staff in Asylum & Protection highlighting significant issues with the biographic information provided about migrants. Follow-up activity by Home Office intelligence teams on potential Persons of Interest (POI) was similarly undermined by poor record-keeping, leading to missed opportunities for intelligence exploitation and debriefing.
- 2.9** The approach to managing the risk around security checks was inconsistent, and consideration of migrants who had absconded from secure hotels prior to the completion of biometrics or 'Operational Mandate' checks (undertaken by UK Visas and Immigration staff) was limited. Between 1 December 2021 and 7 January 2022, 57 small boat arrivals absconded. Two-thirds (38) had not had their biometrics enrolled, despite having arrived in the UK on average 16 days before absconding.
- 2.10** Staff assumed that migrants arriving via small boats were likely to claim asylum and therefore had a vested interest in remaining in contact with the Home Office; this undermined the identification and consideration of individuals who sought to use this migration route for other purposes.

Identification and safeguarding of vulnerable migrants

- 2.11** Staff also failed to engage with the concept that vulnerability and security were inherently linked, and by identifying and safeguarding vulnerable people, border security could be strengthened.
- 2.12** While the staff's focus on migrant welfare was positive, this often overrode any consideration, identification or safeguarding of vulnerability. Guidance is clear that the identification of vulnerability should be undertaken prior to the onward movement of migrants. However, it fails to provide any specific steer for officers on the expectations for identifying and safeguarding vulnerable migrants. Officers, under pressure from the volume of arrivals, failed to utilise their training, and on occasion, their common sense, in identifying vulnerable individuals; nor did they appear proactive in engaging with the obviously vulnerable, such as single women travelling alone. The lack of interpreters, and the need for migrants to declare their vulnerabilities – rather than staff proactively considering them – meant that migrants with vulnerabilities were not identified at the earliest point in the process.

- 2.13** The treatment of those claiming to be children was not child-centred, and inspectors understood they often remained mixed with the adult male population. The age assessment process was perfunctory and engagement with the young people was minimal. Data collected about the number of age dispute cases handled at TH was poor and no feedback was given to operational staff.
- 2.14** The identification of trafficking victims was limited, despite concerns about recent Vietnamese arrivals, who were later identified and referred into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) from immigration detention. Data collected about NRM referrals could not establish if a referral was made in TH, meaning feedback loops were limited.
- 2.15** Despite officers treating migrants in a polite and courteous manner, inspectors identified the need to improve some elements of the process which would increase basic dignity and respect, such as the provision of dry headscarves, and shoes for children. There was limited information about the process in printed foreign languages, meaning migrants were often confused, and in some cases visibly anxious about what was happening to them.
- 2.16** The appointment of an intelligence and vulnerability lead for CCTC in June 2021 was promising and there was a clear understanding, by managers, of the actions required to develop staff capability in these areas. However, there was also some resignation that vulnerability was considered non-essential, with a lack of appetite and capacity to progress these actions.

Poor record-keeping

- 2.17** The lessons learned from Windrush appear to have been subsumed by the need to respond to small boats as an emergency rather than acknowledging that poor record-keeping undermines both state security and the future stability of a migrant's immigration status.
- 2.18** The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which directs Operation ALTAIR activity was light on details about record-keeping. Inspectors found, at all stages of the process, records were inaccurate. Guidance on how to record boat and migrant numbers was not followed. A review of Pronto records for all arrivals in November 2021 revealed basic biographical information was poorly captured, and 968 records had surnames which included numbers or symbols such as '#'. Of these inaccurate records, 221 related to children. Inspectors also found that, despite the records being provided by the Performance Reporting and Analysis Unit (PRAU), a number of arrests had been excluded from the data provided to inspectors, meaning a robust figure could not be provided for the number of arrivals in November 2021.
- 2.19** Migrants should also be provided with a Case Information Database (CID) record, the Home Office's primary casework and operational database. Of the 7,578 records, of migrants arriving in November, provided to inspectors, 4,253 records did not yet have an asylum claim recorded or a CID Person ID (CID numbers), and for the 3,325 records which had CID numbers, 254 of these numbers were duplicates.
- 2.20** A deep dive into the cases posing the greatest risk to the Home Office, namely Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and those migrants with a 'trace' in Grabba, revealed blanks where Grabba checks should have been recorded, a failure to flag the UASC cases as vulnerable, and the absence of the use of interpreters.

Performance data collection

- 2.21** The Home Office does not collect performance data on the operation at TH, for example, on the effective deployment and use of resources. There was limited interest by senior managers in addressing the absence of this data, and little appreciation of the benefits it might deliver for performance, assessment and planning purposes, such as the analysis of the efficient use of staff resource used to justify future staffing models.
- 2.22** Delays in adding and reconciling data, such as the number of arrivals, contributed to significant differences between datasets for which there was no clear reason, other than the inadequate administrative capacity within CCTC. The dispersed and inconsistent nature of the data concerning small boat arrivals available to CCTC meant that reliable and accurate management information could not be produced. There was no evidence of a routine, structured reconciliation of data entries across databases and no overall assurance mechanism for the small boats data. This was coupled with a lack of belief or ambition within CCTC that ‘a single version of the truth’, in respect of one trusted data repository for small boat arrivals, was achievable or required.

Staffing and resources

- 2.23** The Clandestine Operational Response Team (CORT), while highly skilled and knowledgeable, is not sufficiently robust to manage the busiest periods. The Home Office relies on the 14 permanent CORT team members to be onsite, and then adds to this resource by calling on other parts of the Home Office to provide available ‘supplemental’ staff. Inspectors noted that these 2 resources (skills and numbers) were not always effectively balanced with the volume of migrant arrivals. Staffing is linked intrinsically to forecasting, and inaccuracies and late changes often result in supplemental officers being stood down at short notice, causing frustration, undermining trust with the business areas providing those officers, and impacting upon their operations.
- 2.24** At the time of this inspection, work was ongoing to improve forecasting and strengthen the relationships with business areas. However, it was notable that, over the time of the inspection, on over 50% of the days considered, the number of staff working at TH exceeded the number required given the actual number of migrant arrivals. Despite this, CORT staff constantly referred to being understaffed and under pressure as a result. This points to a clear need to review the levels of staffing required for the expected volume of arrivals, and to ensure the correct balance is struck between delivering a smooth operation and the proportionate use of resources.
- 2.25** There was a perception that ‘bodies over skills’ drove the approach to resourcing TH. There were no systems to enable CCTC to request, or even for the business areas to notify CCTC, of the skills, equipment and training profiles of supplemental officers who would be attending shifts. Frequently those profiles were such that they were unable to perform the roles required to ensure the efficient processing of migrants at TH.
- 2.26** Supplemental officers were not provided sufficient information and direction prior to starting a shift at TH or WJF, and there was limited awareness of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Those in charge of operations at TH, such as the Bronze Commanders and Team Leaders, were not easily identifiable, resulting, on occasion, in an unsupported and disorganised supplemental workforce. The increased role of security contractors was considered to be one solution to relieving the pressure on staff.

2.27 There was a sense of urgency felt by officers when processing migrants, with the aim to get them through as quickly as possible, often to the detriment of the quality of service delivery. However, a bottleneck at dispersal, due to a lack of suitable available onward accommodation, or other logistical issues, caused further frustrations among officers and migrants alike. This resulted in protracted waits for transport, and migrants occasionally having to spend nights at WJF, which is not designed for that purpose.

3. Recommendations²

Security – within 1 month³

1. Within 1 month ensure that the staff are sufficiently trained and provided with updated guidance on:
 - a. The operation of the mobile Biometric Recording Stations (BRS).
 - b. The circumstances and authority level required for a migrant to be transferred from WJF without a biometric check being completed and recorded.
 - c. The process for the seizure, retention or return of property including cash and identity documents.
 - d. The process for the seizure, retention or return of intelligence material.

Vulnerability – within 3 months

2. Provide guidance, training and monitoring mechanisms for staff to improve operational performance in respect of:
 - a. Identifying all vulnerable migrants at the earliest opportunity and engaging, proactively and constructively, with those with inherent vulnerabilities, such as unaccompanied children, single women and families.
 - b. Accurately recording vulnerabilities on the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log, Pronto and CID.
 - c. Collecting and utilising vulnerability data to inform staff (regularly and through clear communications) of the vulnerability characteristics of those who have arrived via small boats to inform intelligence and safeguarding priorities.

² In light of Tug Haven's closure in early January, these recommendations are directed at the operation of Western Jet Foil (WJF), and any other site used for processing small boat migrants.

³ All time-bound recommendations 'start' at the point of submission to the Home Secretary.

Collection and use of information – within 3 months
3. Within 3 months:
a. Improve the quality of the information recorded in the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log, Pronto and CID, by establishing clear, minimum data entry requirements for biographic details, encounter, arrest and search records; and develop and implement an assurance regime for data collected about migrants, including contemporaneous spot checks on Pronto records by Bronze Commanders, with regular feedback to staff.
b. Commission a review of the collection, reconciliation and usage of data related to migrant arrivals via small boats.
c. Identify an SCS to be responsible for all data related to small boats.
d. Design and implement a robust and auditable methodology to establish a single, comprehensive, contemporaneous, accurate database of information relating to migrants' arrivals and initial processing performance.

Resourcing – within 3 months
4. Within 3 months review the operational staffing requirements for both CORT and supplemental staff, and produce accurate and detailed Statements of Requirement (SOR). Define and monitor:
a. Stand-up levels: both the trigger point (i.e. predicted migrant numbers) and associated staffing requirement, considering both skills and numbers for each level.
b. How and where consistent administrative support could improve operations at WJF.

Note: The recommendations are not intended to supersede previous recommendations from HMIP or the Home Office Joint Review of processes at Tug Haven.

4. Background

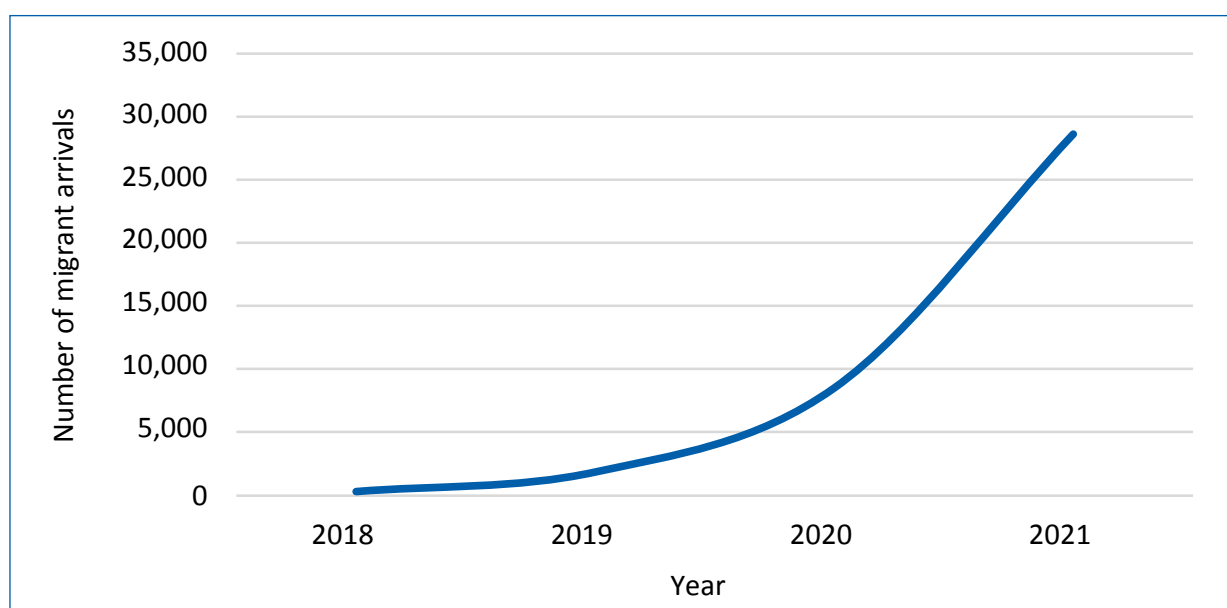
Numbers of migrant arrivals

4.1 The numbers of migrants attempting to enter the UK via small boats was, prior to December 2018, very small. However, between 25 and 31 December 2018, over 100 migrants arrived in the UK using this method. This led to the then Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, declaring a “major incident”⁴ and the formation of the first command structure dedicated to the control and response to migrant arrivals via small boats. In 2018, a total of 286 migrants reached the UK using this method; by 2021 this had risen to 28,526.

Figure 1: Number of migrant arrivals via a small boat

Year ⁵	Number of migrant arrivals	Percentage increase from previous year
2018	286	
2019	1,834	541%
2020	8,486	362%
2021	28,526	236%

Figure 2: Graph showing migrant arrivals via small boat, 2018 to 2021



⁴ Media coverage including <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-46705128> and <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/dec/28/channel-migrant-crossings-a-major-incident-says-sajid-javid>.

⁵ Calendar year.

- 4.2** Small boats can, and do, reach the UK’s coastline before they are intercepted, rescued or handed over to a Border Force (BF) vessel or the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) – these migrant arrivals are referred to as ‘beach landings’. In 2021 there were a total of 91 beach landings, amounting to 2,543 migrants, or 9% of total small boat arrivals.

Characteristics of migrants

- 4.3** Home Office data showed that migrants from Iran and Iraq made up the majority of arrivals between 1 September 2021 and 27 December 2021, the timeframe of this inspection. During the same period only 10% of migrants were women, and 3,793 were children aged 18 and under. See Figures 3, 4 and 5.

Figure 3: Recorded nationalities of migrants: 1 September to 27 December 2021⁶

Rank	Nationality	No. of migrants
1	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	5,725
2	Iraq	4,567
3	Syrian Arab Republic	1,473
4	Eritrea	990
5	Afghanistan	937
6	Albania	749
7	Sudan	370
8	Kuwait	294
9	Vietnam	256
10	Egypt	253

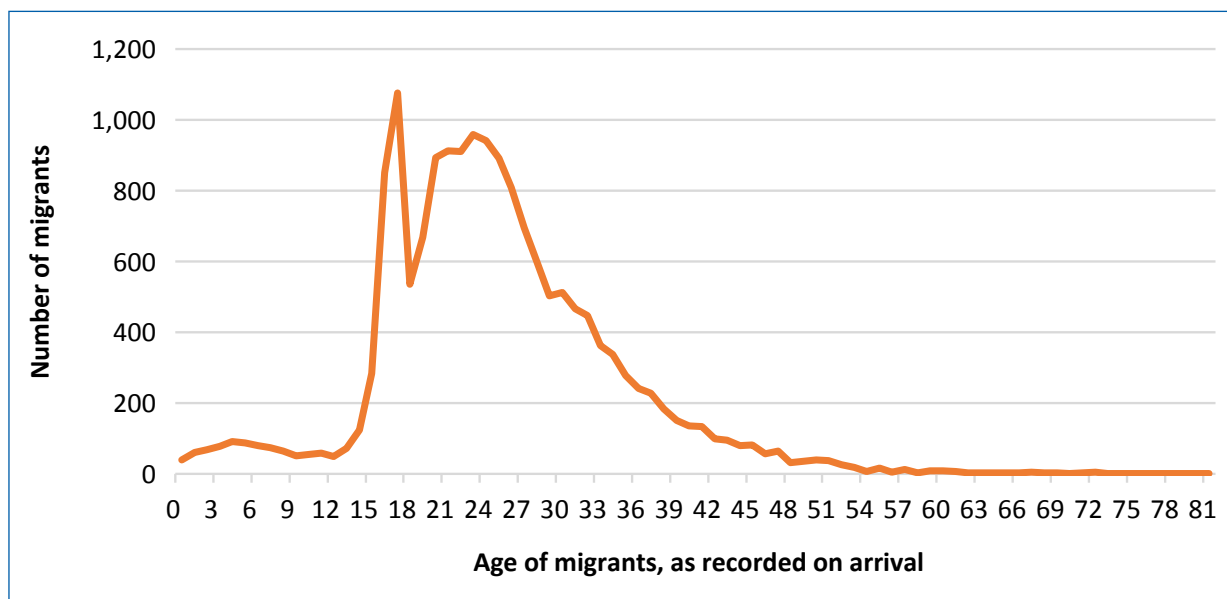
Figure 4: Recorded gender of migrants, 1 September to 27 December 2021⁷

Gender	No. of migrant arrivals
Male	15,137
Female	1,691
Unspecified	6
TOTAL	16,834

⁶ Issues in the accuracy of the data, as well as delays between the reconciliation of data sources by the Home Office, means that despite requesting data to 10 January, and inspectors understanding that migrants arrived between 27 December and 10 January, data was only provided to 27 December.

⁷ Gender is recorded on Pronto at the point of encounter. The data is caveated by the Home Office: “These figures have been taken from a live operational database. As such, numbers may change as information on that system is updated.”

Figure 5: Ages of migrants (as recorded on arrival), 1 September to 27 December 2021



Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC)

4.4 The operational response to small boat crossings is led by the Home Office’s Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC). The overriding objective of CCTC is to “save lives and secure the UK border by ending the viability of the small boats route”. The work of CCTC is guided by the Operational Campaign Plan, which has 5 specific objectives:

- “1. Reduce Supply – reduce the number of people seeking to cross the Channel.
2. Disrupt Organised Crime Groups (OCG) – improve the identification, disruption and prosecution of people smugglers and disrupt their equipment supply lines.
3. Deny Crossings – stop attempts to cross the Channel including by intercepting and returning small boats.
4. Deter Migrants – remove incentives for people to seek to reach the UK via small boats or other dangerous methods.
5. Control Arrivals – prevent loss of life at sea, ensure all identified arrival events are attended, people are controlled and processed securely and safely, with the integrity of UK Border security maintained.”

4.5 CCTC is designed to bring together the end-to-end, multi-agency response to small boats. Op ALTAIR – the cross-government response to “the threat of illegal migration in small boats” – commenced on 21 December 2020, at which point other existing operations relating to small boats either ceased or were absorbed into Op ALTAIR.

4.6 CCTC is led by a Channel Threat Commander, a senior civil servant, and comprises 4 teams: Future Planning and Capability, a Chief Technology Officer (team), Operational Command, and an Illegal Migration Strategy Team. The Operational Command team of CCTC has 62 members of staff ranging from Grade 5 to administration officer level. The other 3 teams have 24 members of staff ranging from Grade 5 to Higher Executive Officer.

Physical site

- 4.7** Between 2018 and late 2021, the processing of small boat migrants was conducted at TH. At the time of inspection in January 2022, this took place in a large heated marquee located at the Western Docks in the Port of Dover. Initially the public and press were able to observe, film and photograph migrants being disembarked from BF vessels, so temporary fencing and screening were erected. The gate to TH was guarded by security contractors, and visitors were required to present ID and sign in and out.
- 4.8** Medical staff, based at TH, told inspectors that, when the site was first used in 2018, facilities were inadequate, consisting of “a couple of sun canopies” with little provision for the processing of migrant arrivals. In March 2019, a Welfare Unit with a capacity to hold 10 migrants was installed at TH as a temporary reception area. This Welfare Unit was visited by ICIBI inspectors in June and September 2019, who saw a customised shipping container with a seating area, a kitchen area with long shelf-life food, water and tea and coffee.⁸ When the capacity of the Welfare Unit was reached, migrants had to wait outside until they were transported to the Kent Intake Unit (KIU). The inadequacies of the facilities at TH were raised by HMIP in a report published in October 2020:
- “Tug Haven resembled a building site and was not fit for purpose. It was impossible to socially distance in the cramped containers. Some gazebos had been erected, but they did not protect detainees from the cold.”⁹
- 4.9** Staff working at TH told inspectors that facilities had improved greatly since the first migrant arrivals in 2018. When the welfare units were no longer suitable due to the increased volume of arrivals, they were replaced by 3 military tents and a larger twin portacabin. These facilities were then further replaced in early summer 2021 by the marquee seen by inspectors. In September and November 2021, ICIBI inspectors visited TH and noted the installation of a hot air heating system, wooden slatted benches, temporary toilet facilities, and the erection of partitions dividing processing areas. HMIP, in a follow-up inspection report published in December 2021, noted further improvements:
- “A new marquee at Tug Haven now gave arriving migrants better cover from the elements and there was enough dry clothing and food. However, many people, including families with young children, spent over 24 hours in tents with no sleeping facilities.”¹⁰
- 4.10** At the time of the onsite phase of the ICIBI inspection in January 2022, the reception and processing of migrant arrivals took place in 2 locations: the initial reception of migrants was conducted in TH before migrants were moved approximately 50 metres, via coach,¹¹ to Western Jet Foil (WJF), a large portacabin opened on 11 November 2021, with a capacity to hold 250 migrants. (See photos 23 and 24, Annex A.) To allow for the marquee at TH to be dismantled and the site to be handed over to Dover Harbour Board on the agreed date of 31 January 2022, the marquee at TH closed on 17 January 2022 and operations moved wholesale to WJF. All onsite observations and interviews by inspectors took place after WJF opened.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-inspection-of-the-home-offices-response-to-in-country-clandestine-arrivals-lorry-drops-and-to-irregular-migrants-arriving-via-small-boats>

⁹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/inspections/dover-short-term-holding-facilities/>

¹⁰ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/inspections/detention-of-migrants-at-dover-and-folkestone/>

¹¹ Migrants are moved by coach for safety reasons as there is a Port of Dover road that runs between Tug Haven and Western Jet Foil.

- 4.11** WJF is located in a screened-off area of the docks. The WJF building comprised a large waiting area with benches and windows which opened approximately 10 centimetres, further waiting rooms with separate toilets for migrants and staff, and rooms that had been set up to contain the mobile Biometric Recording Stations (BRS).¹² There was also an office being used by the Clandestine Operation Response Team (CORT) to complete administrative tasks, a room for use by Medevent,¹³ an office for Mitie Care and Custody,¹⁴ and another, smaller area, where families were held. The site also contained areas for the storage of property and a separate small portacabin where those found to have COVID-19 could be isolated. To handle any overflow from WJF, a new marquee had been erected in the car park¹⁵ as an additional area for migrants to wait for transportation to further accommodation – this was used for the first time while inspectors were onsite. (See photos 27 and 28, Annex A.) In January 2022, work including the installation of cabling at WJF was still being completed.¹⁶
- 4.12** Inspectors were informed of developing plans to process migrants at a former RAF base at Manston, located approximately 20 miles¹⁷ north of the Port of Dover. Future operational plans for the use of RAF Manston were outside the scope of this inspection.

12 The Biometric Recording Station (BRS) scans all 10 of a migrant's fingerprints and takes a digital photograph, which is then linked to the migrant's name, date of birth and nationality. At the time of the onsite observations, there were 4 BRS machines being used.

13 A contractor providing COVID-19 testing and paramedic-level medical care for migrant arrivals and staff. They also have the ability to 'blue light' patients to hospital in an ambulance if needed.

14 A provider of immigration removal centre management and operations and secure escorting services (in-country and overseas) for the Home Office. At WJF they oversee the despatch and transfer of migrants to their next location.

15 The 'Red' car park.

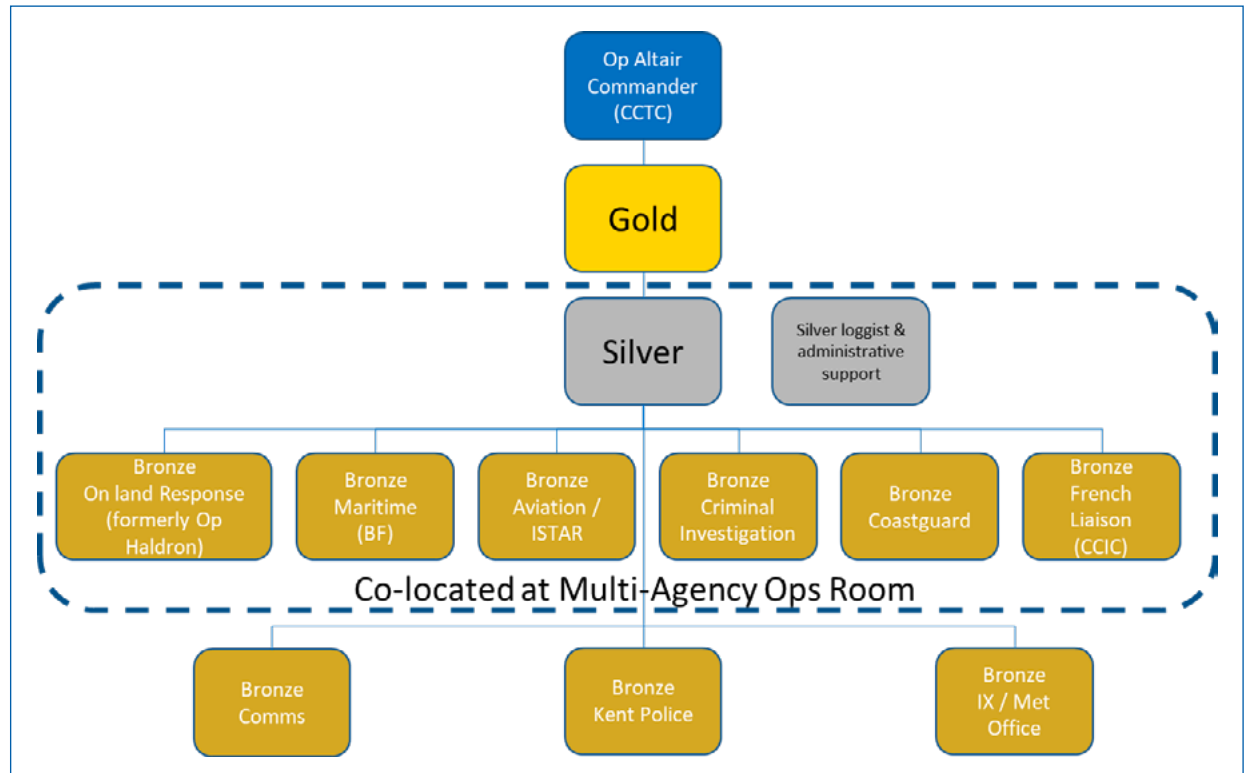
16 Inspectors were told that the Primary Control Point (PCP) style desks in Western Jet Foil initial processing were to be moved and that, until Manston was fully operational, Western Jet Foil would be acting as a "hybrid site".

17 20.8 miles on Google Maps car directions. Port of Dover, Harbour House to Manston International Airport.

Staffing

4.13 CCTC employ a Gold, Silver, Bronze Command operational structure as shown in Figure 6.¹⁸

Figure 6: Op ALTAIR command structure



4.14 The Gold Commander, usually a Grade 5 (director or deputy director level) based remotely:

“assumes and retains command for Op ALTAIR or any critical incident involving small boats [and other forms of high-risk clandestine entry to the UK], holding overall responsibility and authority for the Gold Strategy and any tactical parameters that the Silver or Bronze Commanders should follow.”

4.15 The Silver Commander, usually an HM Inspector or Grade 7 (senior officer or assistant director level) based at the Joint Control Room (JCR) at HM Coastguard Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, is responsible for co-ordinating the various parts of the Home Office’s response to small boat migrant arrivals, including: resourcing beach landings, resourcing and overall operational management of TH and WJF, onward dispersal of migrants to accommodation, and engagement with other agencies.

4.16 Bronze Commanders, usually a Chief Immigration Officer (higher officer level) based at TH/WJF, are responsible for numerous different tasks, including: immediate operational processing of migrants, including welfare, security and preparation for onward transportation, oversight of facilities and equipment, staff and contractor resource allocation, monitoring and welfare, and the provision of timely, accurate operational information to the Silver Commander.

¹⁸ The Gold, Silver, Bronze command and control structure was developed initially for policing but has since been adopted by the emergency services and others, particularly for large-scale or complex operations requiring different resources and/or agencies to work together. Gold is the strategic level (Silver is tactical and Bronze operational).

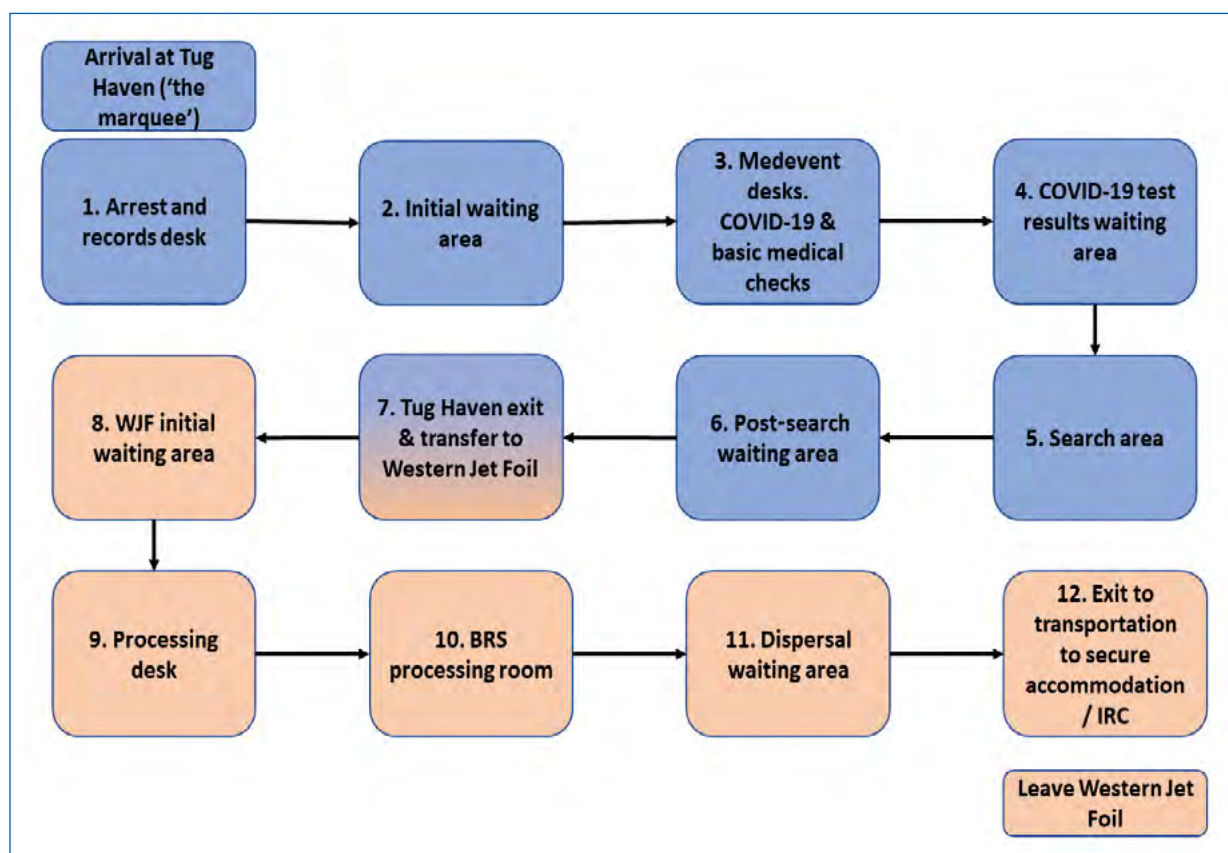
4.17 Frontline duties at TH and WJF are conducted by CORT officers sitting within the Operational Command team. Regardless of the levels of expected migrant arrivals, CORT staffing consists of 14 officers working on a shift basis each day. Additional staffing is drawn from across Immigration Enforcement: Criminal and Financial Investigation, Rapid Response Team, London and South East Region; and Border Force: Brigade, General Aviation/General Maritime, Readiness Task Force and Out Of Region.¹⁹ Known as supplemental staff, these officers have different skills from the CORT staff, for example, not all have been arrest trained. They also have access to different Home Office systems; only Immigration Enforcement staff could use Pronto, the primary database used to record arrest and search details at TH.

Guidance

4.18 Inspectors were provided with a 44-page ‘Op ALTAIR Standard Operating Procedure’ (SOP), version 2.1, revised in December 2021. The SOP is a relatively high-level document which sets out the strategic aims, command structure, roles and responsibilities, and the strategic response to small boat arrivals. Most of the document is an annex setting out ‘Critical Incident Management (CIM) Response Scenarios’. Inspectors were also provided with the Operating Mandate for Asylum and Protection²⁰ and operational plans and Gold Command strategy documents for other interlinked small boat operations.

Initial processing of migrants at TH

Figure 7: Simplified migrant journey from TH (blue) entry to WJF (orange) exit



¹⁹ Compliance and Enforcement officers or Border Force officers.

²⁰ Asylum & Protection is the part of the Home Office responsible for considering asylum and other protection claims. It is made up of 2 business areas: Immigration and Protection, and Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration.

Arrival at TH

4.19 When a migrant is intercepted at sea and brought on board a BF vessel, they are given a wristband identifying them with a numerical reference, known as a migrant number, and a reference linking them to the boat they were rescued from, known as an event number. On arrival at TH, the migrant, accompanied by a BF officer using a 'guiding hold',²¹ disembarks the BF vessel, crosses over 2 moored tugboats, walks up a linkspan bridge and is brought to the entrance of the TH marquee. BF staff from the vessel or cutter inform the officers on the desk at the entrance to the marquee of any concerns they have about the migrants.

1. Arrest and records desk

4.20 According to the SOP,²² on entering TH migrants are seated and then individually called forward to a desk. An arrest-trained Immigration Officer (IO) checks the migrant's wristband and records the event and migrant numbers. Basic biographic information is captured in the 'CORT scribe sheet', which includes name,²³ age and nationality. Subsequently an arrest is conducted by an IO who is Level 3 Personal Safety trained. The arrest is made in accordance with paragraph 17(1) of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 (as amended) as the IO reasonably suspects that the person in question is liable to be detained under paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 to the same Act. A CORT IO acting as 'Triage and Medical Team Leader' ensures arrests are performed appropriately and seeks to identify and prioritise vulnerable migrants. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) should not be arrested. Information about the individual is also entered onto an IS91 form for each migrant.²⁴ The migrants are photographed (with their wristband event and migrant numbers showing) with a polaroid camera and this is attached to their IS91 form. The arrest is made in English.

2. Initial waiting area

4.21 After being arrested, migrants wait on wooden benches to be called to see medical staff.

3. Medevent desks. COVID-19 and basic medical checks

4.22 Medevent staff conduct, in English, a basic medical assessment on every migrant, including a COVID-19 lateral flow test (LFT),²⁵ heart rate, blood oxygen levels and temperature, and asks whether the migrant takes any medication or has any medical issues. Any treatment deemed necessary is conducted in an adjacent cubicle.

4. COVID-19 test results waiting area

4.23 Once tested, migrants wait in the 'post-test holding section' until the result of their COVID-19 test is ready.²⁶

21 Guiding hold is considered the lowest-level technique that can be applied, usually used to stop situations escalating; it should not be used as a matter of routine. It is also referred to as the escort position.

22 Inspectors observed that operations did not always comply with the SOP.

23 Inspectors, for example, did not observe staff asking the names of migrants on arrival at TH.

24 Form IS91 is a legal document giving the Home Office the authority to detain.

25 A COVID-19 LFT will be conducted on everyone over the age of 4.

26 Positive cases are immediately moved into an isolation area.

5. Search area

4.24 Paragraph 25B of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 allows an IO to search a person who has been arrested under Schedule 2, where there are reasonable grounds to believe that they may be a danger to themselves or others. The search must be recorded, and the search reasons justified. Officers may search for and seize anything which the migrant might use to assist their escape from lawful custody. They may also search for and seize any document which might establish their identity, nationality or citizenship and/or any document that might indicate the place from which they have travelled to the UK or to which they are proposing to go. Searching officers should place all potential evidence seized in individual sealed bags. Cash (notes) is returned to migrants. Officers place migrants' personal belongings in a clear plastic bag, sealed and labelled with the event and migrants' numbers for onward transport. Migrants are given dry clothing.²⁷

6. and 7. Post-search waiting area and transfer to WJF

4.25 After being searched, migrants go to another waiting area prior to being called forward and exit the marquee to WJF with their sealed property bags.

8. and 9. WJF initial waiting area and processing desk

4.26 Migrants board a coach and are driven 50 metres to WJF. They are taken off the coach and moved to the WJF initial waiting area. Officers call them to a desk at the top of the room, where the grounds for arrest, event and migrant numbers, and time of arrest are entered into Pronto by an officer.

10. Biometric recording system (BRS) processing room

4.27 Where reasonably practicable, prior to any transfers to any detention centre or initial processing centres, migrants have their biometrics enrolled at WJF.²⁸

11. and 12. Dispersal waiting area and exit to transportation to secure accommodation/IRC

4.28 Migrants are offered food and warm drinks whilst awaiting dispersal from the WJF.

4.29 Single adult males who are to be detained are given a copy of the form IS91R (the authority to detain) and transferred to Immigration Removal Centres (IRC). Single adult males that are to be released on Chief Immigration Officer's bail are given a Bail IS201²⁹ and transferred via coach to a secure hotel. Single females and family units who are sent to hotels are also given a Bail IS201 and transferred. If capacity allows, Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are transported to Kent Intake Unit (KIU) by Mitie Care and Custody contractors. If KIU has reached full capacity, UASC are taken to Frontier House (an Immigration Enforcement building located in Folkestone).³⁰

²⁷ Clothing consists of a tracksuit bottom, a sweatshirt and, where needed, underwear and a pair of flipflops or other footwear.

²⁸ BRS has been in use at Tug Haven/Western Jet Foil since December 2021.

²⁹ Notification of Grant/Variation of Immigration Bail form.

³⁰ Frontier House is an Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) building located in Folkestone, approximately 8 miles west of Dover Western Docks.

Previous reports and oversight

- 4.30** In November 2020, the ICIBI published ‘An inspection of the Home Office’s response to in-country clandestine arrivals (‘lorry drops’) and to irregular migrants arriving via ‘small boats’ (May 2019 – December 2019)’.³¹ This inspection made 5 recommendations; the Home Office accepted 3 and partially accepted 2.
- 4.31** Inspectors requested an update on the progress of the implementation of these recommendations. CCTC stated that much had happened since the ICIBI inspection, referencing: the changes to the scale and nature of the ‘threat’; the improved resilience provided by Op ALTAIR; the development of a new leadership structure – CCTC; and the establishment of the Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) in September 2019 to provide “government with a single point of Maritime Domain Awareness, maritime expertise, and operational advice”.
- 4.32** Following “staff complaints and comments about the working conditions, effectiveness of processes, management oversight, and safety of working practices in Tug Haven”, Border Force’s (BF) Operational Assurance Directorate (OAD), together with Immigration Enforcement (IE) and UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI), looked “at the effectiveness and efficiency of the end to end processes at Tug Haven”. The subsequent ‘Joint review of processes at Tug Haven for dealing with small boat arrivals October 2021’ (the Home Office Joint Review) examined:
- The transfer of people from boats to processing area
 - Initial action in the reception area
 - COVID testing and medical assessment
 - Search of persons, handling of personal property
 - Biometric checking and capture, logging of personal details
 - Creation of detention paperwork
 - The flow of people through Tug Haven
 - Management oversight and direction
- 4.33** The Home Office Joint Review ‘summary of improvements required’ included:
- “Staff time/capacity needs to be bolstered to allow an assessment against previous audit & assurance recommendations and progress any that are outstanding.
 - On-site managers need to be clearly recognisable, overseeing the entirety of the operation, and escalation routes communicated to all staff.
 - Processes need to be documented and consistently applied.
 - Signage needs improving to ensure individuals are informed of the process and aware they have been arrested.
 - The tracking of individuals through the process at TH needs improvement.
 - Minors must be processed with the appropriate duty of care (i.e. by separating them from adults where appropriate) and their handling prioritised within the process.
 - Record keeping needs improving, particularly relating to searching.
 - Staff must adhere to SSoW (Safe System of Work) when conducting searches of people.

³¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-inspection-of-the-home-offices-response-to-in-country-clandestine-arrivals-lorry-drops-and-to-irregular-migrants-arriving-via-small-boats>

- Joining instructions need to be clear on expectations and what skills, designation, and equipment are needed to undertake the roles at TH.
- Regular assurance should be introduced, both on the ground at TH (ensuring guidance is being followed) and away from TH (assurance of data, for example)."

4.34 The Home Office Joint Review committed to share the report with CCTC, BF and IE colleagues and stated that its findings would be fed into the CCTC Operational Change Board "to prioritise efforts to address the concerns raised whilst having oversight of other priorities".

4.35 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMIP) has also inspected TH on 2 occasions:

- 'Report on an unannounced inspection of the detention of migrants arriving in Dover in small boats by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2–4 and 7–10 September 2020)',³² which made 20 recommendations. The first 5 recommendations are related directly to the facilities at TH, the processes undertaken there, the welfare of migrants and the identification of vulnerabilities. Of these 5 recommendations, 3 were accepted and 2 were partially accepted.³³
- 'Report on an unannounced inspection of the detention of migrants at Dover and Folkestone (Tug Haven, Kent Intake Unit and Frontier House) by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (8 October and 1–3 November 2021)',³⁴ which made 15 recommendations. 8 of these related directly to the facilities at TH, the processes undertaken there, the welfare of migrants and the identification of vulnerabilities. Of these 8 recommendations, 5 were accepted, 2 were partially accepted and 1 not accepted.³⁵ See Annex C for correspondence between ICIBI and HMIP on this issue.

32 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/dover-short-term-holding-facilities/>

33 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/2020-Migrants-Arriving-in-Dover-in-Small-Boats-final-SIP.pdf>

34 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/detention-of-migrants-at-dover-and-folkestone/>

35 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2021/12/2021-11.pdf>

5. Security

Arrival at Tug Haven

- 5.1** Underpinning effective security checks is the collection of accurate information to identify migrants. The initial identifier relied on by officers at Tug Haven (TH) is the wristband worn by migrants on arrival. Stakeholders raised concerns that wristbands could be swapped or removed, but inspectors noted that although loose, the wristbands did not seem to be loose enough to be removed without being destroyed.
- 5.2** Operations at TH are governed by the Operation ALTAIR Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). On arrival at TH, basic biographic information (age and nationality) is captured against the migrant's wristband number in the 'CORT [Clandestine Operational Response Team] scribe sheet', an Excel spreadsheet held on SharePoint.³⁶ The guidance indicates that information from the scribe sheet is then copied into another Excel spreadsheet, held on SharePoint, which forms the 'Op ALTAIR Encounter Log' and is used by all the teams involved in the initial processing and onward movement of migrants. In October 2021, the Home Office Joint Review drew attention to the duplication of work and recommended that "consideration should be given to the arresting/reception officers inputting data directly onto the Op ALTAIR log instead of using the scribe sheet".
- 5.3** Migrants are arrested as set out in the process map at Figure 7 of this report. Inspectors observed this process, which was conducted primarily in English. Inspectors did not hear staff consistently inform migrants that they were under arrest and not free to leave, the reason for the arrest and why it was necessary to arrest them, as is required in guidance.³⁷ The guidance also states that where the individual doesn't appear to understand the arrest, the arresting officer must explain again or use an interpreter service. No interpreters or interpretation apps (either via telephone or using a screen) were used during the observed process.
- 5.4** The Home Office Joint Review highlighted concerns around the failure to issue administrative cautions and recommended more prominent signage in foreign languages to help migrants understand the process. Supplemental officers, Home Office staff brought in to assist the CORT team, were concerned about the record-keeping of arrests, which were not recorded on Pronto (the Immigration Enforcement database) until a later stage of processing. They cited instances when they had later contacted the arrest officer recorded in Pronto only to find they were not on duty at the time of the recorded arrest. Supplemental staff also highlighted a lack of clarity on the recording of the time of arrest and noted their overall lack of confidence in the arrest record: "That part of the process needs to be tightened up, otherwise we will get our fingers burnt."

³⁶ SharePoint enables documents to be accessed, and entries made, by required teams across the Home Office.

³⁷ Immigration Returns, Enforcement and Detention General Instructions, 'Arrest and restraint' Version 2.0 (15 November 2021), pg. 11.

5.5 The SOP does not specify when in the process at TH the migrants should be served with immigration paperwork, and inspectors were told this could vary; sometimes this was provided at the front desk, sometimes later on, at the point of departure, depending on the volume of migrants. As these documents were in use at the time of observations, inspectors did not review them but did observe officers filling in the relevant fields and noted on one occasion these entries were incorrect.

Searches

5.6 All migrants are searched following arrest. The SOP states this search must be recorded, and the reason justified, although it does not state where it should be recorded, and inspectors did not see records being made. No exception to this requirement to search migrants is made for minors, although inspectors were told they would be prioritised to facilitate onward movement to the Kent Intake Unit (KIU).

5.7 Stakeholders raised concerns about the adequacy of searching, highlighting incidents where migrants still possessed weapons after they had been searched. Inspectors noted that, when migrants were returned to the waiting area after being searched, there were limited controls to prevent them encountering migrants who had not been searched.

5.8 Officers removed and placed weapons in a sharps bucket in the search area. Officers said that migrants sometimes had pocketknives, but not often, and that guns had been encountered, though rarely.

5.9 Inspectors found officers lacked clarity, and subsequently consistency of approach, on search and seizure procedures. Supplemental officers were unclear as to the legality or type of searches they conducted, saying they were not a “full quadrant search”³⁸ but more about getting the migrant changed and safe. Inspectors saw migrants being asked to undress to their underwear and their clothes checked for weapons. Officers used a handheld wand to check migrants after they had changed into dry clothes but were unsure how to do this as they said that this was a new process.

5.10 The SOP states that officers may:

“search for and seize: anything which they [migrants] might use to assist their escape from lawful custody and/or any document which might establish their identity, nationality or citizenship and/or any document that might indicate the place from which they have travelled to the UK or to which they are proposing to go.”

5.11 This includes the seizure of mobile phones only “on suspicion of being evidence”, which must then be receipted and verified. Stakeholders raised concerns about the inconsistent handling of mobile phone seizures, including a lack of receipting and failures to return them to migrants. It is understood that the Home Office confirmed there was a “blanket seizure policy” for mobile phones operating at TH between April and November 2020; this is currently the subject of a judicial review.

5.12 Inspectors saw A4 guidance outside the search area (see photo 12, Annex A), which an officer said he had only seen recently by chance, and which staff in the search area were unaware of until inspectors pointed it out. It included guidance that “Any PASSPORTS [sic] or National ID cards must be placed in an evidence bag clearly labelled up with MO & individual # numbers

³⁸ A quadrant search is a means of methodically and thoroughly searching a person and their clothing.

and then handed to the Search Team Leader.” CORT officers and managers told inspectors that they seized identity documents and anything of evidential value and sent it to storage. However, supplemental officers said they had been told to stop all seizures, due to a judicial review, except for weapons.

- 5.13** The Home Office guidance directs officers to pass any identity documents taken from migrants to the Bronze Commander for storage. However, some officers were observed putting passports into evidence bags, that were then placed in the migrant’s possessions bag for return to the migrant. At interview, supplemental staff were unclear as to the process for the handling of documents and gave different responses to the question, “what would you do with an identity document?”
- 5.14** The SOP states that the Bronze (Welfare & Staffing) Commander will ensure that Team Leaders (CORT IOs) are assigned across all stages of migrant processing and “are fully conversant of what is required”. These officers oversee the work in their sections and are responsible for ensuring actions, such as searches, are completed, reporting up to the Bronze Commanders. However, supplemental officers in the search area, and inspectors, were unable to identify the Search Team Leader, and it was only through word of mouth that it was established that migrants’ documents should be taken to the TH Bronze Commander.
- 5.15** CORT officers reported that some supplemental officers refused to undertake search duties. Officers must have received Personal Safety Training (PST) Level 3 for this, but despite having had the training, depending on their regular role, some supplemental officers had little experience using this training. Some BF officers were confused about the legality of the searches they conducted. This echoed findings in the October 2021 Home Office Joint Review, which concluded there was nothing apparent in guidance that precluded a BF officer from conducting a “25(b) search” but “This needs clarification, and communication to BF staff and managers who attend/send staff to TH”.
- 5.16** Officers were clear that they should refer seizures of large amounts of money to the Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI) team. Smaller amounts of cash were recorded in a paper logbook (see photo 13, Annex A) and returned to the migrant. CORT officers said that the logbook had only recently been introduced, and they were not clear what happened to the information contained within the logbook, or whether this information was recorded on Home Office systems. The use of the logbook was a response to a recent increase in migrants claiming that a large amount of cash had been taken from them by Home Office staff and not returned to them.
- 5.17** The ‘Op ALTAIR Encounter Log’ for November arrivals showed a limited number of seizures. Despite the SOP indicating that records should be accurate and full, of the 6,634 arrival records, very rarely was a search officer named; instead this was recorded as “An immigration officer” or “IMM OFFICER”, and only 4 seizures were recorded (all passports). This reflected the findings in the Home Office Joint Review, which found no search records were captured or recorded on Pronto and recommended more specific details should be captured when capacity allowed.
- 5.18** There did not appear to be any guidance on referring other items of interest found during a search to intelligence colleagues. One officer said “things are being missed” as they were under too much time pressure to look for items that might be useful. Despite this, inspectors observed supplemental officers showing initiative by referring a USB stick to Counter-Terrorism police.

Property

- 5.19** Partner agencies, stakeholders and Home Office staff from Asylum & Protection (A&P) teams all reported issues with the Home Office's approach to handling migrant property, and the impact this had both on operations and the migrants themselves. The migrants' clothing, together with other belongings, are bagged after they leave the search area and each bag is given a thick plastic tag with space to write the event number and migrant number.
- 5.20** There was no consistent process for handling migrants' property bags. Inspectors observed migrants variously being instructed to carry only their own bag, or to carry any bag to the next stage of the process. Property bags contained items such as medication, travel documents and mobile phones, as well as clothing and shoes. Some bags had opened, as the tags had come off (see photos 20 to 22, Annex A) and the contents were in full view. A number of bags containing migrants' belongings were stored insecurely outside on wooden shelving. On several occasions, inspectors noticed that, despite all migrants having left both TH and WJF, bags of property remained. The Home Office Joint Review similarly noted challenges in property management, including the failure to inventory items placed in the bags.
- 5.21** Returning a property bag to its owner was an increasing challenge to CORT staff, who said there were between 100 and 150 pieces of property stored in the Queen's Warehouse³⁹ which needed to be returned to migrants.

Processing – Pronto

- 5.22** According to the SOP:
- “officers will take and record on Pronto⁴⁰ initial details, including identification number from wristband, age, nationality and if they are part of a family unit under the correct reference for the relevant boat. (Officers will record this data manually if they have no access to Pronto) Officers will record any medical issues. Must be accurate and full records.”
- 5.23** At this stage, which is now conducted at the Western Jet Foil (WJF), the arrest will also be entered into Pronto and this record must include “grounds for arrest, event reference number, subject's migrant number and time of arrest using the correct visit reference for the relevant boat for evidentiary and intelligence purposes for everyone.”
- 5.24** Inspectors observed officers recording information in Pronto via the mobile app on their phone, which uploads instantly to the Home Office system. Staff employed a mixture of speaking slowly in English, showing question sheets in different languages (including Amharic, Arabic, Dari, Persian, Pashto, Tigrinya, Urdu and Vietnamese), using other migrants to interpret, asking migrants to write their details on Post-It notes, asking migrants to enter their own information onto Pronto, and confirming details by showing migrants what had been entered onto Pronto. These methods are not ideal and risk errors occurring in the information-gathering process. Inspectors noted technical difficulties with Pronto itself, including problems accessing the Wi-Fi and with downloading. CORT staff told inspectors that Home Office staff sent to assist them did not always have access to, or training on, Pronto, which meant that this work could only be completed by a limited number of staff, who were often under pressure.

³⁹ Queen's Warehouses are secure storage locations for material that has been seized or detained by Border Force, HM Revenue and Customs and the National Crime Agency.

⁴⁰ Pronto – police and reporting notebook organiser – is a database used by Immigration Enforcement to record details of visits and manage casework in relation to enforcement visits and immigration offenders.

- 5.25** CORT officers did not recognise language difficulties to be a barrier in engaging with migrants. However, supplemental officers found communicating with migrants to be “quite challenging at times”, especially when trying to obtain biographic data. They did not consider use of telephone interpreters to be “practical” due to the ambient volume and intermittent telephone reception. Like CORT officers, they said they might rely on a migrant’s friends to interpret, foreign language crib sheets and the Arabic calendar on Google to assist.
- 5.26** Migrant photographs were taken using phones and were uploaded directly onto Pronto. The first migrant observed by inspectors took 10 minutes to process, though the officer said it would normally take less time and he had made an inputting error. One CORT officer struggled with Pronto, taking 38 minutes to enrol a family, while a more experienced CORT officer completed a Pronto record in 6 minutes. Inspectors witnessed Pronto crashing on one occasion, causing delays. Inspectors noticed that once someone had been through the Pronto stage, a star was drawn on their wristband to indicate that the process had been completed.

Processing – Biometrics

- 5.27** The SOP states that “Where reasonably practicable, prior to any transfers to any detention centre or initial processing centres, migrants will have their biometrics enrolled at Western Jet Foil”, though no detail is given as to how or what security checks ought to be run against the enrolled biometrics.
- 5.28** The Home Office confirmed that full biometric enrolment at the point of reception (TH/WJF) only commenced on 15 December 2021, using mobile Biometric Recording Stations (BRS) (see photo 26, Annex A); while onsite, therefore, inspectors observed the use of BRS only. Previously, officers had been using Grabba (see photo 25, Annex A), a hand-held peripheral docked to a Home Office mobile phone used by Immigration Enforcement (IE), to search fingerprint databases. Police onsite may also run Identity Not Known (INK) checks, though inspectors understood these were only conducted at times of high demand or when Grabba did not work. Neither of these systems permanently recorded an individual’s fingerprints. When inspectors reviewed the November 2021 Encounter Log as part of a deep dive into Home Office records, the records related only to checks undertaken via Grabba. Figure 8 sets out the details of the checks.

Figure 8: Details of equipment and security checks

Device	Equipment	Owner	Function	Checks done	Restrictions
Grabba	Hand-held device connected to a mobile phone.	Home Office (Immigration and Compliance Teams and at ports)	A scan of the index finger to identify if there is a fingerprint match to Home Office or police records. The fingerprint image is not retained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Office's Immigration and Asylum Biometric System (IABS) IDENT1 (police biometric database) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant cannot be moved until Grabba check result is input on the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log. However, guidance says Grabba results may not be known when filling out the tab, but police who conduct the fingerprinting will advise if they have had a positive response.
BRS (Biometric Recording Stations)	Generally, office based, non-mobile units, suitable for taking fingerprints for immigration purposes – the Home Office uses mobile versions for use at TH/ WJF.	Home Office	Full biometric enrolment using 10 print capture. Fingerprints taken on these units are saved and recorded on the IABS. Demographic details must be completed in full by the officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IABS IDENT1 [Redacted] Special collections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers said migrants should only leave Tug Haven once the results email had been received, usually within 5 to 10 minutes. [Redacted] A barcode from the check on BRS should be placed on the IS91 and to allow the results to be manually input into CID and Atlas.
INK (Identity Not Known)/ livescan	Police fingerprint scanning equipment	Police	Searching or verification against fingerprints already recorded on IABS. Scan results not recorded or saved on the IABS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IABS Police records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant cannot be moved until check has been completed. It was unclear where on a Home Office system this check might be recorded.

- 5.29** Migrants can no longer be checked against European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database (Eurodac), used to identify asylum claims in European countries, as the UK has now left the European Union. A senior manager acknowledged this is unhelpful; “you are missing another piece of the picture – we lost some of our capability.”

Equipment

- 5.30** Officers reported technical issues with Grabba devices, saying they were “not very robust” and suffered from connection issues, while a senior operations manager agreed that they “never appear to be working”. Officers told inspectors that, where Grabba devices failed or there was an “influx” of migrants, the police would assist and carry out checks on migrants on behalf of the Home Office using INK checks.
- 5.31** At the time of inspection there were 4 mobile Biometric Recording Stations (BRS) at WJF. Officers told inspectors of difficulties with these, describing them as “slow and temperamental”, taking time to set up, and 6 or 7 minutes to process each person. At one point during inspectors’ observations only one of the 4 BRS was working, doubling the time to process migrants (up to 10 to 15 minutes).
- 5.32** A senior manager was dismissive of these challenges, saying staff had not used the BRS correctly, that they had since been trained and could process a person in 3 to 5 minutes, but accepted that they were “end-of-life” machines. Another senior manager recognised that the technology sometimes failed, and enrolment on the Biometric Recording System could not be completed, but suggested that staff should be employing their behavioural detection training to prioritise individuals for Biometric Recording System enrolment rather than ceasing it entirely during busy periods.
- 5.33** A BRS “expert” told inspectors that the mobile BRS units were 20 years old, several cables were missing from each of the kits, the original guidance had been removed and the current guidance was unhelpful. The lack of clarity over how to use the equipment was problematic and inspectors watched staff undertake activities which the equipment was not meant to be used for, such as taking the fingerprints of a child under the age of 5.
- 5.34** Staff had difficulties connecting to the Home Office Wi-Fi network. Staff were observed using their work phones as Wi-Fi hotspots to enable the operation of the mobile BRS, and this approach appeared to work well; however, officers raised a practical issue around charging points being difficult to find on site but which were “really needed” due to the constant use of electronics.

Suspension of process

- 5.35** CORT officers told inspectors that the enrolment of biometrics on BRS or use of Grabba/INK could be stood down if there was a justifiable need to do so, but any such decision had to be escalated through the command chain up to the Gold Commander and authorised at that level.
- 5.36** Data provided by the Home Office showed that from 1 September to 14 December 2021, there were 4 incidents where Grabba and/or INK were slow or unreliable, affecting a total of 2,050 migrants. “Some” police checks were done on one day, and there was said to be a “limited risk of absconding” on another as migrants were going to a short-term holding facility (where they would be processed). There were 2 days when no mitigation was provided. There were 6 days

when the Home Office was unable to confirm whether Grabba processing had been suspended or whether any mitigating actions had been implemented.

- 5.37** Between 15 December 2021 and 10 January 2022, checks on the Biometric Recording System were suspended 4 times due to the time taken to process migrants or the problems with the kit. On these occasions, to avoid a bottleneck in processing, either Grabba or INK checks were used, or migrants were processed at a secure hotel or Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). On one date, the Home Office could not confirm whether Biometric Recording System checks had been suspended.

Dispersal and hand-offs to Asylum & Protection

- 5.38** The CORT team duty officer, Kent Intake Unit (KIU)/National Asylum Intake Unit (NAIU), Rigid Inflatable Boat (RHIB) Support Team, Detention Gatekeeper (DGK), Detainee Escorting and Population Management Unit (DEPMU) and the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC) all complete the 'Op ALTAIR Encounter Log' (Log). Its purpose is set out as being:

“to ensure that certain administrative purposes relating to small boat arrivals are simplified and streamlined, thereby ensuring less duplication, and allowing all partners to access real time information at any given time.”

- 5.39** Once a migrant's accommodation is confirmed, CORT officers update the transport and movement tab on the Log with each migrant's destination and assign them to a 'bulk list'. Information about the migrants is taken from the CORT 'scribe sheet' and auto populates the relevant bulk list.
- 5.40** A&P staff told inspectors that the NAIU RHIB support team create an individual's case on CID,⁴¹ and undertake the mandatory checks as soon as individuals are uploaded to the 'bulk list'. The UKVI Operating Mandate checks for asylum include checks against the PNC, IDENT1 and Special Collections, IABS, and internal Home Office systems, and takes place after Grabba and PNC checks have been completed by CCTC at Tug Haven.⁴² A&P staff told inspectors that UKVI mandatory checks were mostly completed before, but “sometimes” not until after migrants departed TH/WJF, although they would not be admitted to the secure hotel (instead held on the coach on which they are travelling) until the results had been received.
- 5.41** Stakeholders and A&P staff both reported issues with the quality and timeliness of information provided about migrants at TH/WJF, reporting that the individuals arriving at IRCs were “often” different individuals from those they had been told were coming. Staff stated that they often received incomplete biometric information for migrants, causing frustration for staff: “On a coach with 36 to 38 migrants, 15 to 20% will not have biometric results, so the BRS process will have to be repeated.” One operational manager said:

“90% of cases will require changes to the migrant names or dates of birth once they reach detention and their details are confirmed, which means security checks have to be re-run and IS91 forms re-issued with the correct details.”

41 Case Information Database. It is the main case working and operational database used throughout the Home Office to record personal details of foreign nationals and sponsors who pass through the immigration system for any reason.

42 PNC: Police national computer system for England and Wales, which holds information about criminal records. IDENT1: UK police database, which provides fingerprints services to the Home Office to forensically verify or resolve identities in the UK, including those who have been taken into custody, or fingerprints taken at the scene of the crime. Special Collections: Searches from the normal operation of IDENT1 can trigger searches of specialist collections, including data owned by UKVI, the Ministry of Defence, Counter Terrorism Forensic Services, NCA, Police Service of Northern Ireland and the National Fingerprint Office. Where an identification is made, results are returned to the data owner. IABS: The Immigration and Asylum Biometric Information System, which provides biometric identity services (fingerprint and facial image) for the Home Office.

These findings echoed those highlighted in HMIP's report, where they noted the poor quality of IS91s, judging them inaccurate or incomplete. One stakeholder also reported instances of missing names, estimating that 70% were either missing or inaccurate. The collection of inaccurate information about individuals could be reflected on CID via the use of the aliases tab, which could include different spellings of surnames, for example. A review of selected case files showed that these 'aliases' had not always been effectively reflected or reconciled across different Home Office databases.

Intelligence gathering

- 5.42** A senior manager in CCTC acknowledged that there was limited capacity amongst staff at TH to identify and collect intelligence. In the search area, the staff focus on weapons and identity documents and are not instructed to collect 'pocket litter'. However, inspectors were told that Counter-Terrorism (CT) police and IE Intelligence were raising awareness amongst staff of the potential dividends of intelligence and further training has been planned.

Joint Debriefing Team (JDT)

- 5.43** The Joint Debriefing Team (JDT) comprises IE officers, and Special Branch police officers from Kent Police. The JDT is responsible for identifying migrants who may be willing to provide intelligence. The JDT may target specific migrants depending on taskings from the National Crime Agency or other organisations or based on their own priorities. This may relate to specific boats, nationalities, or personality types (such as migrants who appeared to be directing the activities of others). JDT officers regularly attend TH and WJF to have a brief conversation with migrants, then fully debrief them using an interpreter once they have been dispersed to accommodation.
- 5.44** JDT senior managers told inspectors that it can be difficult to locate migrants after dispersal, particularly where there is no photo or biometrics enrolled and/or the recording of bio-data details was inaccurate. The Clandestine Channel Threat Command Campaign (CCTC) Board minutes from September 2021 noted that:
- "all migrants are offered the opportunity to debrief. Currently 30–40% are being debriefed. However, the current facilities at Tug Haven are challenging for undertaking de-briefing. Migrants are triaged as potential persons of interest but accessing them once they have left Tug Haven is difficult. They are reliant on ROMs [Reporting and Offender Management] to provide details of accommodation."
- 5.45** The Board's discussion, which included identification of the need for a single set of intelligence questions, resulted in an action for "CCTC to devise a set of questions articulating out intelligence and data requirements". However, inspectors did not see any examples of migrants being offered the opportunity to debrief, nor was it clear where such a debriefing would have taken place, prior to the opening of WJF. JDT senior managers said that JDT and CT police should have the use of 2 interview rooms at WJF, but they are currently being used for storage.
- 5.46** Senior JDT managers said that they have a positive relationship with CCTC and are included in decision-making. Under 'Op CASSIOPE' (a CCTC operation run with the Rapid Response Team), intelligence-gathering opportunities have improved. The JDT now have access to searches conducted in TH, enabling them to identify tickets, times, dates and locations, and commented they had received good referrals from CCTC. Intelligence is disseminated via intelligence reports to the relevant law enforcement agency.

Counter-Terrorism police

- 5.47** Senior CT police officers told inspectors that they have dedicated staff who attend TH/WJF but are also able to bring staff in from other areas if required. Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 enables a designated constable, immigration or customs officer to stop, search, question and detain a person travelling through a port/airport or the border area to determine whether the person is or has been involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism. [Redacted] CT Police noted that cases had been referred to CT officers onsite by IE/BF officers but no data on the number or outcome of these referrals could be provided by the Home Office.
- 5.48** Law enforcement agencies [Redacted] commented that it is “extremely important for BRS enrolment to occur as early as possible to identify persons of interest before they are dispersed”.

Criminal and Financial Investigations

- 5.49** Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI) are able to make arrests at TH/WJF when there is evidence available to do so. This evidence can come via aerial footage from drones (operated on behalf of CCTC), or from IE/BF officers who may refer migrants with large amounts of money to them, or migrants for whom biometric/identity checks indicate they are a previous illegal entrant or have returned in breach of a deportation order. However, if there are delays in obtaining imagery of persons of interest or where biometric/identity checks have not been properly completed, then migrants may have been moved from TH/WJF without CFI being able to make arrests. This tension between processing large numbers of people in a vulnerable situation at TH/WJF and criminal investigations means that the early identification of persons of interest is missed. However, once identified, arrests can take place at onward locations by CFI teams. CFI senior management and JDT senior management told inspectors that they also refer cases to each other.
- 5.50** CFI senior managers told inspectors that CFI productivity has been reduced due to the provision of CFI staff to Op ALTAIR. CFI officers seconded to Op ALTAIR at TH told inspectors that they had mainly been used to conduct searches. They did not have access to Pronto, and although they had previously used mobile BRS, they had not been asked to do so.

National Crime Agency (NCA)

- 5.51** The National Crime Agency (NCA) do not have a regular presence at TH/WJF but they are involved in the intelligence and investigation of organised crime groups facilitating crossings of migrants by small boats. Inspectors observed that they feed into Gold Commander calls and provide an intelligence update, and inspectors understood that NCA are engaged at a more senior and strategic level. At a tactical level, the JDT told inspectors that they are sometimes tasked by the NCA to debrief migrants, based on specific profiles.

Risk management

- 5.52** The threat of inadequate security checks and absconders is acknowledged in the CCTC risk register provided to inspectors (dated 10 November 2021), but only as a potential result of an unsuitable processing location for migrants. The management and mitigation control is the

use of contingency processing locations, but there is no explanation as to how these would be staffed.

- 5.53** The data entry into Pronto, serving immigration paperwork and capturing of biometrics for all migrants at TH is the responsibility of the 'Encounter Team Leader'. CORT officers told inspectors that this work was assured by the 'Admin Bronze' Commander, who oversees the reconciliation of initial information obtained from migrants against Pronto records and the IS91s, checking that every arrival had the relevant records completed before arranging dispersal.
- 5.54** CORT officers were adamant that a migrant's departure from TH/WJF was reliant on "tasks being done and showing up on systems". CORT managers said, "The processes are now at the stage where nobody can leave TH without being fully processed...Everything is in place to ensure that nobody can slip out of the process"; and were confident that, in the absence of the BRS being used, a check against the PNC will have been done either by Grabba or through police at TH/WJF. While this checks a migrant is not known to the police or Home Office, it does not necessarily record or 'lock in' the identity, so if a migrant were to abscond having only been subject to Grabba checks, the Home Office would have no biometric record of the individual to match against if they were subsequently encountered.
- 5.55** The lack of a retrievable biometric record caused concerns to a range of stakeholders. Union representatives told inspectors that, when migrants leave TH/WJF, it is not clear whether everyone has been through processing and their members are "concerned they cannot meet the country's national security requirements". Others highlighted the lack of traceability of the migrant, from both national security and vulnerability perspectives. Confirmation of an individual's identity at TH is reliant on information provided by the migrant themselves, and therefore open to mistakes or deception; it is the enrolled biometric which 'locks' the identity and essentially overrides the biographic information such as date of birth or name – if the latter is false, it does not matter as the biometrics mean the individual is known to the system.
- 5.56** Previously, the risk of not enrolling migrants' biometrics at TH could be mitigated because all, apart from families, were transferred from TH to Immigration Removal Centres and underwent full biometric enrolment in a secure environment. However, as highlighted by CORT officers, the introduction of secure hotels has undermined this mitigation, as the number of absconders illustrates in Figure 9 below. The volume of absconders from the same hotels over a period of days and weeks also illustrates the poor security of these hotels.
- 5.57** In evidence, the Home Office confirmed that, between 1 September and 30 November 2021, 170 migrants absconded from secure hotels. Additional data, for 1 December 2021 to 10 January 2022, showed a further 57 absconders from secure hotels, all of whom were adult males and 2 had traces against the Warnings Index or PNC (though they had no criminal charges against them). Of the 57 absconders, 21 had absconded from the same hotel, while the remaining 36 had absconded from 6 other hotels. Migrants who absconded did so on average 16 days after their arrival in the UK, though this ranged from 4 to 29 days. However, as shown in Figure 9, the majority did not have biometrics recorded or UKVI Operating Mandate checks completed by the time they had absconded.

Figure 9: Breakdown of the completion of security checks on 57 absconders, 1 December 2021 to 10 January 2022

Security check	Not completed	Completed
Biometrics	38	19
Op Mandate	41	16
Screening	44	13

5.58 Absconding risks were not limited to those departing TH at the end of processing. Migrants are transferred the short distance between TH and WJF by coach, with one IE escort on board, and, where required, migrants are transferred to hospital by ambulance or by secure IE vehicle (for minor injuries). CORT officers said whether a migrant was accompanied to hospital was assessed on a case-by-case basis, as they could be there for days. A senior operations manager described such cases as their “biggest bugbear”, saying migrants and staff have gone to hospital without their knowledge, “It happens, not frequently but consistently.” COVID-19 cases are transferred to an isolation centre by specialist taxi.

6. Vulnerability

Guidance

- 6.1** Op ALTAIR, which governs the response to small boats, has as one of its strategic objectives:
- “Recognise vulnerable or “at risk” people we may encounter – maximise the opportunity to identify potential people at risk and/or victims of exploitation and/or abuse of various types and notify relevant agencies.”
- 6.2** The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is clear that this identification should be undertaken prior to the movement of migrants to detention centres or secure hotels.
- 6.3** At Tug Haven (TH), the Bronze (Welfare & Staffing) Commander, usually a Chief Immigration Officer from the Clandestine Operational Response Team (CORT), is tasked with:
- “Ensuring that the welfare and wellbeing of officers and migrants is considered and escalated through the appropriate channels. That vulnerabilities and any potential safeguarding issues are raised as [sic] escalated appropriately.”
- 6.4** Within this chain of command, the Triage and Medical Team Leader is “responsible for identifying vulnerable cohorts and [sic] that they are prioritised”, while the Encounter Team Leader is required to “Continue to prioritise vulnerable cohorts”. The SOP does not provide any guidance for officers on performance standards in terms of identifying and safeguarding vulnerable migrants.

Identifying vulnerabilities prior to arrival at Tug Haven

- 6.5** The interception of migrants at sea by Border Force (BF) is governed by the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS). When migrants are brought onto Border Force boats in the Channel, where feasible, inspectors were told that staff will undertake a (SOLAS/ Protective) search, ask if anyone has any medical issues, and provide first aid as necessary as there are 2 medics on board (usually ex-paramedics). The migrant is given a wristband identifying them with a numerical reference linking them to the boat they were rescued from⁴³ and provided with a bag for personal belongings. The migrants may also be given a COVID-19 lateral flow test, and single adult males travelling on their own are separated from families, where possible.
- 6.6** BF staff provide the number and gender breakdown of migrants to the Bronze (Admin) Commander in TH via a dedicated radio channel and highlight any immediate welfare or safeguarding concerns identified at sea.

⁴³ If the migrant is brought ashore by the RNLI, migrants will be issued with a wristband on land upon arrival at the arrest desk in Tug Haven.

6.7 BF staff confirmed that they had received training on vulnerabilities and were confident in its use. They described observing interactions between individuals on the boats, particularly between children and adults, and escalating concerns as required. An officer described how she reported a concern about an agitated young girl she had noticed who was accompanied by a man; the girl was later found to be a 6-year-old unaccompanied child.

Consideration of vulnerabilities in Tug Haven from arrival

6.8 Inspectors observed the triage process at the entrance to the TH marquee. There were a number of staff in the triage area and a whiteboard with the name of the welfare lead, but it was not apparent who that individual was as they were not wearing the relevant tabard. There was a separate, small, screened-off area (see photo 8, Annex A) beside the triage area where staff could have confidential discussions with anyone identified as vulnerable and who would then be fast-tracked through the process. However, inspectors did not observe any use of this area or questioning about potential vulnerabilities/safeguarding issues at this point.

6.9 A member of the CORT staff confirmed that immediate welfare was the primary concern, but that:

“We are mainly reliant on migrants coming forward to say they have issues, especially when it is busy... Not considered a priority – staff only look for (self-declared) minors and medical cases in reality. No time in the process to look for ‘in-depth’ vulnerabilities.”

6.10 There was no indication that the screened area constituted a safe space that might be used for the confidential disclosure of vulnerabilities; however, there was a medical room in Western Jet Foil (WJF) that could be used for this purpose.

6.11 At the point of entry to TH, arriving migrants were provided with a blanket and ushered to benches where they waited until being asked to come forward to the staffed desk. Families with children were placed at the front of the queue, but there was no apparent prioritisation of unaccompanied minors who were held with single adult males. Inspectors were informed that unaccompanied minors and families could be removed from the main group of migrants and held in a welfare tent outside the main marquee, but this tent was not in use at the time of the onsite phase of the inspection.

6.12 Staff determined the age of migrants by asking them to point to a hand-written grid with numbers on a piece of card, to indicate their age (see photo 5, Annex A). There was also a separate sheet which had the question, “How old are you?” translated into 8 languages with national flags, but this was not being used. Another sheet had the flags of 24 countries and the question “Where are you from?” translated into 6 languages (see photo 6, Annex A), which individuals were able to point to.

6.13 Despite these aids, a number of migrants struggled to understand the questions and no interpreters or interpretation apps (either via telephone or using a screen) were used, despite this technology being available to officers. While most individuals appeared to be able to provide some biographic details, there were problems with confirming the age of migrants and their family relationships. Despite this, officers at this triage stage told inspectors they were generally confident that language barriers did not pose a problem.

Medical checks

- 6.14** Medevent staff, who are contracted by the Home Office to provide paramedic services and conduct COVID-19 lateral flow tests, move between TH and WJF and include paramedics and technicians. Inspectors were told by Medevent staff that they had a good rapport with Home Office staff.
- 6.15** Medical checks largely focused on the migrants' physical condition and, as well as COVID-19 lateral flow tests, included core temperature and pulse oximeter checks, with minimal verbal interaction with migrants. (See photo 9, Annex A.) Medevent have the capability to deal with any minor injuries. Fuel burns, a chemical burn which occurs when petrol mixes with seawater and comes into contact with the skin, were the most common injury and could usually be treated using a pump spray to irrigate the wound. Medevent indicated there were shower facilities at WJF, but there were conflicting reports as to whether these were open and available for use. More serious conditions could be referred to local hospitals or minor injuries units.
- 6.16** Migrants who were provided with medication by Medevent staff were given a separate blue wristband which had the dose, medication and time administered written on it. A yellow medical form was also completed with details of the initial assessment, any issues/injuries, COVID-19 status, and any medication. The white copy of the medical form was attached to the IS91 detention authority form.
- 6.17** Medics told inspectors that physical checks or symptoms were their main focus and anyone who did not 'look ok' was flagged to the Bronze Commander. The medics made it clear that they were not trained mental health specialists. During their 4 days onsite, inspectors observed minimal floor-walking by Medevent staff, and only one medic spoke to a family before the family left TH.
- 6.18** Both stakeholders and Home Office staff at Frontier House and the Midlands Intake Unit (MIU) raised concerns that some individuals were leaving TH with untreated burns. Inspectors saw one woman with an untreated open wound on a finger in the search area, despite having already been seen by Medevent staff.
- 6.19** Where a person has a positive COVID-19 lateral flow test, they are transferred to the isolation area, a metal shipping container beside the marquee. (See photo 16, Annex A.) Here they are searched and given a change of clothes and held securely before being taken to an isolation hotel. Inspectors were informed that one individual had been left in the container for several hours following arrival overnight and had complained of feeling cold. It appeared that he had been forgotten about.
- 6.20** Home Office staff did not ask about pregnancy, so unless a woman was physically showing the signs of pregnancy, the identification of pregnant women was reliant on specific questioning (and then the sharing of that information) by Medevent or the migrant mentioning it herself. A CORT officer explained that she would ensure that pregnant women were given particular attention and gave an example of her approach in action.

Search process and vulnerabilities

- 6.21** After the medical check, migrants are searched by officers of the same sex in individual cubicles and provided with clean basic clothing. (See photo 11, Annex A.) This process was potentially another opportunity to detect vulnerabilities as it involved longer interaction time between migrants and staff. However, no vulnerability questions are asked during the search. Officers were focusing on finding the right clothes to fit children, or where items were stored, or getting to grips with the current search protocol, and this, combined with language barriers, often prevented any meaningful interaction.
- 6.22** It was unclear what happened to medication if it was discovered during a search. Supplemental staff variously told inspectors that medication “should be confiscated”, “returned to the migrant in person”, or “secured in a migrant’s property bag”. Medevent staff seemed to be content for migrants to keep their medication, although this was not always the case if it was a controlled drug.

Pronto questioning

- 6.23** Home Office staff record an individual’s personal information and details of their arrest in Pronto. Although vulnerability and safeguarding comments can be recorded on Pronto, inspectors did not observe any questions being asked, nor any concerns recorded relating to vulnerability or safeguarding, despite the relatively low number of migrants present at the time.⁴⁴ Inspectors also found very limited vulnerability recording in a review of Pronto records from November 2021. A senior manager, when asked about what records staff are expected to keep on vulnerabilities, responded: “...probably nothing... guidance is being revised, looking at the basics, defining vulnerability (with the help of experts) and then how to manage them”.
- 6.24** Staff mentioned the availability of interpretation apps, such as ‘thebigword’,⁴⁵ but these were not being used, and there was a reliance on other migrants to help interpret, including children, who had very limited English themselves. Officers told staff that interpreter apps were difficult to connect to due to a poor mobile phone signal, lack of availability of specific language interpreters, and the general noise level at TH.
- 6.25** When the officer was unable to obtain the precise date of birth due to the language barrier, they would record only the year of birth given, and use a default of 1 January as the day and month. Inspectors also observed individuals being given the officer’s mobile phone to type the information into Pronto themselves.

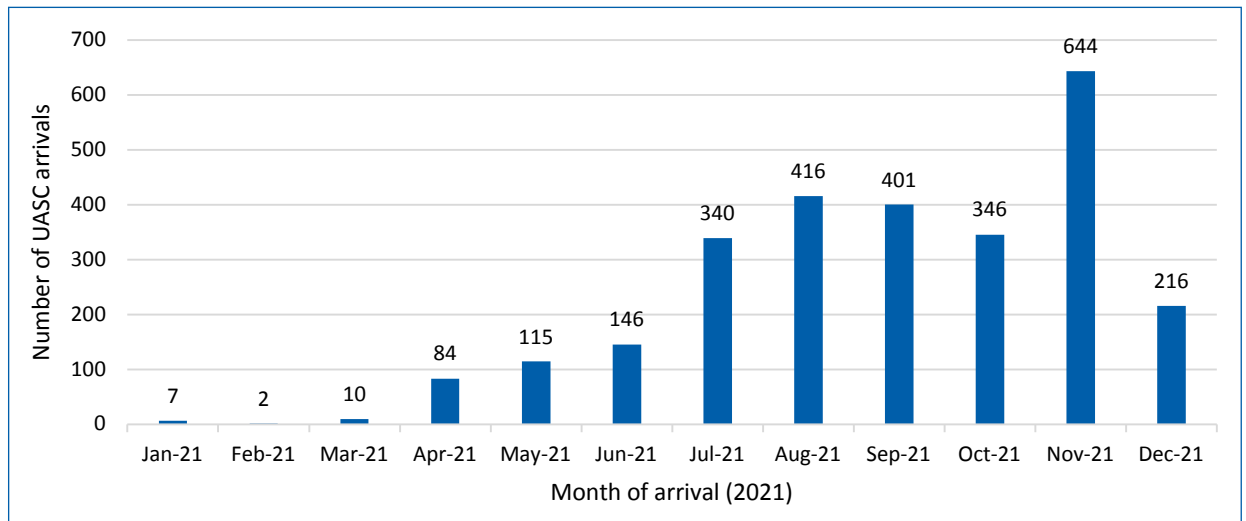
The effective identification of children

- 6.26** Home Office data shows that 2,725 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) arrived on small boats in 2021 (10.5% of all migrant arrivals), with a peak in November 2021 when the numbers of all arrivals increased significantly. This is set out at Figure 10.

⁴⁴ Questions on the screen included: Are there any vulnerabilities/trafficking/safeguarding issues? Section 55 issues (duty of care towards children)? Referral to social services? Referral to (NRM) National Referral Mechanism (for modern slavery)? Are you pregnant? – from Pronto demonstration pre-onsite.

⁴⁵ thebigword is an interpretation and translation service.

Figure 10: UASC arrivals via small boats in 2021



Month	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Totals
UASC	7	2	10	84	115	146	340	416	401	346	644	216	2,725
All arrivals ⁴⁶	224	308	831	750	1,627	2,177	3,512	3,053	4,602	2,701	6,971	1,770	28,562
% UASC	3	1	1	11	7	7	10	14	9	13	9	12	10.5

6.27 Figure 11 shows Home Office data for the number of age dispute cases which arose at TH between 1 September and 30 November 2021. The data is heavily caveated on the basis of time lags between systems. The information is drawn from an operational database and “The location where the Age Dispute is raised is not recorded in a reportable format on CID”. However, the Home Office could confirm the data related to all migrant arrivals via small boat over the relevant time period.

Figure 11: Age dispute outcome by month, 1 September to 30 November 2021

Arrival month	Age dispute outcome			Grand total
	Accepted as a child	Not accepted as a child	Open age dispute	
Sep-21	61	176	45	282
Oct-21	59	181	32	272
Nov-21	75	129	56	260
TOTAL	195	486	133	814

⁴⁶ This data is drawn from the Illegal Migration Strategy Team and, for November, differs from that provided in the Home Office’s response to the ICIBI data request.

- 6.28** Figure 11 shows 133 open age disputes. The closure of an age dispute case is dependent, in record-keeping terms, on the Special Conditions flag on the CID database being “closed” and, according to the Home Office “the person’s date of birth should be updated in line with the findings”. The outcome of an age dispute case determines not only how an individual is accommodated by the Home Office (for example, referred to local authority care as a child or independent asylum accommodation as an adult), but also how their asylum claim is lodged and processed. As a result of known poor record-keeping in relation to this cohort and subsequent errors on CID, it is not possible to determine whether the numbers of open age dispute cases have in fact been resolved, nor the manner of any such resolution. However, it is of concern that 16% of young people over a three-month period have, in record form at least, not had their age dispute resolved.
- 6.29** HMIP, in two reports on Yarl’s Wood IRC (August 2021),⁴⁷ and Tug Haven, Frontier House and Kent Intake Unit (November 2021),⁴⁸ highlighted concerns about how the Home Office identified and safeguarded children, noting: poor initial risk assessments, inaccurate or incomplete IS91 detention authority forms, a lack of assurance that minors had not been wrongly age-assessed and sent to adult accommodation, and child safeguarding referrals not made when necessary. In response, in its Service Improvement Plan, the Home Office stated it was working in partnership with Mitie Care and Custody to identify appropriate safeguarding escalation processes and methods to record these to enable reporting/auditable outcomes.
- 6.30** A number of migrants arriving at TH claimed to be children during the inspectors’ onsite visit. The Home Office did not, in the main, treat them as children until assessed otherwise. For example, when they were brought into WJF ahead of their check on the Biometric Recording System, they were held with the adult male population. This is problematic not only for the effective safeguarding of children but also, as highlighted by Mitie Care and Custody staff, it means that force could be incorrectly used on a child as the officer in question is unclear of their status. Home Office and contractor staff did not take a child-centred approach to engagement – staff did not seem to notice that the lack of understanding of the process was causing some of the young people to be visibly anxious – no one reassured them or explained what would happen next. Overall engagement by Home Office and contractor staff with the young people was very limited.
- 6.31** Inspectors observed, on 2 separate occasions, the assessment of age dispute cases by Home Office staff at WJF. The guidance on assessing age states that 2 Home Office members of staff, one at least of Chief Immigration Officer or Higher Executive Officer grade, must independently conduct the assessment as to whether an individual is an adult where there is little or no supporting evidence for their claimed age and apply the principle of “the benefit of the doubt”. This means that where there is still uncertainty about whether the individual is an adult or a child, the individual should be treated as a child and referred to a local authority, with a request for a Merton compliant age assessment.⁴⁹ This would include cases where their physical appearance and demeanour does not very strongly suggest they are significantly over 25 years of age. Where 2 Home Office members of staff conduct the initial assessment, the second person must interact with the claimant – an instantaneous visual assessment of the

47 An unannounced inspection of the residential short-term holding facilities at Larne House, Manchester Airport and Yarl’s Wood by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (23–26 August 2021).

48 [Report on an unannounced inspection of the detention of migrants at Dover and Folkestone by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 8 October and 1–3 November 2021 \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](#).

49 Merton compliant age assessment: A social worker conducted age assessment which adheres to the minimum standards set out in *B v London Borough of Merton* [2003] EWHC 1689 (Admin) and further case law. This may be either a full assessment or a reduced length (abridged) assessment.

claimant is not sufficient.⁵⁰ Inspectors observed that KIU staff undertook only a very quick visual assessment to ascertain if the individuals concerned were minors; they did not speak to them beyond asking them to stand up. This did not appear to be in line with the guidance.

- 6.32** All those young people observed by inspectors, who were subsequently considered to be between 18 and 25, were later subject to a further assessment⁵¹ by a social worker at Frontier House. Where that interview with the social worker did not result in a definitive assessment of an individual's age, inspectors understood some young people were to be interviewed subsequently by a further social worker from the local authority where they were to be placed.
- 6.33** While Frontier House was outside the scope of this inspection, inspectors noted a number of observations about its operation. Mitie Care and Custody staff, charged with running Frontier House, confirmed that young people should be held at the facility for no longer than 12 hours. The young people were searched on arrival; the search area was a screened-off portion of the custody room where the staff worked and observed the holding room. The young people were held in one space and provided with snacks, soft drinks, a blanket, pillow and sometimes a mat to sleep on the floor or fixed metal seating. Despite the 12-hour timeframe, many of the previous day's arrivals from TH had yet to be interviewed at Frontier House by the afternoon of the following day.
- 6.34** Inspectors noted that a BRS machine had been brought to Frontier House to use for biometric checks. Staff noted that young people often arrived with their IS91 form incomplete, missing their name and other details, and with a poor-quality Polaroid photo attached. Staff therefore relied on the young person's wristband. Inspectors looked at care plans, which mainly listed generic activities and information on food and drink available. These had already been prepopulated on photocopied forms and were not specific to each young person's needs.
- 6.35** The ICIBI Adults at Risk report⁵² found an increase in the number of age dispute cases who had arrived via small boats and who were wrongly assessed as adults and subsequently identified as children in detention. This issue was also highlighted by staff at the Midlands Intake Unit (MIU). They raised concerns at the quality of the age assessments being undertaken at TH and the failure by frontline staff to adequately record the age dispute process, often noting a crossed-out date of birth and the insertion of a new one. There was a strong suspicion amongst some staff and stakeholders that migrants are noted as adults at TH in order "to pass the problem of minors onto someone else". One stakeholder reported particular issues with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children's (UASC) paperwork being either missing or having incorrect information on arrival at the KIU, and the children not having understood it.
- 6.36** Another stakeholder commented that, in their organisation's experience, there appeared to be a preference at the initial assessment for staff to designate a migrant as either definitely a child or definitely over 25, rather than sitting within the 'grey area' between 18 and 25 and therefore eligible for a social worker age assessment. Attention was drawn to a concerning incident in December 2021 where the stakeholder alleged that between 40 and 50 young people were assessed as adults and sent to an adult hotel, only to be taken back to the KIU, re-assessed and

50 Home Office guidance on age dispute cases changed on 14 January 2022, to considering a person as being an adult if assessed as being 'significantly over 18', rather than 'significantly over 25'. This follows a recent judgment of the Supreme Court in R (BF (Eritrea)) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2021] which found that the initial age assessment policy of treating individuals as adults, where their physical appearance and demeanour very strongly suggested that they were significantly over 18 years of age, rather than prove they were significantly over 25, was lawful.

51 A reduced length (abridged) age assessment.

52 [Second annual inspection of 'Adults at risk in immigration detention.' July 2020 – March 2021 – GOV.UK.](#)

processed as children.⁵³ Another stakeholder described a “culture of disbelief” among Home Office age assessors, with migrants returned from adult hotels to the KIU as age assessments had been missed, or they were claiming to be a child, or their date of birth had been recorded incorrectly.

- 6.37** Refugee Council research on age disputes found that, from October 2020 to September 2021, of a total of 151 young people deemed by the Home Office to be over 25 on arrival, 100 were subsequently found to be children, 6 were found to be adults, 38 were in the care of the local authority pending the conclusion of their Merton compliant age assessment, and 7 cases were still outstanding.
- 6.38** The Home Office’s ‘Joint review of processes at Tug Haven for dealing with small boat arrivals October 2021’ (the Home Office Joint Review) highlighted similar concerns to those identified by inspectors, in particular the lack of separation of minors from other migrants on arrival, minors not being prioritised within the process, and the lack of accredited interpreters available on the phone. This last issue is key to the collection of accurate biographic data on young people, which ensures their prompt identification and treatment according to their age.

Safeguarding vulnerable migrants

- 6.39** Almost all staff were keen to highlight how they might identify a vulnerable person and their understanding that vulnerability was not only a physical state, and some provided examples of where they had done so. However, a senior manager confirmed that vulnerability is not always considered at TH and so the opportunity for early intervention or referral is missed: “When it’s busy, that goes out the window. I’m not confident that we are not missing things.” Staff at all grades said the lack of focus on vulnerability is the result of the prioritisation of welfare – getting migrants warm and dry – and the pressure of numbers. This echoed comments from operational staff, who said that the identification of vulnerable migrants could not happen when it was busy. However, inspectors saw no obvious signs that this identification activity was taking place, even when it was quiet.
- 6.40** A senior manager commented that their observation of operations at TH had shown that staff were not using their common sense or their standard immigration training to identify vulnerable people. Officers’ basic training and mandatory refresher safeguarding training equips them with the skills required to identify triggers that suggest an individual requires some additional attention, although only CORT staff had received specific behavioural detection (BDO) training (useful for identifying victims/preparators of exploitation). It is axiomatic that as the Home Office increases the use of contractors, identification opportunities will decline as professional Border Force and Immigration Enforcement officers have less interaction with migrants.

⁵³ The Home Office, in its factual accuracy response, stated: “It is inaccurate that 40 to 50 young people were assessed as adults and sent to an adult hotel. Following record arrivals through small boats in November 2021, which significantly outstripped all planning assumptions and forecasts, individuals who arrived on 19 – 20 November 2021, which included claimed UASCs, who at that point had not been fully age assessed as adults, were not all moved to the KIU for their asylum registrations to be completed or to UASC hotels thereafter. Some claimed UASCs were taken directly to secure hotels, which were being used to accommodate adult asylum seekers. An initial age assessment was undertaken by a CIO at the Tug Haven on some arrivals on 19 November. Those who appeared to be younger UASCs were prioritised and taken to the KIU, and those who appeared to [be] older were taken to an adult secure hotel. Whilst, the level of support at these hotels do not replicate the support provided in UASC hotels, the Head of Safeguarding Advice and Children’s Champion attended these hotels to identify their suitability, and contracted social workers attended to offer wider levels of support for any potential young person and to undertake age assessments. An operation commenced to complete the asylum registration, including age assessments of this cohort at the KIU. Those determined to be UASC had their claims registered at the KIU and were moved into the UASC hotels, as and when space became available. No known child from this cohort currently remains in an adult hotel. All those within this cohort have also now had their asylum claims registered, either as children or adults.”

The stakeholder has subsequently confirmed to ICIBI that the young people were identified and taken to the adult hotel in November, but not returned to KIU until December.

- 6.41** Inspectors did not observe, or hear from staff, that they would proactively engage with those who were inherently vulnerable, such as single women, unaccompanied minors and mothers travelling with young children. While pressure to process migrants promptly at TH was clear, when they transferred to WJF and were waiting for their turn to have their biometrics taken, inspectors observed opportunities for engagement which were not utilised by staff. Similarly, opportunities to identify victims of exploitation or trafficking were not taken by staff, and consequently possible referrals to law enforcement agencies onsite were not made. Inspectors also observed a single male migrant sitting with families and young children for a number of hours before being identified as such and removed from the area.
- 6.42** Several stakeholders highlighted the consequences of failing to identify an individual as vulnerable, with particular reference to Vietnamese migrants. The Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC)⁵⁴ noted that between 1 May and 18 June 2021, 40 of 54 (74%) Vietnamese nationals released from detention into non-secure accommodation went missing, and a further case in June 2021, “in which over 160 Vietnamese nationals arrived via small boats on the same day and were placed in hotels across four police force areas. All of the individuals went missing within 24 hours.”
- 6.43** NGO staff echoed these findings and told inspectors that, between May and late August 2021, there had been a surge in Vietnamese migrants arriving via small boats and despite many showing trafficking indicators, none were identified as trafficking victims and all were referred for detention. Whilst in detention, they were all identified as potential victims and referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and put in contact with the NGO and released. Subsequently, all their clients – 70 in total – have now disappeared, in part because they were released into hotels with very little support. This echoed what inspectors were told onsite as part of the yet to be published inspection of contingency asylum accommodation (May 2021 – November 2021).
- 6.44** The absconding of migrants, vulnerable and otherwise, remained an issue in early 2022. Home Office data on those who absconded from secure hotels between 1 December 2021 and 10 January 2022 showed that of the 57 absconders, 7 were Vietnamese (though the data entry was so poor that this was recorded as VNM and VMN respectively). 6 absconded from the same hotel over a 4-day period and 1 had a trace against the Police National Computer/Warnings Index.
- 6.45** Interviews with Counter-Terrorism police and the Home Office’s Joint Debriefing Team indicated that there was a clear correlation between Vietnamese migrants and a risk of trafficking and exploitation, but this does not appear to act as a trigger for additional attention for this cohort by operational staff at TH. Worryingly, one organisation indicated that Vietnamese names were sometimes entered into Pronto and CID in the wrong order by staff.
- 6.46** The IASC’s letter went on to highlight concerns with the approach taken by staff at TH to the collection of biometrics, namely that when the systems became overwhelmed, these could be taken at a later stage, outside of TH. Migrants had absconded prior to these biometrics being taken, making the search for a missing person by police problematic. In a joint response, the Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration and the Minister for Safeguarding stated, “We expect to move this biometric capture to the point of arrival once new facilities are in place at Dover, so that this is completed as soon as possible following arrival in the UK.” No reference was made to improving the identification of vulnerable cohorts at TH.

⁵⁴ Letter from the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Dame Sara Thornton, to Rachel Maclean MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Safeguarding), 19 October 2021.

6.47 Operational staff were able to give examples of vulnerabilities they had come across and reported to the Bronze Commander. However, there was less confidence amongst staff on how to make a formal safeguarding referral. A National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral was considered to be an activity which took place later in the process and outside TH/WJF. The data provided, and interviews with staff, support this approach. The numbers of NRM referrals were small (as set out in Figure 12) and caveated by the Home Office’s Performance Reporting and Analysis Unit (PRAU) that “It is not possible to determine from reporting whether the NRM Referral was raised by staff at Tug Haven.”

Figure 12: NRM referrals by latest outcome, 1 September to 30 November 2021

Arrival date	Negative reasonable grounds	Positive reasonable grounds	Other	Withdrawn	No outcome	Total NRM referrals	Total migrant arrivals
Sep-21	23	75		1	6	105	4,602
Oct-21	9	37	1		6	53	2,701
Nov-21	16	85	1		12	114	6,971

Vulnerability and dispersal

6.48 Failure to consistently identify and safeguard vulnerable migrants can result in them being sent to inappropriate accommodation. ICIBI’s Second Annual Inspection of ‘Adults of Risk in Immigration Detention’ highlighted the paucity of the information provided to the Detention Gatekeeper to make decisions on whether an individual should go to an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). These were more recently echoed in the concerns of IRC teams receiving migrants, who commented “roughly one case in every other coach” have unidentified vulnerabilities and/or are unsuitable for detention. Some of those sent to the Midlands Intake Unit at Yarl’s Wood STHF had significant vulnerabilities ignored, including migrants with severe burns, wounds not covered or treated, an individual with a missing leg without a crutch, and a deaf individual who could not sign and had no method of communication without support. For those sent to hotels, the National Asylum Intake Unit (NAIU) confirmed that less obvious vulnerabilities would not be picked up until the asylum screening interview, which could take place several days after leaving TH.

Dignity and respect

6.49 Inspectors considered whether migrants were treated with dignity and respect by staff. Home Office staff were consistently calm, polite and professional in the manner in which they dealt with migrants. However, inspectors observed a limited willingness on the part of staff to engage with migrants, even when there were many staff available and relatively few migrant arrivals. One officer said she was a mental health floorwalker, but this was mainly for the benefit of staff: “Colleagues are a first priority.”

- 6.50** Many of those arriving were visibly shivering, but the marquee was warm despite the cold outside temperatures and everyone had been provided with a blanket. Stakeholders expressed concerns that migrants could be left sitting in wet, even soiled clothes for an extended period of time before being offered dry clothing, and in very busy periods when multiple boats arrive at the same time, placed directly onto coaches to await initial registration, as there was no room to accommodate them in the tent. Inspectors did not see this happen, though levels of arrivals were low.
- 6.51** Clothing provided was in the form of a sweatshirt and track suit trousers, socks and flipflops. Baby clothing, nappies and wipes were also available. Small children were not provided with footwear and were observed walking around in socks and often had to be carried by parents to avoid getting wet. Inspectors were informed that the contractor who provided clothing on behalf of the Home Office did not provide children's footwear and this was obtained by CORT staff themselves. There were also no dry hijabs or scarfs for women who chose to wear them.
- 6.52** Despite being required by the SOP, arriving migrants were not asked their name (nor was it recorded) until after their search and change of clothes, which could be over an hour after arrival. While the emphasis is rightly on identifying an individual's boat and migrant numbers and any immediate welfare and medical concerns, asking for and using a person's first name at the first point in the process would be more welcoming and would recognise them as an individual.
- 6.53** There was a lack of written information, instructions or signage to inform migrants of the process at TH and WJF and they were often not told what was to happen next. The only information displayed was laminated black and white A4 posters in 5 different languages⁵⁵ (see photo 10, Annex A, for Dari) in very small font bullet point text, placed on a dividing screen in the initial holding area on arrival. No one was observed reading these and staff did not draw migrants' attention to them. There was no other visual material about the process (or indeed where they were and who was in charge) in TH or WJF and no provision for those who could not read.
- 6.54** The TH marquee had loose and frayed floor coverings which presented a tripping hazard to staff and migrants (see photo 15, Annex A). The toilets outside had not been cleaned recently, hand towel bins were full, and soap was not available at all wash hand basins. Sanitary products were available to women at the search station but not placed in all the women's toilets. Inspectors understood from staff that western-style toilets were unfamiliar to some migrants but there was only one cubicle door with instructions on how to use the toilets, which resulted in the need for regular, in-depth cleaning, often rendering them out of use.
- 6.55** The point at which food and water was provided to migrants was not consistent. On one occasion inspectors observed bottled water only being provided after completion of the processing in TH and on another occasion food (hot rolls that were halal) was only provided on arrival in WJF. This meant that some migrants, including children, may have been without nourishment for a considerable period of time after arrival.

⁵⁵ Vietnamese, Urdu, Tigrinya, Pashto and Dari.

7. Record-keeping and data collection

Record-keeping and data collection

- 7.1** Information about migrants is recorded by staff at several points of the process at Tug Haven (TH):
- basic biographic details on the ‘scribe sheet’ at the entrance to TH and, subsequently, the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log (Log)
 - details of the migrant’s encounter and arrest on Pronto
 - the (paper) IS91 form authorising detention
 - after leaving TH, on CID (a casework database for recording all Home Office applications and managing all immigration casework) and Atlas⁵⁶ (the planned replacement for CID)
- 7.2** The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Op ALTAIR states that “Officers must record everyone on the correct visit reference for the relevant boat for evidentiary and intelligence purposes” [on the scribe sheet]... “Where there is an issue accessing Pronto, officers are required to record this manually” and staff should keep “accurate and full records”.
- 7.3** Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC) Illegal Migration Strategy Team also developed and maintained a ‘small boats master sheet’ based on daily situation reports, and which included details of French prevention and interception rates, characteristics of those arriving such as gender, family size, size of boat and weather conditions. Staff considered this document to be the pivotal information source for understanding small boats, and from which responses to Parliamentary Questions and submissions to the Home Secretary could be drawn.

Data review

- 7.4** The Log, held on SharePoint, is updated by several teams across the Home Office and incorporates the information recorded on the scribe sheet by the CORT team. Inspectors reviewed the entries made in the Log for arrivals in November 2021 and the equivalent records found in Pronto, where details of visits/encounters/arrests are recorded by staff at TH.
- 7.5** The recording and reconciliation of information across the 2 systems was poor. Inspectors found the number of arrivals recorded did not match. Inspectors also found inaccurate records within both the Log and Pronto. The Home Office’s ‘Joint review of processes at Tug Haven for dealing with small boat arrivals, report of findings’ (October 2021) echoed these findings, noting: “The review team found numerous discrepancies between the information recorded on Pronto and the information on the TH SharePoint spreadsheet.”

⁵⁶ Atlas is the new immigration case working system for the Home Office. It is a modern, sustainable digital service to replace CID.

Data entry – Log

- 7.6** Guidance on how to complete the scribe sheet (which forms the basis for data entries into the Log) states that boat numbers must be recorded in the format M01234, and each migrant should be given an additional sequential number to link them to that boat. Inspectors found that the prefix of ‘M’ was normally followed by either a zero or the letter ‘O’, but sometimes neither. The year (2021) was sometimes included in the reference number as ‘/21’ but not always.
- 7.7** Trying to reconcile records across the systems was problematic as hashtags were used in the reference number on Pronto but not on the Log, resulting in several possible permutations of the same reference number being recorded. The reference number for migrant 16 arriving on boat M01972 could be recorded on the Log or Pronto in a number of ways, such as M01972/16, MO1972/16, M1972/16, M01972/21/16, MO1972/21/16, MO1972#16, and M01972 #16.

Data entry – Pronto

- 7.8** Inspectors also requested for all migrants who arrived at Tug Haven between 1 and 30 November 2021 inclusive:
- A person file reference number (for Atlas – and CID if different)
 - Person name
 - Person date of birth
 - Person nationality
 - Arrival date (On CID – Special Conditions – Op SILLATH – Lodged Date)
 - Boat arrival reference (On CID – Special Conditions – Op SILLATH – Additional Information)
- 7.9** The records provided in response to this request merged data from Pronto with data drawn from CID from the ‘Small Boats dataset’ (those with an Op SILLATH marker – the reference to the Home Office operation on asylum claims lodged by those arriving via small boats).⁵⁷ The data included a caveat from the Performance, Reporting and Analysis Unit (PRAU) that read, “This data should not be considered complete. Due to a time lag in updated records in Pronto and CID, this data is expected to change in future as more information is recorded.” PRAU further commented that this lag “does not impact processing or operational responses at TH but does limit our ability to analyse real time trends around nationality and demographics of the most recent arrivals”.
- 7.10** The data drawn from Pronto contained a range of errors; for example, 7 records had individuals’ ages recorded as 121 and 1 record had no gender specified. The method of recording first names varied and included examples such as:
- #7 Mohammed
 - #22 M012 Mohammed
 - Migrant #6 Ali
 - as well as actual standard first names.

57 Pronto data extracted on 8/12/2021 from OAR44; CID data extracted on 10/12/2021 from Small Boats Dataset.

The same principle applied to the recording of surnames, which included examples such as:

- M021 #17 Hamid
- #27
- numbers such as '9'
- 'wristband'
- as well as actual standard last names.

In total, 968 names contain at least one of the following characters: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, '#', '/', '(', ')', '?', '_', ':', '*', 'ç', 'Ç' – one other further entry exists purely as '-'. Of these inaccurate records, 221 related to arrivals that were aged 18 or under.

- 7.11** Inspectors reviewed randomly selected records in Pronto itself and found errors between the Pronto system and the dataset provided by PRAU which drew on Pronto. A search on Pronto for all visits with the reference PE61-81 (specific to arrivals between 1 November and 30 November 2021) showed that 4 visit references had not been included in the dataset, meaning 70 migrant arrivals had been incorrectly excluded from the dataset of arrivals. Inspectors cross-referenced the missing records against those recorded in the 'small boats master sheet' (collected and managed by CCTC's Illegal Migration Strategy Team) and found these arrivals had been recorded here. In response to a query about this discrepancy, the Home Office stated, "it is likely to be [this occurred] because they were not flagged/recorded correctly on Pronto at the time of extracting the sample."
- 7.12** There were also errors in the Pronto records between the number of migrants encountered and the number of arrests. On one Pronto entry, 29 encounters were recorded but only 20 arrests were made; 10 of the encounters do not appear to have an associated arrest, yet the migrants appear to have arrived on the same vessel as individuals whose encounter has been recorded as an arrest. The Home Office responded that "CTC colleagues advise that this appears to be simple human error. The encountering officers should add the arrest to the system as part of their process but clearly have not."
- 7.13** A further interrogation of Pronto records for arrivals in November found there were only 41 cases where a vulnerability was flagged, despite there being at least 7,578 arrivals that month, and 2 of these records had no details of the vulnerability.

Data entry – CID

- 7.14** Inspectors were told that the RHIB Support Team created a CID record for each migrant arrival on the day of their arrival or shortly afterwards. Inspectors reviewed the CID/Pronto records for all those who arrived in November and found that, of the 7,578 records provided, 4,253 records did not yet have an asylum claim recorded or a CID Person ID (CID numbers). For the 3,325 records which had CID numbers, 254 of these numbers were duplicates (and 16 of these appeared 3 times). While duplicate CID numbers are not uncommon, this duplication is usually mitigated by clear differences in other elements of the case such as name, nationality, age, or type of immigration case.

Targeted file review

- 7.15** Inspectors initially sought to undertake a file sampling exercise whereby randomised files are selected for review to ascertain trends and patterns and to provide insight into 'live' Home Office activity. However, the problematic quality of the CID/Pronto data provided undermined the ability of inspectors to trace a migrant across Home Office databases. Instead, inspectors reviewed a small selection of files which represented cases of greatest risk to the Home Office, namely individuals claiming to be unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASCs) and migrants who were found to have a trace on Grabba (a fingerprint match indicating that the individual's biometric details have been captured in the past, for example when applying for a visa, applying for asylum in-country, or when encountered as an illegal entrant).
- 7.16** The Encounter Log, Pronto and CID records for 25 small boat arrivals between 1 and 30 November 2021 were reviewed: 17 records related to UASCs (one randomly selected from each day of arrivals), and 8 records were those with a Grabba trace (the total number of cases with positive traces from the whole cohort of 7,578 arrivals recorded in the data provided). Echoing observations of the datasets as a whole, the reviewed files showed inconsistent spellings of names across the 2 data sources.
- 7.17** The Op ALTAIR SOP directs that officers should record, for each migrant, on the Encounter Log: the results of a Grabba check, their COVID-19 status, language spoken, safeguarding concerns and whether the migrant has been arrested for a criminal offence. The Grabba results and COVID-19 status are deemed to be the most important information to capture. However, many of the Encounter Log records relating to Grabba checks were incomplete. On 2 days in November, no Grabba check results were recorded; and on 5 days only some of the results had been recorded.
- 7.18** There were duplicate Log records for 16 November 2021. On one version of the record, the entry for one of the migrants shows a trace for a Grabba check. On the second version of the record, the entry for the same migrant is recorded as "no trace". Both records appear to be in use. When this duplication was queried with the Home Office, and assurance sought that the migrant had been Grabba checked, inspectors were told "CID special conditions show that the migrant was a Grabba [sic] checked and trace returned against PNC." Tracing these cases through the Home Office's systems, for the 8 records where there was a Grabba trace, only 4 of the matching Pronto records had a corresponding CID record.
- 7.19** Inspectors also raised 2 cases with the Home Office where individuals had a blank entry in the Grabba trace results box on the Encounter Log and no CID record, and asked for clarity on whether the checks had been completed and where they were recorded. The Home Office indicated that one individual could be located on CID using the Port Reference number. For the other individual, the Home Office commented:

"As details may change from the initial Tughaven process through to their asylum registration, it is plausible that the CTC Sharepoint [Encounter Log] will not reflect the details of the individual who has been raised on HO systems.

The closest match we have is [name redacted by ICIBI] but they have contacted the NAIU appointments line and await an appointment to register their claim."

7.20 None of the records held on Pronto indicated that an interpreter had been used in the interaction between the migrant and the member of Home Office staff despite these being higher-risk cases. None of the UASC cases reviewed were marked as vulnerable on Pronto. Inspectors raised this issue with the Home Office and the Department responded, “Part of the minimum viable product for large numbers of arrivals does not allow for all details to be added to the various Pronto forms.” All the UASC cases which had a CID record had been flagged as unaccompanied minors or age dispute cases on CID.

Data relating to operations at Tug Haven

7.21 There were no key performance indicators available to measure operations at TH, and no other data was collected which would enable a robust assessment of staff performance or the experiences of migrants. Significantly, the total length of time spent by migrants at TH was not collected at all. The Home Office told inspectors that systems were being developed to capture performance information.

7.22 The failure to collect data on areas that would illustrate how the operation runs at TH is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it hides the areas of risk from managers; for example, the length of time that migrants are held at TH means that the Home Office cannot assure itself it is not unlawfully holding people. It also means that this operation is out of line with other places of detention in the Home Office, for example, at ports, where this information is collected. Secondly, the lack of a measure to assess performance means managers are unclear, beyond the most basic interpretation, of the success of the operation and subsequently the areas for improvement. In this context, it undermines the ability of the Home Office to effectively plan for the development of alternatives to Tug Haven, such as Manston. Thirdly, it hinders the ability of managers to identify and evidence where the blockages in the wider system are, for example illustrating the delays caused by a lack of available accommodation, and the consequences for staff hours or levels of violence amongst migrants. The lack of data about these problems reduces CCTC’s leverage to improve performance across the connecting Home Office operations. Finally, there was a lack of reflection at senior management level as to the relationship between data collection and the effective use of resources. No information was collected as to the wasted staff hours of those who were stood up to work at Tug Haven and then stood down again before commencing work.

7.23 The limited data collection on groups of high-risk migrants was also problematic for both the improvement of staff performance and for the development of intelligence. The data collected on age dispute cases could not determine the location where the age dispute had been raised, and further undermined by the time lags in the data and the lack of reconciliation between systems.⁵⁸ As a result, feedback to staff on the ground as to the accuracy of their decision-making in terms of age assessments could not be provided.

7.24 At interview, the Home Office’s view of the value of performance data was illustrated by an operational manager who commented, “Do you value what you measure or measure what you value... is security of state more important than understanding how long a migrant is in an area?” This simplistic rendering of data collection and the lack of engagement with measuring performance is emblematic of the ongoing Home Office approach to this issue.

⁵⁸ The data provided was caveated as follows: Private Vessel Encounter recorded on Pronto; Person’s CID record verified and CID Person ID added to the Pronto record; Asylum case on CID is within 2 days before or 14 days after the encounter; Person has an Op SILLATH Special Condition on CID; Person has an Age Dispute Special Condition.

Assurance

- 7.25** Interviews with staff indicated that the process for recording information about migrants was not always clear to them. Inspectors were told that a presentation was provided to staff working at TH about the importance of record-keeping, though none mentioned this at interview. Briefing documents provided to supplemental staff ahead of their deployment to TH set out the points at which information needed to be recorded but did not contain any guidance on the quality or accuracy of these records. Senior managers noted that, while the CORT team “absolutely get” the value of good data (drawn from accurate records), “relief teams, not so much”.
- 7.26** Senior managers were aware of the issues with poor quality record-keeping. The minutes from the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC) Campaign Delivery Board, dated 28 September 2021, noted that, “Pressure on the CORT team means that 63% of Tug Haven arrivals are not having a nationality recorded, this makes it difficult to assess current levels of arrivals from each country.”
- 7.27** Inspectors noted there is no reference in the SOP to the assurance of records from TH. There was also limited capacity for operational managers to provide feedback to staff about the quality of their record-keeping. For supplemental teams in particular, CCTC staff told inspectors they were not undertaking “internal policing” of colleagues. This was echoed in the Home Office’s Joint Review, which stated:
- “Very little management assurance of activity was undertaken at Tug Haven and the review team saw no evidence that any records created by Tug Haven staff were ever assured. The review team are aware that work is underway to develop a Borders & Enforcement assurance toolkit; effective management assurance checks for Tug Haven operations should be built into that new system to ensure that the operation is working effectively, and in line with guidance and to identify and mitigate any issues.”
- 7.28** However, no reference was made by staff at interview as to the development of an assurance kit or plans for management assurance checks to be developed at TH. One operational manager indicated he had commissioned a review of the processes at TH, but the parameters of this review were unclear.
- 7.29** Inspectors understood that all Gold Command calls were recorded “in case something happened and they needed to go back [to review what happened]”. However, while the Silver Command kept a record of what happened each day, including decisions and rationales, this was completed without a loggist to assist (despite the increased pressure this absence put on an already pressurised role). No assurance was conducted on this work and nor were these records used for learning and improvement.
- 7.30** Inspectors were provided with a copy of ‘Deep Dive into Incomplete Biometric Records’ (September 2021), undertaken by the Home Secretary’s Implementation Unit (HSIU). The report noted that, on the wider record-keeping landscape, “Legacy IT was developed in silos, meaning officers are required to duplicate information across multiple systems” such as CID and Atlas, and the “significant manual inputting of information creates opportunities for human error.”

7.31 The HSIU Deep Dive matched data between case files and records on the Immigration and Asylum Biometrics System (IABS) and concluded that ‘Biometric information gaps are occurring and creating issues, however the level of risk is uncertain.’ The report identified 4 “drivers” for the gaps in information, which resonate with inspectors’ observations at TH and WJF and their review of files:

- “Driver 1: There is insufficient accountability for performance on biometric enrolment, and inadequate reporting or data available to seniors at a cross-system or local level
- Driver 2: IT and technology systems are disjointed and do not fully mitigate against human error
- Driver 3: Officers may miss the opportunity to capture biometrics at first engagement, creating a resource burden on the department to capture them retrospectively
- Driver 4: Inconsistent approaches are taken for assuring biometric enrolments and training staff”

7.32 The report made 12 recommendations focused on improving guidance for staff, bringing greater consistency across operations, and increasing quality assurance and oversight; the majority were to be implemented within 6 months. This work was under way at the time of the inspection.

Data reconciliation

7.33 Unlike the rest of the Home Office, where data is collected and assured by the PRAU, CCTC undertakes this role in-house and the ‘small boats master sheet’ was not subject to review by PRAU. Inspectors were told that a small team had developed a range of products primarily concerned with arrival numbers, arrivals prevented, the use of intelligence and for the purposes of forecasting. This team also sought to reconcile arrival figures retrospectively, beginning the day after the arrival. However, while this spreadsheet provided information on the numbers of arrivals, some information which contained greater detail about the characteristics of these numbers was drawn subsequently from PRAU, based on an interrogation of CID using the Op SILLATH marker, denoting asylum claims from small boats arrivals.

7.34 The Illegal Migration Strategy Team did not have oversight or involvement in the recording of information on the frontline. Staff were confident about the data quality of the ‘small boats master sheet’ but acknowledged variations between this document and the corresponding PRAU data. Inspectors were told that for quarter 3 (2021), this variance was 7% but was likely to increase in quarter 4 (2021) as a result of the sharp increase in numbers in November, the poor data entry by staff on the ground, conflicting CID Personal ID numbers, and staff absences and departures.

7.35 In response to a broader concern about the data held on CID and Pronto, a data cleanse team had been recruited. A document setting out the ‘bid’ for this resource noted:

“On the small boat cases there is need for the PID documents to be both on CID and Pronto and for the SILLATH [denoting a small boat arrival] flag to be checked. Without this PRAU cannot identify or progress the cases. As of the 15/10/2021 there are approximately 12,000 cases to update.”

7.36 Three staff, it predicted, would be able to cleanse 2,300 records per week, with a processing time of 5 to 6 weeks. Additional evidence from the Home Office showed that, in fact, the team (comprising between 1 and 4 staff members at varying times), were required to deal with over 16,000 cases. It appears that this exercise was not able to complete the task in the allotted time:

“...by the end of December some 3,500 CID PIDs were still missing (mostly from November – outside of scope) and further work is being completed to reconcile Q4.”

Agency staff were also appointed temporarily to cover Home Office staff who were redirected towards other priorities.

7.37 It was unclear to Home Office managers and inspectors where permanent responsibility would lie for reviewing and cleansing the records – for example, in deleting duplicate files – and which team had the capacity to undertake this work.

7.38 Inspectors noted significant disparities in the data on migrant arrivals returned by PRAU and CCTC for the same time period. As an example, PRAU data only contained information on arrivals to 27 December 2021, while CCTC’s data ran to 10 January 2022. More broadly, it was clear that there is little to no systematic reconciliation of migrant arrivals figures between the Encounter Log, Pronto and CID, and the small boats master sheet. Managers could not assure inspectors that there was one, accurate and authoritative, set of figures relating to arrivals at Tug Haven or any consistent and robust process to reconcile the conflicting data. After 2 years of operation, inspectors would expect this basic level of accurate reporting to be in place.

8. Resourcing

Staff welfare

- 8.1** Inspectors, through interviews and observations, onsite and virtually, found a workforce which had been operating under significant pressure for some time. Acknowledging these pressures, staff welfare featured in the strategic aims of Op ALTAIR and was included in the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC) risk register. Concerns about staff wellbeing and welfare were also highlighted by multiple stakeholders, who told inspectors that while there had been some improvement in the Home Office’s response to these issues, it remained a concern for staff.
- 8.2** A manager told inspectors that a “wellbeing offer” had been developed for staff (CORT and supplemental), with welfare plans tailored to respective stand-up levels. Take-up of these welfare resources is monitored by the wellbeing lead, primarily to ensure that follow-up actions and care plans are supported. While senior managers were positive about this recent focus on welfare, operational managers commented: “all staff really want is to be listened to and know something is being done, and if not, why not.” Some operational staff indicated they had benefited from speaking to Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)⁵⁹ counsellors and the Employee Assistance Scheme, which gives impartial, confidential support to staff. One commented, however, that:
- “Psych support came down at our busiest period. It wouldn’t have sat well with me to go off to Dover Marina Hotel to see them. It would impact the team. My priority would be to support my colleagues. Been times when so exhausted and waterworks will flow. Normally I’m robust...”
- 8.3** Discussions with staff revealed that burnout was a real concern and highlighted the extreme levels of stress staff were operating under, particularly in November and December 2021. One manager commented, “I think we’ve all got staff burnout.” To illustrate the levels of pressure, on the busiest day for arrivals in November with 1,250 migrants, there were only 120 staff onsite of the 235 staff required by the stand-up level.
- 8.4** Operational staff described a strong “esprit de corps” and sense of comradeship. However, they also commented that they often worked additional hours so that their colleagues were not left short-staffed. This was supported by observations from CCTC managers, who commented: “The cohesiveness of the CORT [Clandestine Operational Response Team] is outstanding; they work 16/17 hours flat out.” Inspectors noted from interviews with staff that regular reference was made to stress, work pressures, and unpredictable working conditions. One commented:
- “CORT staff don’t ever know when they are going home. Everything starts and ends with us. If we have people overnight, we don’t have enough resource to cover the night shifts, then we just have to stay. That is now expected of us.”

⁵⁹ A trauma-focused peer support system designed to help assist in the management of staff who have experienced a traumatic, or potentially traumatic, event.

- 8.5** A senior operational manager indicated that, following a letter from the Health and Safety Executive highlighting concerns around staff welfare, a monitoring exercise had been undertaken to look at the number of hours worked by staff. CCTC’s risk register references this weekly review, conducted by Grade 7 managers and which includes identifying “staff going into the red on hours worked and clear plans to revert to Amber/Green status”. Staff on the ground did not mention either this monitoring exercise or any changes implemented as a result of its findings.
- 8.6** A contributing factor to the wellbeing of staff was the perceived absence of senior managers in and around the TH site, although one senior manager said he was trying to address this. There was a further sense of division between the frontline CORT officers and the non-operational CCTC staff. Perceptions, from operational staff, about the appropriateness of the division of resources between these 2 teams, grades and the quality of operational delivery, all played a role in a sense of schism between the 2 parts of CCTC. One staff member said, “CORT managers implement changes without asking the operational CORT staff about what is achievable.”

Security of staff

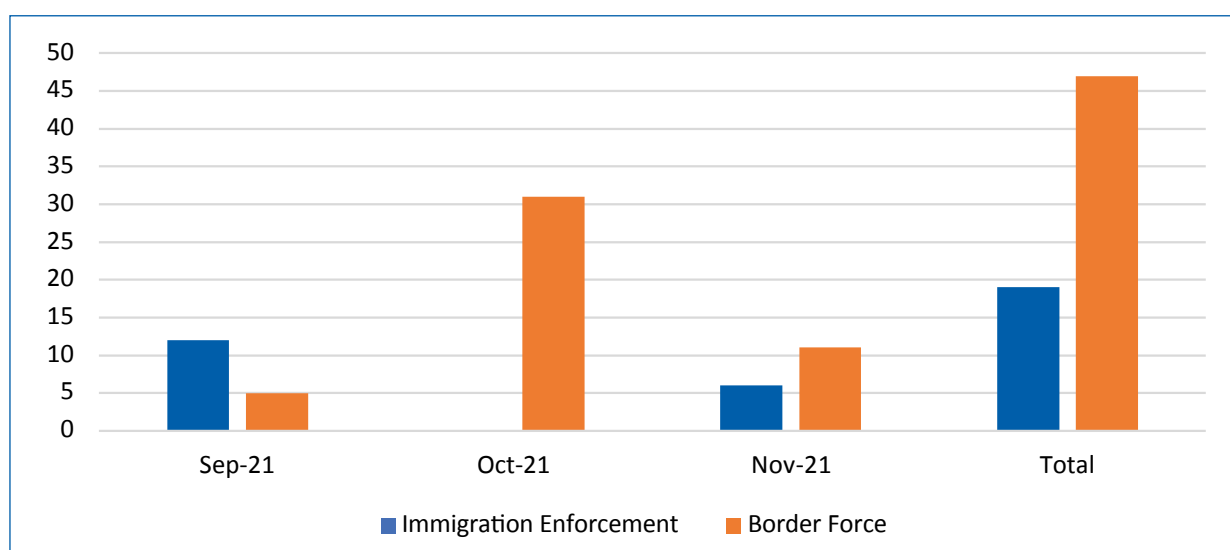
- 8.7** Concerns about the security of staff at TH and Western Jet Foil (WJF) were raised by staff and stakeholders, though this was considered more of an issue for those escorting migrants who had landed on beaches and who were not searched prior to getting on transport. Stakeholders also drew attention to the security of female staff, particularly around large numbers of male migrants, when the marquee at TH was very crowded. Where blockages in the system meant that migrants were held for longer periods and in crowded conditions, staff reported rising tensions and the need to de-escalate fights between migrants. Not all officers were issued with radios and this was considered problematic in terms of the personal safety of staff and migrants.
- 8.8** Home Office records show force was used 19 times by Immigration Enforcement and 47 times by Border Force between 1 September and 30 November 2021. However, figures relating to the use of force by security contractors were not included in this data and could not be provided by the Home Office.⁶⁰ The data shows that the highest number of incidents happened in October, rather than November when migrant numbers peaked significantly. The response to a request for the equivalent data for 1 December to 10 January was a nil return. Figures 13 and 14 show the number of use of force incidents by the Home Office team responsible.

⁶⁰ In contrast, security staff on the ground told inspectors that there had been a recent use of force incident by security contractors and a weekly report on its use was collected and shared with the Home Office.

Figure 13: Use of force incidents and volumes of Border Force and Immigration Enforcement onsite, 1 September to 30 November 2021

Month	Total incidents	Immigration Enforcement incidents	Immigration Enforcement staff onsite	Border Force incidents	Border Force staff onsite
September 2021	17	12	1,697	5	876
October 2021	31	0	1,278	31	687
November 2021	17	6	2,259	11	1,781
TOTAL	66	19	5,234	47	3,344

Figure 14: Use of force by Border Force and Immigration Enforcement, September to November 2021



8.9 It is difficult to develop an accurate understanding of the use of force at TH, partly because 2 separate parts of the Home Office, governed by their own policies and procedures, are operating in this location and there is no unifying guidance on the use of force set out in the Op ALTAIR Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

Resourcing and forecasting

8.10 The Home Office outlined, via a position statement, some of the resourcing challenges posed by migrant arrivals, noting the need to draw support for core CCTC staff from Immigration Enforcement and Border Force as well as the use of security contractors, to meet the increasing volume of migrants being processed at TH. CCTC specifically acknowledged this resourcing risk on the risk register, provided to inspectors during the inspection (dated 10 November 2021). Some of the mitigating actions, such as the development of a Short-Term Holding Facility at Western Jet Foil, had yet to be realised, while others, such as acquiring 30 Security Industry Authority (SIA) trained Mitie staff, had recently been put in place at the time of the inspection.

- 8.11** This inspection did not consider how the Home Office undertook the forecasting of the number of migrants arriving via small boats. Inspectors were told during interviews with senior managers that substantial work had been undertaken to improve this forecasting and that the monthly forecasting of arrival numbers had been, until mid to late 2021, within 2% of the actual number who arrived. However, the risk appetite for the criminal gangs operating the route, and the migrants themselves, had begun to change, with more crossings attempted in previously marginal conditions – higher waves, stronger winds and the use of larger boats – which saw an unexpected spike in migrant numbers in August and November. At the time of the inspection, senior managers were grappling with this change of approach and the impact it subsequently had on resources and processes.
- 8.12** To predict the level of migrants who might arrive and ensure there were available resources, the Home Office also undertook shorter-term forecasting. This forecasting was based on a range of sources, including tailored information from the Met Office, French intelligence on activity on the French coast and the number of boats launched, supported later by information from Border Force undertaking interceptions at sea. The accuracy of this activity and its interplay with the setting of staff stand-up levels was challenging, although a senior manager told inspectors that recent modelling on the predicted number of migrants to arrive around the Christmas period had been accurate.

Stand-up staff – levels

- 8.13** The level of anticipated migrants arriving dictates the numbers of staff required onsite at TH and WJF. These staff are drawn from CORT and the supplemental teams, and the respective requirements are set out in Figure 15. Senior managers told inspectors that there were plans to bring greater rigour to the forecasting of staff requirements and referenced reducing the stand-up levels from 5 to 3 and the launch of a review of the process.

Figure 15: Correlation between migrant arrival numbers and staffing levels (as at 15 December 2021)

Stand-up level	Expected number of migrants	Resource requirement
5	Up to 50	No additional resource required – CORT and Border Force General Aviation/General Maritime (GAGM)
4	Under 125	Total headcount is 58, with 14 from CORT, 26 from IE and 18 from BF. Standard night cover, with a small early staff between off nights and 09:00 and a day shift that will see up to 38 people working onsite through the main part of the day.
3	125 to 175	Total headcount is 104, with 14 from CORT, 60 from IE and 30 from BF. Standard night cover, with a small early staff between off nights and 09:00 and a day shift that will see 75 people working onsite through the main part of the day.
2	175 to 400	Total headcount is 145, with 14 from CORT, 76 from IE and 55 from BF. Essentially, it is the same balance of numbers as Level 3, but with 16 IE Surge (6 of whom are CFI) and a further 25 BF. This level will see a return to the current Night/Early/Late pattern.
1	400+	Level 2 stand-up plus 45 additional surge each from BF and IE. Total headcount is 235 and follows the current Night/Early/Late pattern.

8.14 Inspectors observed that, where the number of migrants arriving was under that anticipated (and reflected in the stand-up level), supplemental staff were often stood down, either on their way to TH or shortly after arrival. Inspectors spoke to staff who expressed their frustration at these wasted journeys and the impact this had on their daily activities, which had been cancelled in light of the call to TH. Data provided for 1 September 2021 to 10 January 2022 showed that on 23 of the 132 days provided, the stand-up level was significantly changed and staff were no longer required to work. However, the data was caveated by the statement that “information on resources retained, used on the day and or stood down by CORT (i.e. not stood down) is not held. Information in the Excel sheet is included to indicate whether Op ALTAIR as a whole was stood down on the day.”

8.15 Inspectors reviewed 2 sources of evidence that contained data for the months of September, October and November 2021 relating to weather predictions, anticipated staffing demand and the numbers of migrants that actually arrived. For the 91-day period for which evidence was analysed, the 2 evidence sources agreed on the Op ALTAIR level for 84 of those days. Of those 84 days, the anticipated staffing demand (as set by the Op ALTAIR level):

- Matched actual migrant arrival needs on 36 occasions (42.9%)
- Exceeded actual migrant arrival needs on 43 occasions (51.2%)
- Underestimated the actual migrant arrival needs on 5 occasions (5.9%)

These figures indicate that the forecasting methodology that was being used to set anticipated staffing demand resulted in inaccurate predictions on over 57% of occasions for which reliable data was analysed. The majority of these inaccurate forecasts lead to an excessive stand-up level of staffing being set. The consequences of this were the inefficient use of resources and needless disruption to plans and activities of units providing the supplemental staff.

- 8.16** The Home Office’s position statement stated that CCTC could, where staffing levels were at risk of being below required levels, call a ‘critical incident’ to increase the priority of the response across the Home Office. However, while this would result in the provision of additional resources, this status required a formal debrief process at the end of the operation, which operational staff considered created an additional, unnecessary burden for them. One operational manager also told inspectors that there can be resistance by Gold Commanders to calling a critical incident as they did not see the value of the declaration. For the manager, however, calling a critical incident functioned as a method of illustrating concerns about staffing numbers, health and safety issues, working hours directives and vulnerabilities.
- 8.17** Inspectors asked senior managers about the impact of standing down staff provided by other parts of the Home Office. There was an acknowledgement of the reputational risk where this happened and a potential impact on the willingness of teams to supply resources in the future. However, overall, CCTC managers said that other operational commands were aware of the priority of the small boats’ response (both operationally and from the Home Secretary), and the difficulties in predicting numbers. The Operational SCS indicated that this was also facilitated by relationships built on trust and honesty, and by attempts to improve the current forecasting.

Stand-up staff – skills deployment

- 8.18** A key challenge highlighted by operational staff centred on the skillset of the supplemental staff sent to assist CORT staff. Inspectors were frequently told that the approach of “bodies over skills”, meaning that those sent to TH may not be arrest trained or have access to Pronto, which limited where they could be deployed, and therefore did not always reduce the pressure on the CORT staff. The deployment and instruction of these staff rested with the Bronze Commanders, but pre-planning was problematic as only the numbers, not the skills, of staff were provided ahead of their arrival. While the team from which these staff were pulled was provided, not all of the same teams had the same training, skills or equipment. There were also disparities between the hours that these staff were able to work, contractually, and what was required onsite.
- 8.19** The Home Office provided ‘relevant’ guidance documents for TH/WJF, specifically the SOP, SharePoint guidance, and the ‘Safe systems of work’ (‘SSOW’) for Tug Haven. A further ‘Op ALTAIR briefing document’ was supplied, said to be updated ahead of anticipated migrant arrivals and circulated to supplemental officers. Embedded in this was an ‘Op ALTAIR Joining Instructions’ presentation dated 4 March 2021. Although it gives an overview of the process and functions, it caveats that the “situation at Tug Haven is very dynamic and officers can expect a need to rapidly change their attention between tasks”.

8.20 Supplemental officers told inspectors onsite that they received the risk assessment and SSOW via email, but not information on up-to-date processes; and gave the example that they had not received a briefing before manning the search area, and the layout and process had changed since they had last been at TH/WJF. Communications were often described as poor, particularly by teams who were not CORT staff. Staff said they would benefit from a 'meet and greet' on arrival or a debriefing folder (similar to that found at the Primary Control Point at an airport) to detail any changes, as the Bronze officer was not always visible to staff.

Security contractors

- 8.21** As noted in CCTC's risk register, some of the staffing risks had been alleviated by an increase in the number of security contractors. At the time of the inspectors' visit to TH, there were 4 different security companies working onsite. Not all of them had branded clothing so it was not always clear which company an individual worked for. Security contractor staff themselves commented on the potential for confusion when the Home Office designated CORT staff as team leaders by using a blue tabard with 'Team Leader' on the back, which was the same colour as one of the company's uniforms. Inspectors saw this first-hand when asked by a member of supplemental staff if the person, actually a security contractor, was the Bronze Commander.
- 8.22** Security contractor staff told inspectors that they viewed their role as primarily welfare focused, and to relieve the pressure on immigration staff. Their duties included distributing food and drinks, providing static guarding and accompanying migrants on coaches. Some contractors are Personal Safety Trained (PST) and those that were told inspectors they had used force on occasion, though no data on this use was available from the Home Office. A CORT manager described them as "a really good resource" and working relationships between security contractors and Home Office staff appeared cordial and professional.
- 8.23** Senior Home Office managers considered that the ability of contractor staff to identify vulnerable migrants was limited as "they can guard and escort but you need our staff, IOs that are well trained and experienced enough to deal with this side, have the wherewithal to look at behaviour...". However, inspectors noted that the guarding of migrants required, for the most part, sitting and observing them, providing an opportunity to identify individuals who may warrant extra attention and could direct immigration staff accordingly.
- 8.24** Stakeholders raised concerns about the poor level of security at TH/WJF, something which inspectors experienced when visiting the site. Although inspectors were required to sign into TH each morning, their Home Office passes were not checked on entry on the first day and there did not appear to be a system of issuing visitor passes to the site. Staff could walk in and out of TH throughout the day after signing in and were not asked to show ID passes. Security at WJF was tighter, as guards were required to open gates to allow entry and exit, and inspectors were always asked to show ID passes.
- 8.25** While contractors commented that they had been provided suitable training for the use of force, and carried handcuffs, they told inspectors that their preference was to de-escalate situations verbally. On several occasions, however, inspectors heard security staff speaking aggressively to migrants, and on one occasion shouting instructions at them. It was not clear if anyone from the Home Office had onsite responsibility or oversight of these security contractors, although a site manager from one of the security contractors was present at all times.

Blockages in the system

8.26 The effective processing of migrants at TH and WJF is reliant, in part, on the sufficient availability of accommodation either in Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) or secure hotels, and then further space in accommodation specifically used by the Home Office to house asylum seekers. At the time of the inspection, these had been under competing pressures: the detained estate as the result of an increased focus on removals and returns for immigration offenders; and the asylum estate, as the result of increasing small boat migrants, delays in asylum decision-making, the bottleneck in contingency and initial accommodation caused by COVID-19 restrictions, and the demand created following the UK's withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Home Office's position statement highlighted improvements to the management of this capacity:

“through closer planning and day to day management working with Asylum & Protection (A&P), Detention and Escorting Services (DES) and the National Asylum Accommodation Unit (NAAU) additional accommodation has been brought online and we have improved the efficiency of hand-off processes.”

8.27 Inspectors heard, and observed, the challenges faced by staff seeking to move migrants on from WJF. Firstly, staff highlighted the lack of consistently available accommodation matched to the numbers of those being processed at TH, meant migrants are spending unnecessary time at TH and WJF. Inspectors were told by staff and stakeholders of some very lengthy stays at WJF (up to 4 days). Secondly, the mismatch between the 24-hour operation at TH and the working hours (weekday and standard hours only) of those able to access the required accommodation, in the detained estate and asylum accommodation, was particularly problematic. Thirdly, these issues created delays in the dispersal of migrants from TH and meant that the coach drivers charged with taking migrants to their accommodation often ran out of driving hours.

8.28 One manager summarised these experiences in relation to detention and said:

“On the first Silver call at 8am we may have migrants ready to leave but detention don't seem to be able to get a picture on bed availability until 09:30. Then [we are] facing coach driver hours wasted, escorting provision being wasted. Comes down to the fact they have a Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 set-up in response to a 24/7 operational response.”

8.29 The cumulative effect of this issue was summarised by an operational manager who commented, “It [TH/WJF] then goes from a processing site to a holding site,” with consequences for the safety and security of the site, staff and migrants. The site is not designed to hold migrants for extended periods, with only wooden benches and thin blankets available, a small number of toilets and, until relatively recently, a limited ability to provide hot food. Staff expressed their frustration when migrants were held onsite, commenting on the personal impact of working longer hours and the impact on the security of the site, with increased tensions and potential violence between migrants or against staff.

Annex A: Migrant photo journey

1. Tug crossing arrival point



2. Linkspan bridge



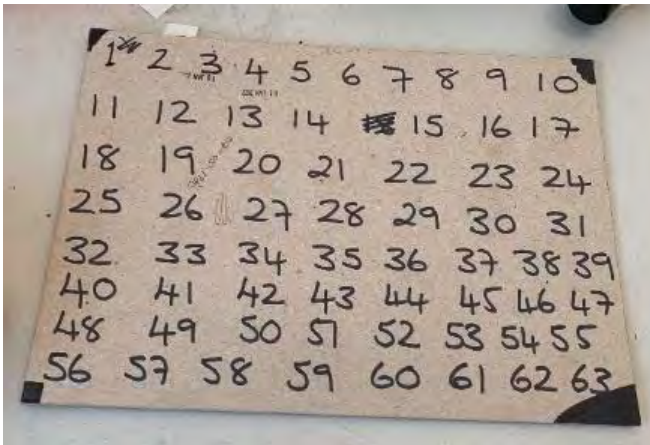
3. Tug Haven entrance



4. Tug Haven front door and arrest/triage



5. Numbers card for migrant's age in English



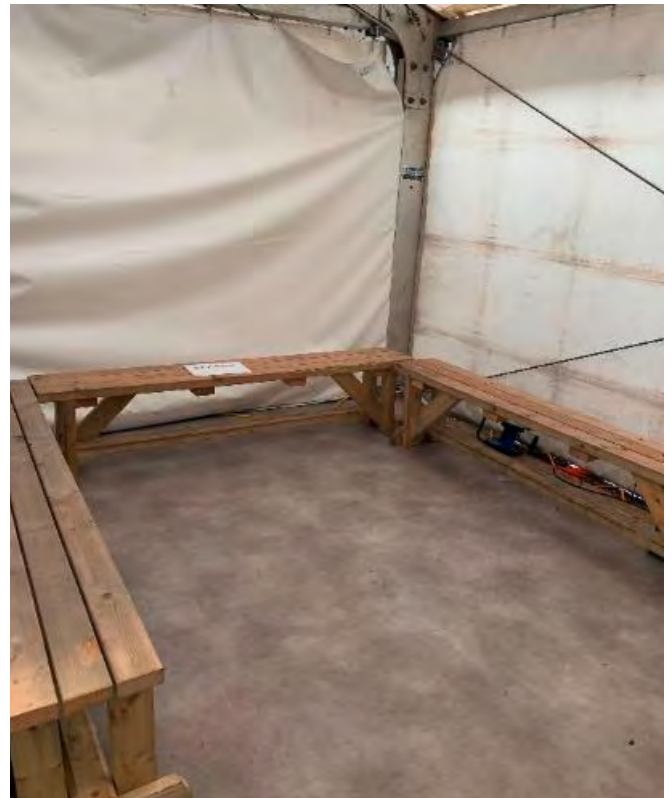
6. Where are you from? Translation card



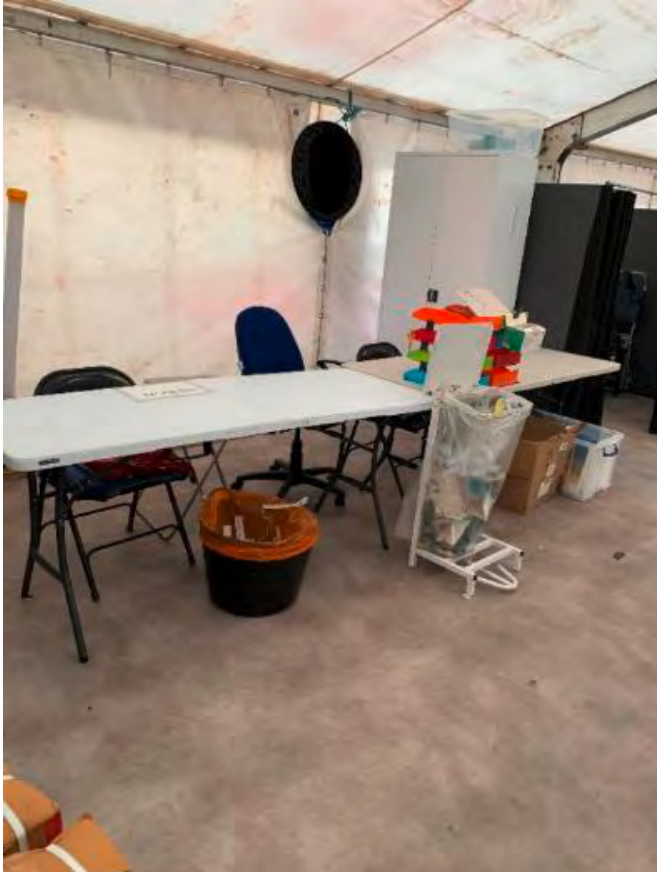
7. Initial holding area 1



8. Vulnerability area



9. Medical check and lateral flow test area



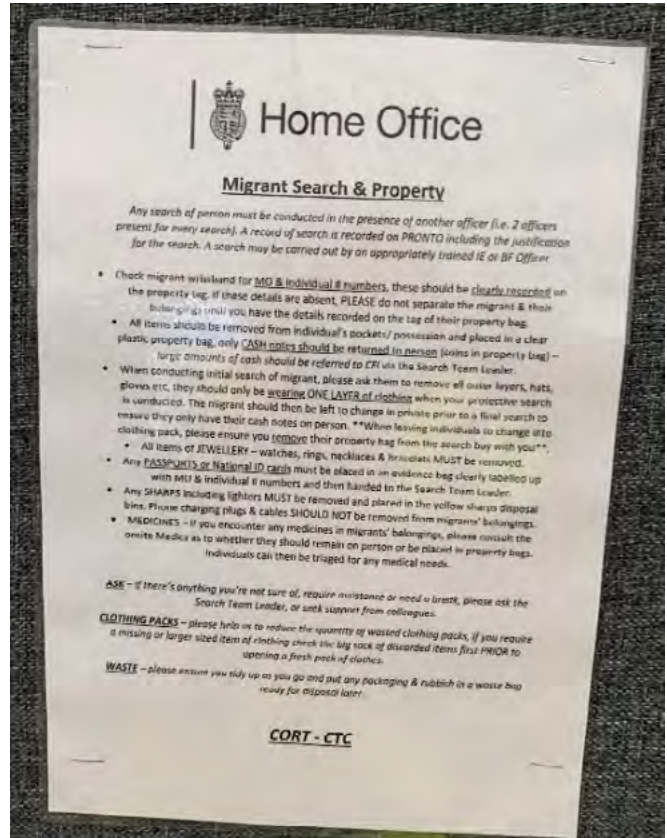
10. Translated poster (Dari example)



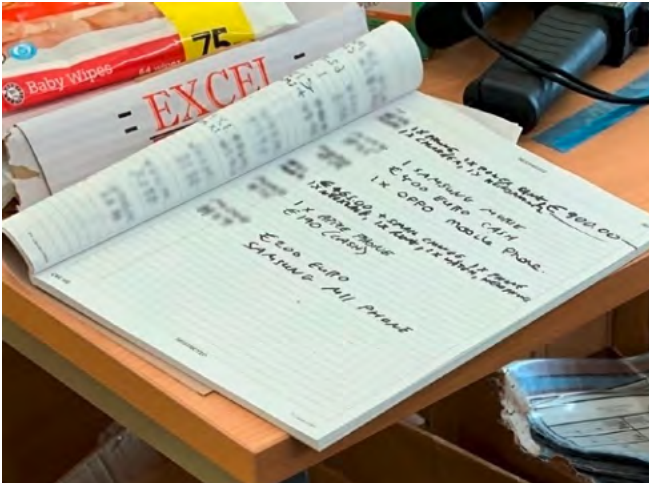
11. Search and changing area



12. Migrant search and property guidance



13. Search logbook



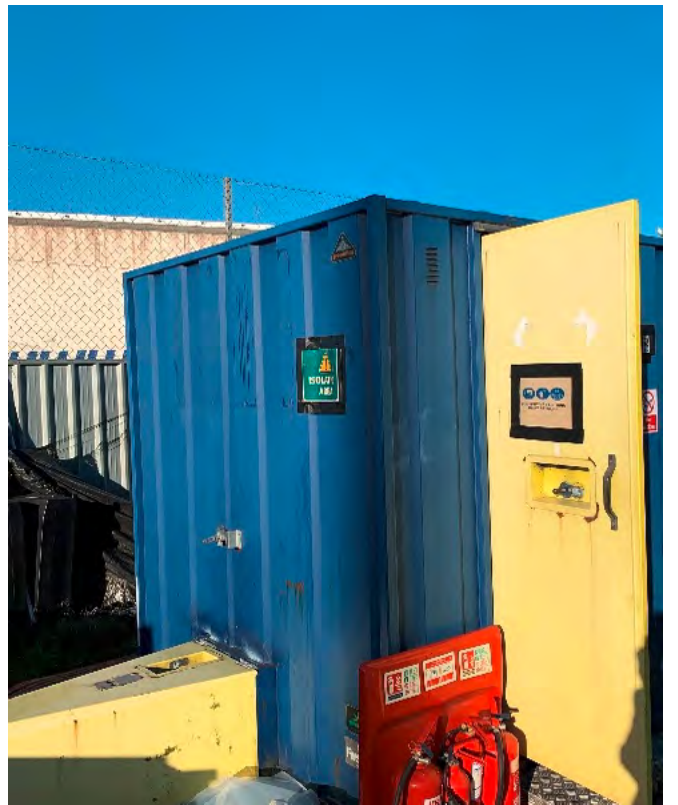
14. Holding area 2



15. Loose/damaged floor covering in TH



16. COVID-19 isolation container



17. Tug Haven exit



18. Western Jet Foil entrance



19. Western Jet Foil building



20. Migrants' belongings outside WJF



21. Open bags of migrants' belongings (1)



22. Open bags of migrants' belongings (2)



23. WJF entrance and initial holding area



24. WJF Pronto checks area



25. Grabba device



26. Biometric Recording Station



27. Marquee in red car park – external



28. Marquee in red car park – internal



Annex B: Summary of records created and maintained during the migrant journey

Record	Migrant wristband	CORT only scribe sheet	IS91	Op ALTAIR Encounter Log	Pronto	CID/ATLAS	Small boats master spreadsheet
What	A wristband to be worn by migrants.	A local Clandestine Operational Response Team (CORT) Excel spreadsheet replacing what was previously completed by pen and paper – it feeds into the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log.	A paper document, giving authority to detain under the Immigration Act 1971.	A central Excel SharePoint spreadsheet accessible by, and with separate tabs for, all Home Office business areas involved in the small boat migrant journey.	An Immigration Enforcement (IE) event recording system. Records are created for all individuals ‘encountered’ and ‘arrested’.	Creation of the person record on the Home Office immigration databases.	An Excel spreadsheet held on SharePoint.
When	Prior to entry to Tug Haven (TH), either at sea or once landed.	On arrival at TH, some detail can be pre-populated in advance when boat arrival details are known.	On reception at TH.	CORT data should be input before a migrant leaves TH. Guidance states a migrant cannot be moved until the Grabba check is completed.	Input after arrest and search, once migrant is in the ‘processing’ section of TH/WJF.	As soon as bulk lists are uploaded by CORT.	The day after arrival, reconciling information extracted from the SitReps.
Who by	Border Force	CORT officers, CCTC (IE)	IE	3 tabs completed by ‘CORT only’: ‘scribe sheet’, ‘search record’ and ‘transport and movement’	CORT/ Immigration Enforcement officers	NAIU RHIB support, UKVI	Illegal migration strategy team, CCTC

Record	Migrant wristband	CORT only scribe sheet	IS91	Op ALTAIR Encounter Log	Pronto	CID/ATLAS	Small boats master spreadsheet
Detail captured	Boat and migrant number, for example M1234 #3.	Boat number, date/ time of arrival, wristband colour, migrant number, arresting officer, searching officer, authorising officer, seized items, name, gender, age, nationality, family group, UASC, Single Adult Males (SAM) or Single Adult Females (SAF).		Scribe sheet: As per 'CORT only scribe sheet.' Search record: Grabba result, COVID-19 result, medical conditions and safeguarding concerns. Transport and movement: Bulk list group, location moved to and coach registration.	Identification number from wristband, age, nationality, family unit details, medical issues "once reasonably practicable". Arrest: grounds for arrest, event reference, migrant number and time of arrest.	Personal biographic details. Flagged with an Op SILLATH marker, and small boat arrival details.	No identifying details of individual migrants. Data is statistical about small boat event, including number of boats, migrant numbers, gender, nationality.
Onward use	To enable the identification of an arrival by the boat they were in at the point of interception.	Copied onto the Op ALTAIR Encounter Log when completed by other business areas.	Must be served on the detaining agent (e.g. police officer or escort contractor) by the immigration officer to allow the individual to be detained.	Once CORT update the transport and movement tab, it is used by RHIB Support Team, DEPMU, NAIU, KIU, MIU.	Real-time reconciliation by TH Admin Bronze of Op ALTAIR Encounter Log, Pronto and IS91 [CORT CIOs].	Processing of casework. Data reporting to the public.	Reporting to the Home Secretary and ministers.

Annex C: Dave Neal to Charlie Taylor – KIU and Tug Haven visit

Charlie Taylor
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
3rd floor, 10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London E14 4PU



28 September 2021

Dear Charlie,

Kent Intake Unit and Tug Haven visit

As part of my continuing programme of familiarisation visits, I visited the Kent Intake Unit (KIU) and Tug Haven facilities in Dover on Thursday 23rd September 2021.

I was particularly disturbed to see the conditions in the holding room of the Short-Term Holding Facility (STHF) at the KIU. This is outside of my responsibility detailed in the UK Borders Act 2007 and is the responsibility of Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons as outlined in Section 5 of the Prisons Act 1952.

The STHF was holding 40 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), of which 18 were in the holding room, in conditions that I judge to be unsanitary and squalid. Toilet facilities were dirty, with overflowing sanitary bins and water on the floor. There were half eaten meals and open packets of dates next to where the children were sleeping. In the few gaps between sleeping children, blankets and kip mats, there was litter. I was assured by Home Office staff that the contractor had a regular cleaning regime, but the conditions I saw were unacceptable.

From my service in the Royal Military Police, I have significant experience of visiting detention facilities overseas, and I have never visited a detention facility in such a poor state. The fact that this facility contained UASC aggravates the situation even further.

If this was within my inspection remit, I would be taking action as a matter of urgency.

I have copied this letter to the Home Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

David Neal
Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

Annex D: Glossary

Term	Description
A	
Asylum	Protection given by a country, pursuant to the Refugee Convention of 1951, to someone with a well-founded fear of persecution in their home country
Asylum and Protection (A&P)	Part of the Home Office responsible for considering asylum and other protection claims. It is made up of 2 business areas: Immigration and Protection, and Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration.
Atlas	New Immigration case working system for the Home Office currently being rolled out
B	
Border Force (BF)	Law enforcement command within the Home Office carrying out customs and immigration controls for people and goods entering the UK
Borders, Immigration & Citizenship System (BICS)	Overarching term for UK Visa and Immigration, Immigration Enforcement, Border Force, HM Passport Office and BICS Policy and International
Bronze Command	Operational staff member at Chief Immigration Officer (CIO), Home Office Higher Executive Officer (HEO) grade level within the Clandestine Channel Threat Command
BRS	Biometric Recording System
C	
Casework	The Home Office term for the decision-making process used to resolve applications (for example, applications for asylum or British citizenship)
CCTC	Clandestine Channel Threat Command
CFI	Criminal and Financial Investigations
CID	Case Information Database – Home Office database with case details of all foreign nationals with whom the Home Office has come into contact, either through applications or enforcement
CIO	Chief Immigration Officer – management grade above Immigration Officer, equivalent to Higher Executive Officer (HEO)
CORT	Clandestine Operational Response Team, part of CCTC

Term	Description
D	
DEPMU	Detention and Estates Population Management Unit
DGK	Detention Gate Keeper – Immigration Enforcement team who makes detention decisions – they assess the particulars of a case to ensure that any detention is lawful, appropriate and that it meets the Department’s strategic objectives
DR	Detention Review
E	
EURODAC	EU asylum fingerprint database
F	
Factual Accuracy	Formal stage of Home Office/ICIBI protocol. “The ICI will: Provide a draft of the inspection report to the relevant Director(s) General for the purpose of factual accuracy checking within four weeks of presenting the emerging findings or for re-inspections within four weeks of the onsite phase concluding.”
Frontier House	Immigration compliance and enforcement building located in Folkestone, Kent
G	
Gold Command	Senior operational staff member of the Clandestine Channel Threat Command with responsibility for coordinating small boat activities
Grabba	Home Office fingerprint scanning device
H	
HMIP	Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons
I	
IABS	Immigration & Asylum Biometric System
ICIBI	Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
ID	Identity
IDENT1	Police fingerprint database
Immigration Enforcement (IE)	Immigration Enforcement – UK law enforcement agency responsible for preventing abuse, tracking immigration offenders and increasing compliance with immigration law
INK	Identity Not Known – civilian police fingerprint scanning equipment
IO	Immigration Officer – Home Office employee, Executive Officer (EO) grade – superior to Assistant Immigration Officer, and subordinate to Chief Immigration Officer
IRC	Immigration Removal Centre
IS201	Bail IS201 form – (Notification of Grant/Variation of Immigration Bail form)
IS91	Form IS91 is a legal document, giving authority to detain

Term	Description
J	
JCR	Joint Control Room
JDT	Joint Debriefing Team
K	
KIU	Kent Intake Unit – asylum processing centre in Dover
M	
Medevent	A contractor providing COVID-19 testing and paramedic-level medical care for migrant arrivals and staff
Mitie Care and Custody	A provider of immigration removal centre management and operations and secure escorting services
MIU	Midlands Intake Unit – asylum processing centre
N	
NAAU	National Asylum Accommodation Unit
NAIU	National Asylum Intake Unit
NCA	National Crime Agency
NRM	National Referrals Mechanism – framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support
O	
OAD	Operational Assurance Directorate – provides objective second line assurance of Border Force operational activity through development and management of standards, and an assurance and testing regime
Operation ALTAIR	Operational response to small boat migrant arrivals
P	
PCP	Primary Control Point – point at immigration control where passengers present their travel documents (typically passports) to Immigration Officers, for determination as to whether entry should be granted to the UK
PNC	Police National Computer
PRAU	Performance Reporting Analysis Unit – Home Office team that lead on reporting and analysis of performance for internal and external publication for the department
Pronto	Police and reporting notebook organiser – database used by Immigration Enforcement to record details of visits and manage casework in relation to enforcement visits and immigration offenders
PST	Personal Safety Training

Term	Description
R	
RHIB	Rigid-hulled inflatable boat
RHIB Support Team	RHIB administration support team who assist in administrative processing of migrants after they leave TH (for example, setting up CID records)
S	
SCS	Senior Civil Servant
Screening Interview	This is the initial interview after claiming asylum. In this interview, the Home Office takes personal details and information about the claimant's journey to the UK, and checks if they have claimed asylum in the UK or Europe before.
Section 55	Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 requires the Home Office to carry out its existing functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK. It does not impose any new functions, or override existing functions.
Silver Command	Operational staff member at Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), Home Office Senior Executive Officer (SEO) grade level within the Clandestine Channel Threat Command
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
STHF	Short-term holding facility
Supplemental Staff	Immigration and Border Force staff ordinarily deployed to operations other than small boats
T	
TH	Tug Haven
thebigword	Interpreter service
U	
UASC	An unaccompanied asylum-seeking child is defined by paragraph 352ZD of the Immigration Rules as one who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under 18 years of age when the claim is submitted • claiming in their own right • separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so
UKVI	United Kingdom Visas & Immigration – operational command set up under the direct control of the Home Office in place of the UK Border Agency. It handles all overseas and UK immigration and visa applications, including settlement and nationality, and EEA applications for UK documentation.

Term	Description
W	
Warnings Index	Home Office immigration database
Western Jet Foil (WJF)	Western Jet Foil, large portacabin used to hold and process migrants. Opened in November 2021
Windrush	<p>Windrush ‘scandal’ refers to people who were directly or indirectly denied their rights to live and work in the UK, receive healthcare, have a pension, claim state benefits, and re-enter the UK. The subsequent review by Wendy Williams, Windrush Lessons Learned Review (WLLR), recommended that the Home Office “Look for risks and listen to early warning signs. Recommendation 22 – The Home Office should invest in improving data quality, management information and performance measures which focus on results as well as throughput. Leaders in the department should promote the best use of this data and improve the capability to anticipate, monitor and identify trends, as well as collate casework data which links performance data to Parliamentary questions, complaints and other information, including feedback from external agencies, departments and the public (with the facility to escalate local issues). The Home Office should also invest in improving its knowledge management and record keeping.”</p> <p>In the Home Office’s response to WLLR, the Comprehensive Improvement Plan, the Department noted:</p> <p>“140. Home Office information is currently stored across several different systems. To ensure that we can better manage our records and easily locate information, we have already begun to move staff to a single digital repository for information, to invest in new search tools and update our paper file management systems. This is likely to take 18 to 24 months and includes training and support in good information and records management practice, behaviours and culture. We intend to track how successful our approach is through measuring usage rates of the electronic file management system.</p> <p>141. We are improving our management information to allow the Home Office to better identify risks, look for early warning signs and then act. This includes making better use of our existing data, as well as strengthening our capability to capture and analyse new insights, and then act. We will build on steps we have already taken, such as the creation of the Chief Caseworker Unit. We are also developing our skills and resources to capture and manage knowledge, to reduce the risk of missing vital insight and lessons from staff in decision-making, policy development and operational delivery. To assist in this, we are developing a distinct Knowledge Management Strategy. Fully embedding the changes to behaviours and culture is likely to take three to five years.”</p>

Annex E: Role and remit of the Independent Chief Inspector

The role of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (until 2012, the Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency) was established by the UK Borders Act 2007. Sections 48–56 of the UK Borders Act 2007 (as amended) provide the legislative framework for the inspection of the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of functions relating to immigration, asylum, nationality and customs by the Home Secretary and by any person exercising such functions on her behalf. The legislation empowers the Independent Chief Inspector to monitor, report on and make recommendations about all such functions in particular:

- consistency of approach
- the practice and performance of listed persons compared to other persons doing similar activities
- the procedure in making decisions
- the treatment of claimants and applicants
- certification under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum act 2002 (c. 41) (unfounded claim)
- the law about discrimination in the exercise of functions, including reliance on section 19D of the Race Relations Act 1976 (c. 74) (exception for immigration functions)
- the procedure in relation to the exercise of enforcement powers (including powers of arrest, entry, search and seizure)
- practice and procedure in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of offences
- the procedure in relation to the conduct of criminal proceedings
- whether customs functions have been appropriately exercised by the Secretary of State and the Director of Border Revenue
- the provision of information
- the handling of complaints; and
- the content of information about conditions in countries outside the United Kingdom, which the Secretary of State compiles and makes available, for purposes connected with immigration and asylum, to immigration officers and other officials.

In addition, the legislation enables the Secretary of State to request the Independent Chief Inspector to report to her in writing in relation to specified matters.

The legislation requires the Independent Chief Inspector to report in writing to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State lays all reports before Parliament, which she has committed to do within eight weeks of receipt, subject to both Houses of Parliament being in session.

Reports are published in full except for any material that the Secretary of State determines it is undesirable to publish for reasons of national security or where publication might jeopardise an individual's safety, in which case the legislation permits the Secretary of State to omit the relevant passages from the published report.

As soon as a report has been laid in Parliament, it is published on the Inspectorate's website, together with the Home Office's response to the report and recommendations.

Annex F: ICIBI's 'expectations'

Background and explanatory documents are easy to understand and use (e.g. statements of intent (both ministerial and managerial), impact assessments, legislation, policies, guidance, instructions, strategies, business plans, intranet and GOV.UK pages, posters, leaflets etc.)

- They are written in plain, unambiguous English (with foreign language versions available, where appropriate)
- They are kept up to date
- They are readily accessible to anyone who needs to rely on them (with online signposting and links, wherever possible)

Processes are simple to follow and transparent

- They are IT-enabled and include input formatting to prevent users from making data entry errors
- Mandatory requirements, including the nature and extent of evidence required to support applications and claims, are clearly defined
- The potential for blockages and delays is designed out, wherever possible
- They are resourced to meet time and quality standards (including legal requirements, Service Level Agreements, published targets)

Anyone exercising an immigration, asylum, nationality or customs function on behalf of the Home Secretary is fully competent

- Individuals understand their role, responsibilities, accountabilities and powers
- Everyone receives the training they need for their current role and for their professional development, plus regular feedback on their performance
- Individuals and teams have the tools, support and leadership they need to perform efficiently, effectively and lawfully
- Everyone is making full use of their powers and capabilities, including to prevent, detect, investigate and, where appropriate, prosecute offences
- The workplace culture ensures that individuals feel able to raise concerns and issues without fear of the consequences

Decisions and actions are 'right first time'

- They are demonstrably evidence-based or, where appropriate, intelligence-led
- They are made in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance
- They are reasonable (in light of the available evidence) and consistent
- They are recorded and communicated accurately, in the required format and detail, and can be readily retrieved (with due regard to data protection requirements)

Errors are identified, acknowledged and promptly 'put right'

- Safeguards, management oversight, and quality assurance measures are in place, are tested and are seen to be effective
- Complaints are handled efficiently, effectively and consistently
- Lessons are learned and shared, including from administrative reviews and litigation
- There is a commitment to continuous improvement, including by the prompt implementation of recommendations from reviews, inspections and audits

Each immigration, asylum, nationality or customs function has a Home Office (Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System) 'owner'

- The BICS 'owner' is accountable for:
 - implementation of relevant policies and processes
 - performance (informed by routine collection and analysis of Management Information (MI) and data, and monitoring of agreed targets/deliverables/budgets)
 - resourcing (including workforce planning and capability development, including knowledge and information management)
 - managing risks (including maintaining a Risk Register)
 - communications, collaborations and deconfliction within the Home Office, with other government departments and agencies, and other affected bodies
 - effective monitoring and management of relevant contracted out services
 - stakeholder engagement (including customers, applicants, claimants and their representatives)

Acknowledgements

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Inspection team members

Lead inspector:	Caroline Parkes
Project manager:	Victoria Campbell
Inspector:	Caroline Bradshaw
Inspector:	Philip Insuli
Inspector:	Louise Milligan
Inspector:	Chris Thompson
Inspector:	Paul Whitehead



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