

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF DETENTION OF MIGRANTS ARRIVING IN DOVER IN SMALL BOATS

Rec No	Recommendation Addressed to	Primary Theme	Secondary Theme	Repeated Recommendation	HMIP Recommendation	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted	PROGRESS Complete / Partially Complete / Not Complete	Action taken / proposed	Expected completion within [6/12 months]
4.1	Home Office	Main Recommendation	Safeguarding Children	N	<p>Key Concern: Unaccompanied children were often held overnight with adults and often for too long. Welfare interviews with unaccompanied children arriving in the daytime regularly took place in the early hours of the next morning, which undermined the purpose of the interviews. Some children had not been identified at Dover and were placed on a coach to adult detention facilities.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Home Office should ensure that its practice at Dover complies with its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children arriving in the UK. (1.13)</p>	Accepted	Partially completed	<p>The operational response to the significant increase in small boats arrivals has been reviewed by Home Office Legal Advisers and policy officials to ensure that it is consistent and compliant with clear guidance for all officers. It is reasonable to expect that this guidance and process will be in place before the end of this calendar year.</p> <p>In the meantime, on days of significant numbers of arrivals, we will prioritise unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs) by ring-fencing resources in the Kent Intake Unit (KIU). Notwithstanding operational pressures we will work to promptly screen UASCs so that this does not exceed 24 hours.</p> <p>In addition, officers from the National Asylum Intake Unit will attend Tug Haven going forward in order to undertake initial age assessments and support other Home Office departments in ensuring that only adults are transferred to the Midlands Intake Unit.</p> <p>At the Tug Haven facility itself, processes have been amended to introduce a dedicated team leader role to oversee the transportation to intake units. Specific instructions have been given to all team leaders to check the age of all people prior to transfer to avoid errors. All staff are reminded of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.</p>	6 months

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4.2	Home Office	Preparation for Removal and Release	Leaving the facility	N	Immigration staff should ensure that detainees understand their bail conditions and what will happen to them when they leave the detention facility. All documentation should be provided in a language and format understood by the person being bailed. (1.75)	Partially Accepted	Partially Complete	<p>When issuing documentation, officers are clear that this should be explained to the claimant with the support of an interpreter. Interpreter services are accessed by the issuing officer utilising Skype telephony – during business hours these will be Home Office engaged interpreters, but out of business hours officers are able to utilise ‘Big Word’ interpreter services by telephone. However, we recognise that during very busy periods with significant arrivals from small boats there may have been instances where this has not been done. Officers will be reminded of this practice and arrangements will be developed to ensure that compliance monitored.</p> <p>In addition, Asylum Operations are currently reviewing the Asylum Intake Unit information packs which are provided to customers at the point of claim. We are working to improve and streamline the information packs to make them more accessible to those claiming asylum, with the aim to also provide information in the customers preferred language. The information packs are currently under review and in the process of being redeveloped, with an aim to be completed Spring 2021.</p>	6 months

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4.3	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Arrival and early days in detention	N	<p>Key Concern: The reception facilities at Tug Haven were very poor and those at KIU were unsuitable for the large number of detainees who frequently had lengthy stays. There was no ready access to showers or lockable toilets with seats and lids. Many detainees at Tug Haven were not sufficiently protected from the cold, basic supplies including clothing were running out and detainees were often crowded into spaces where social distancing was not possible. Managers agreed that the environment was not acceptable but not enough progress had been made towards improving the situation, which was especially poor in view of the risks posed by COVID-19.</p> <p>Recommendation: Effective and coordinated action by all agencies involved should ensure that there are safe, decent and hygienic reception conditions for arrivals at Tug Haven, KIU and Frontier House. In particular, contingency planning should ensure there is an effective response to fluctuating numbers and rapid mobilisation of resources whenever necessary. (1.10)</p>	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>UKVI have implemented several strategies to address the resourcing challenge for days of significant arrivals. This includes establishing the Intake Response Team to provide an internal, and flexible resource to be deployed to any National Asylum Intake Unit (NAIU) location to support our priorities. This will include 45 volunteers from across UKVI as part of our contingency pool. Plans are being progressed to transform this into a 'retained workforce' to improve the reliability and ensure capability.</p> <p>Multi agency contingency planning has been increased to respond to the increase in small boat events and a new command & control room is being set up to manage resources more effectively.</p> <p><u>Tug Haven</u></p> <p>It is acknowledged that the infrastructure at the Tug Haven required improvements and since the inspection the site has been significantly transformed. The new temporary welfare unit has become operational including a new toilet block and heavy flooring has been laid on the uneven surface. Additional shelters were being procured before the inspection and have since been delivered and are now in operation. Supply chains and storage facilities have been increased and additional handwash stations have been procured for the temporary welfare unit and shelters.</p> <p><u>KIU</u></p> <p>The shower at KIU is freely available when the occupancy level is fewer than 10 individuals, however when the holding room becomes busy the availability is diminished and a process is in place managed by the Detainee Custody Officers (DCOs) to ensure the safety of those in detention and fair allocation of the facilities.</p> <p><u>Frontier House</u></p> <p>UKVI has made improvements to the facilities within the Freight Services Building in response to our own concerns and recommendations from previous inspections. These have included decoration within the STHF, as well as investment in the atrium area. Further investment is planned in terms of the reconfiguration of the Mitie booking in room and the toilets. We acknowledge the shortcomings highlighted regarding the condition of the toilets and hand sanitising facilities – these are being tasked for priority improvement work.</p> <p>Process improvements have been identified through internal reviews which will enable us to bring the initial assessment of claimants closer to the front of the process with the aim of identifying and addressing vulnerabilities at the earliest opportunity.</p>	6 months
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4.4	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Arrival and early days in detention	N	<p>Key Concern: Detainees arriving at Tug Haven routinely had their mobile phones removed from them, and they could not gain access to the contact details for family or friends that were stored on their phones.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detainees arriving in the UK should be able to make initial contact with their family and friends by telephone free of charge. (1.11)</p>	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>In respect of the Tug Haven every individual who arrives at the Tug Haven has done so through engagement with Organised Crime Facilitators in France or potentially been involved in the actual facilitation for example as a pilot of the actual vessel. Phones are seized as all are arrested and as such, we would not allow individuals to access any phone that has been seized as evidence of criminal offences to ensure the forensic integrity of the device. Phones are downloaded to an ongoing project where all numbers / data are cross referenced to establish Organised Crime Group links. Dismantlement of these Organised Crime Groups is essential to save lives of other migrants.</p> <p>Unless there is a requirement to retain the mobile phone for evidential purposes, which could take some time, they are returned to the owner. We are currently reviewing our processes for returning property when they are no longer required for evidential purposes.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place for individuals to access telephones free of charge once at the short term holding facilities and going forward, we will ensure this is clearly publicised.</p>	6 months

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4.5	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Safeguarding adults and personal safety	N	<p>Key Concern: Detainees' vulnerability was not always identified. Screening interviews were undertaken in the early hours of the morning, making it less likely that vulnerabilities would be identified. No vulnerable adult warning forms had been opened at Frontier House. An elderly woman was held there for 40 hours. Mitie had not reported any modern slavery concerns and we did not receive information on how many UKVI referrals were made under the National Referral Mechanism.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Home Office should promptly assess and meet the needs of vulnerable detainees. Care plans should be in place for all detainees at risk. (1.12)</p>	Accepted	Partially Complete	<p>Identifying vulnerabilities is an integral part of the asylum screening process and of particular importance for those arriving via clandestine routes at greater risk from facilitators and people traffickers. The completion of biometric and biographic checks will alert officers to any information already known such as immigration history and criminality. However, there are specific questions within the screening interview designed to identify any safeguarding issues, and potential risks that an individual may present to themselves, others or the UK.</p> <p>When screening asylum seekers we follow a quality assurance process. This can include observing the process to ensure quality and compliance. However, we acknowledge that periods of sustained high volumes or spikes such as those from small boat arrivals and the operational impact of COVID 19 have reduced the effectiveness and our confidence in these quality assurance measures. The new staffing structure of the National Asylum Intake Unit will provide allow us to review and refresh quality assurance in asylum screening to ensure that going forward it is sustained and effective.</p> <p>As part of their Initial Training Course (ITC) and annual refresher, all Detainee Custody Officers undertake training in Cultural Diversity, Disability, Mental Health Awareness, Adult Safeguarding, Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery.</p> <p>In all holding rooms, including at KIU & Frontier House, immediate actions are taken to mitigate any vulnerabilities identified and these will be documented in the Vulnerable Adult Warning Form (VAWF). This accompanies the individual as part of their transfer records and helps supports the continuation of care at the receiving establishment.</p> <p>In addition to the VAWF Suicide Self-Harm Warning Forms (SSHWF) are available to DCOs who are aware of the process in completing them.</p>	6 months

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4.6	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Legal Rights	N	<p>Key Concern: Detainees, including children, were held for far too long and often overnight in facilities with no access to the open air and little or no natural light. Detention reviews frequently did not take place.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detainees should only be held overnight in non-residential holding facilities without access to fresh air and exercise in exceptional circumstances and reviews of their detention should be timely and thorough. (1.14)</p>	Accepted	Partially completed	<p>UKVI are taking steps, through process and resourcing improvements to mitigate the risk of claimants being detained overnight and/ or in excess of 24 hours – particularly in relation to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.</p> <p>However, small boat arrivals have, on days this summer, exceeded 400 and in these circumstances, there may be occasions when detention has to be extended beyond 24 hours. Therefore, work will be undertaken to refresh the officers' knowledge and understanding of the detention review policy and ensure consistent compliance.</p>	6 months

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4.7	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Healthcare	N	<p>Key Concern: Health services had developed in response to changing and growing needs, but no overall health needs assessment had been completed to establish what services, equipment and clinical supplies were required.</p> <p>Recommendation: Agencies responsible for contracting health care services at Tug Haven, Frontier House and KIU should commission a health needs assessment and establish an integrated care pathway for detainees. The pathway should contain milestones for assessment and treatment, and an agreement should be reached with East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust about when emergency hospital services are to be engaged. (1.15)</p>	Accepted	Partially completed	<p>UKVI have plans in train to extend the medical care on-site at the KIU and also to ensure that comparable access is available when Frontier House is utilised.</p> <p>Consideration is to be given to seeking support from Public Health England and NHS England in completing an overarching health needs assessment for the end to end operational response process.</p>	6 months
4.8	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Preparation for Removal and Release	Communications	N	<p>Detainees should have access to the internet, including email, video calling and social networks, unless an individual risk assessment indicates otherwise. (1.69)</p>	Partially Accepted	Complete	<p>It is acknowledged that the provision of internet access is an important means of helping those in detention to remain in contact with family, friends and legal representatives and to prepare for removal. However, due to the relatively short period of time that individuals spend in holding rooms, it is not practicable to provide or supervise access to the internet.</p> <p>At Yarl's Wood individuals have access to the internet, email and video calling facilities as set out in Detention Services Orders 04/2016 'detainee access to the internet' and 01/2020 'detainee access to video call service'.</p>	N/A

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4.9	Facility Contractor	Safety	Arrival and early days in detention	N	Initial interviews should take place promptly, be held in private and focus on identifying safeguarding concerns as well as detainees' immediate welfare needs. (1.23)	Accepted	Partially complete	Through internal reviews we have identified how to bring the initial assessment of claimants closer to the start of the process with the aim of identifying and addressing vulnerabilities at the earliest opportunity. Asylum screening interviews are consistently undertaken in the privacy of designated interview rooms and specifically include questions to identify safeguarding issues.	6 months
4.10	Home Office	Main Recommendation	Safeguarding adults and personal safety	N	Key Concern: Asylum screening interviews were usually conducted by telephone and did not allow for a visual assessment that could help to identify vulnerabilities. The Home Office could not provide information on National Referral Mechanism referrals made in the previous three months and very few detainees had been assessed to have been adults at risk. Recommendation: The Home Office should ensure that detainees' vulnerability is thoroughly assessed at the earliest stage and that their identified needs are met. (2.11)	Accepted	Partially complete	In line with government guidance on social distancing a number of measures are in place for the asylum screening and registration process to minimise contact for the safety of claimants and officials. Remote screening is one such measure – however UKVI officers are on site to escort and support claimants during the screening process. These are temporary measures in response to Covid 19 and will be reviewed in line with government guidance. An evaluation of all the temporary measures is planned. NRM statistics are published at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics however it is not possible to break this down to data relating to a specific unit. However, from local records we are confident that NRM referrals are being made from the Midlands Intake Unit as appropriate.	6 months

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4.11	Home Office	Main Recommendation	Legal Rights	N	Key Concern: There was no Home Office induction for detainees and there were no surgeries where detainees could ask about their status. Many detainees we interviewed had little understanding of what was happening to them, even after they had received a screening interview. Recommendation: Onsite immigration staff should offer detention surgeries to detainees. (2.12)	Accepted	Partially complete	We will review the current induction and screening processes and materials provided to individuals held at Yarl's Wood STHF to ensure that those in detention understand what is happening to them and how they can find out more information about their immigration status.	6 months
4.12	Home Office	Preparation for Removal and Release	Communications	N	Detainees should be permitted to access social networking sites. (2.62)	Not Accepted	N/A	The provision of internet access is an important means of helping individuals to remain in contact with family, friends and legal representatives and to prepare for removal. Detention Services Order (04/2016) on access to the internet was published in May 2016 and does not permit access to social networks.	N/A
4.13	Home Office & Escort Contractor	Preparation for Removal and Release	Leaving the facility	N	Detainees should have access to adequate toilet facilities during their journey from the centre. (2.70)	Accepted	Partially complete	The provision of adequate toilet access during journeys is a contractual requirement, including appropriate rest stops.	6 months
4.14	Home Office, Escort Contractor & Facility Contractor	Preparation for Removal and Release	Leaving the facility	N	The Home Office, escort contractor and centre staff should communicate effectively with one another to ensure that the discharge process for detainees is prompt. (2.68)	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	Work is underway to improve the communication between these parties with the first step agreed for UKVI to have officers on site to support the process. In addition, Serco will establish more formal links with UKVI including providing dedicated email addresses to be used for receipt of relevant information to allow for preparations to begin at earliest opportunity.	6 months

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4.15	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Safety	Arrival and early days in detention	N	Reception processes should be swift and safe. In particular, vehicles leaving Dover should be staggered and facility staff informed of their estimated time of arrival. (2.20)	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>Where possible coaches leaving Dover will be staggered to assist with processing times at Midlands Intake Unit. This however will not always be viable due to officer shift times and driver hours.</p> <p>Improvements to the processes at the Tug Haven include contacting the intake units on departure of coaches to inform them of the estimated time of arrivals.</p> <p>Once Serco receive notification from UKVI at Dover, activation and preparation of admission processes for a large number of simultaneous admissions will begin. Where possible Serco will prepare paperwork in advance, to enable quicker processing, prioritising those with additional vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Both Serco and Home Office DEPMU have adapted processes since the inspection to alleviate a number of these issues to deal with higher volumes.</p> <p>Serco will dynamically risk assess each cohort on arrival, using alternative space available when appropriate, such as the Visits Hall or Sports Hall, to ease congestion and achieve social distancing requirements.</p>	6 months
4.16	Home Office & Facility Contractor	Preparation for Removal and Release	Leaving the Centre	N	Detainees should receive information about their onward destination in a language they understand before their release so they can inform family and friends. (2.69)	Accepted	Partially complete	UKVI will review the processes and information provided to those in detention about their onward destination, to identify how communications can be improved in these circumstances.	6 months

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4.17	Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Arrival and early days in detention	N	<p>Key Concern: Centre staff did not make adequate use of professional interpretation services. This undermined effective information sharing between staff and detainees and left many detainees uncertain and anxious.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detention staff should use professional interpretation whenever necessary to ensure communication with detainees is effective. (2.9)</p>	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>Serco will ensure that where appropriate staff will use translation services as required.</p> <p>Staff will be reminded of the importance of using translation services.</p> <p>Serco managers will conduct regular checks of use of translation services, as will the on-site Home Office Compliance Team.</p>	6 months
4.18	Facility Contractor	Main Recommendation	Arrival and early days in detention	N	<p>Key Concern: The induction process was not always completed promptly, if at all. The induction's usefulness had been undermined by the provision of outdated information and a lack of professional interpretation and written material in languages other than English.</p> <p>Recommendation: The centre should ensure that all detainees have a prompt and effective induction in a language they understand. (2.10)</p>	Accepted	Partially complete	<p>Serco will aim to complete inductions within 24 hours from arrival, volumes permitting.</p> <p>Serco will review and update Induction Documents to include the latest guidance that is applicable.</p> <p>Managers will ensure staff are using translation services where appropriate during induction, especially where translated documentation is not in place.</p> <p>The Home Office Compliance Team will undertake regular assurance in this area to ensure that timescales are being adhered to.</p>	6 months

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4.19	Facility Contractor	Safety	Legal rights	N	Detainees should receive comprehensive information on how to access legal support. (2.36)	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>Those arriving at the Yarl's Wood Short Term Holding Facility (STHF) are provided with an induction from the supplier in which they are signposted to legal advice and are issued information on these provisions, additional support and assistance.</p> <p>Individuals arriving at Yarl's Wood also undergo a welfare 'meet and greet' session from the IRC supplier in which they are informed about and provided with contact details for Legal Aid Agency (LAA) firms that can provide free legal advice. Welfare officers will also establish whether individuals require assistance in contacting a legal representative and endeavour to assist in them in doing so.</p> <p>Serco will liaise with UKVI to provide relevant information regarding legal support as part of the supplier induction process.</p>	6 months
4.20	Facility Contractor	Respect	Healthcare	N	Health care staff should inform the Home Office of all detainees identified as requiring Rule 32 assessments, including those whose assessments are not undertaken because they have left the centre before their appointment takes place. (2.57)	Accepted	Complete	<p>Following the inspection discussions took place between the Home Office Compliance Team and Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust regarding this issue.</p> <p>Revised processes were put in place in September 2020 to ensure the Home Office is informed appropriately, which is reviewed on a daily basis.</p>	