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UK Border Agency

Today we launch the UK Border Agency which brings together the work of the Border and Immigration Agency, Customs detection work at the border from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), and UKvisas from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). As one of our strategic stakeholders I want to share with you what this means.

Background

As you may be aware, on 14 November 2007, the Prime Minister announced the decision to establish a UK Border Agency, a global organisation that will improve the UK's security through stronger border protection whilst welcoming legitimate travellers and trade.

The new Agency

Our new Agency is a part of the Home Office family. In fact, it is the largest delivery agency of the Home Office, with a high profile and demanding remit, a 25,000 strong workforce and a presence in 135 countries around the world. We will therefore contribute in no small part to the wider objectives of the Home Office, in particular cutting crime, protecting the public from terrorists and safeguarding identity and citizenship, as well of course as the overall purpose of *working together to protect the public*.

The Agency builds on the joint working already established between the three organisations that are coming together and the security authorities. Closer working with police at the border will be critical to the success of the Agency, and I have welcomed Chief Constable Roger Baker as a member of the Agency's Board to continue to build our relationship with police at a strategic level. The Board will also include an HMRC Commissioner, Mike Eland, a senior FCO representative, James Bevan, as well as directors responsible for borders, immigration and international work.

A key aspect of this new Agency is the development of a border force, a new front-line operation designed to strengthen our border whilst delivering more effective ways of expediting entry for legitimate trade and travellers. Bringing together the work of immigration

and customs officers will enable us to address a wider range of risks at the border, and deploy staff quickly and flexibly where enhanced checks are required.

We have published a business plan setting out the UK Border Agency's three strategic objectives:

1. To protect our border and our national interests;
2. To tackle border tax fraud, smuggling and immigration crime;
3. To implement fast and fair decisions.

As one of our key stakeholders you are an important partner and we are committed to working with you as we develop the new Agency and to keeping you updated on our plans and programmes.

If you have any questions about the new Agency please email stakeholder feedback UKBASF@ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk in the first instance.

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

Lin Homer