

UK BORDER FORCE AND ACC ENGAGEMENT

What this paper is about

At last year's Annual Meeting, the issue of ACCs engagement with UK Border Force (UKBF) was discussed. It appeared that whilst some ACCs had established good local arrangements with Border Force, others had less developed arrangements. Accordingly ACCs were encouraged to actively engage with their local Border Force representatives. This paper invites ACCs to report on their current experiences with Border Force and advise of any problem issues.

Points for Discussion

- How have relationships between ACCs and UKBF developed during the last year?
- Are performance targets being met or are they being affected by resourcing or any other issues?

Points for Possible Action

Whether there is any need for UKACCs to write collectively to UKBF on any key common issues.

Background

1. The issue of the performance of border control has been the subject of regular discussion at previous Annual Meetings. This reflects the continuing media interest in delays at immigration, highlighting that passengers entering the UK have to queue for many hours to pass through border control at the busiest UK airports (although it is clear that passenger perception has not always been borne out in all cases by actual waiting times)

2. As a result some ACCs have endeavoured to establish a closer working relationship with their local Border Force and act as a critical friend and become better informed about issues. At last year's meeting, ACCs were encouraged to seek to develop closer relationships with their local Border Force. **Have ACCs made any progress in developing such relationships?**

3. Responsibility for processing arriving passengers falls to Border Force although airports can assist in such areas as queue management. Given recent increased security concerns, Border Force has been focussing on its prime responsibility of maintaining border security to protect the UK from criminality, terrorism and illegal migration. As a result at some airports Border Force have been faced with the challenge of meeting its performance level agreements whilst devoting resources to their terrorism and security priorities. The current national performance measures, established many years ago, are for 95% of the time EEA passengers to be cleared within 25 minutes and non EEA passengers within 45 minutes. **Have ACCs noticed any deterioration in performance at their airports or are Border Force managing to meet performance targets? If there has been any significant deterioration in performance, should UKACCs write collectively to Border Force expressing its concerns?**

4. The introduction of e-gates is expanding across airports to assist in the processing of passengers. **ACCs are invited to comment as to whether e-gates have been or planned to be installed at their airports. It would also be helpful if those ACCs where gates have been installed could comment as to:**

- **whether there has been any noticeable improvements in passenger flows**
- **whether there have been any operational issues relating to the e-gates**

5. Delegates are invited to report on any other issues affecting Border Force at their airport

**Frank Evans
UKACCs Secretariat**