

30 March 2007

BORDER AND IMMIGRATION AGENCY LAUNCH

As I am sure you are aware 1 April sees the launch of the Border and Immigration Agency.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about some of the implications of this announcement, and how we will use shadow agency status to bring a new focus on delivery across the organisation.

Our new status will focus greater concentration on our core objectives, provide more freedom on resource management and make us more accountable to the public with clear published targets. It will also redefine the way we work with ministers, the wider Home Office and our key partners and stakeholders. These measures will drive us to improve our performance and put us in a stronger position to deliver a high quality service.

We want to further develop our relationship of collaboration and partnership with you and all our important stakeholders in line with the Joint Statement of Principles on effective stakeholder engagement, which was published last year. Our aim is to share our understanding of the challenges, and strive to work across traditional boundaries to deliver for the public.

A new simplified regional structure will see offices in all areas of the UK. These offices will be more responsive to local issues and concerns, better able to deliver joined-up immigration services and better placed to work with other agencies at a regional level. By the summer accountable directors will be appointed for each region and they along with all facets of the new Border and Immigration Agency, its stakeholders and partners will have a responsibility for explaining what we do across the country.

A powerful new regulator will deliver tougher inspection of the agency, focusing on overall efficiency and effectiveness across our operations. It will scrutinise the quality of our decision-making, including comparisons across regions so the public and stakeholders can see how we are performing in different areas and where we need to improve

The timing of transition to full agency status is not fixed – it will depend on progress with the reform agenda but if all goes well we expect it to be in 2008. This is not a 'big bang' change nor is it a trial; rather the shadow agency year is a time for us and Ministers to get the approach right through action learning. As part of this change, you will see that the new Border and Immigration Agency will have a new identity and logo. This will be rolled out over the next 12 months. During the roll out some things will change to carry the new identity from the 1st April but, equally as the change-

over process takes time, there will be a mix of old and new branded items in circulation as old items carrying IND are phased out.

Our agency should set a standard. We have started to improve – and agency status will speed up that journey of improvement. We hope that you will continue to engage with us to help our transition, and to assist us in getting to where we want to be.

Finally, you will have seen that the Prime Minister has announced important changes to the responsibilities of the Home Office and the creation of a Ministry of Justice. The Home Office will have a strengthened role coordinating the response to the UK terrorist threat alongside its responsibilities for the police, crime reduction, immigration and asylum, anti-social behaviour and Respect and identity and passports. On May 9, a new Ministry of Justice will come into being, providing a stronger focus on the criminal justice system and on reducing reoffending. Our agenda, as the Border and Immigration Agency, will not change. We will remain part of the Home Office, although the shape and focus of our parent department will be different.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lin Homer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lin Homer