



Securing the UK Border

Our vision and strategy for the future

Home Office March 2007

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Foreword by the Minister for Nationality, Citizenship and Immigration and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office



Liam Byrne MP



Lord Triesman

The exponential growth in global movement brings great opportunity for the UK but creates new challenges which demand a new doctrine for the national border.

Border control can no longer just be a fixed line on a map. Using new technology, particularly biometrics, and new approaches to managing risk and intelligence, we must create a new offshore line of defence, checking individuals as far from the UK as possible and through each stage of their journey. Our aim is to make legitimate travel easier, yet prevent those who might cause us harm from travelling here. We want the UK to be attractive and welcoming to business, tourist, student and family visitors, skilled migrants and returning nationals and residents, but halt those with no right to come to this country well away from our shores.

This approach cannot be taken forward by a single government department acting alone. It requires co-ordinated support of government, international partners and industry to succeed. We will consult those who can assist in the initiatives outlined in this paper as we proceed and develop new mechanisms for co-operation.

This strategy is a part of the radical reform of the UK immigration system begun last July. It provides a vision for the future for our border and visa operations and sets out practical steps as to how we will get there. It is part of our wider migration message, whether in-country or abroad, of supporting those with entitlements and penalising those without.

A strong border is good for travellers, good for industry, national security and the economy.

A strong border is what the public demand and is what we will deliver.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liam Byrne".

Liam Byrne MP
Minister for Nationality,
Citizenship and Immigration

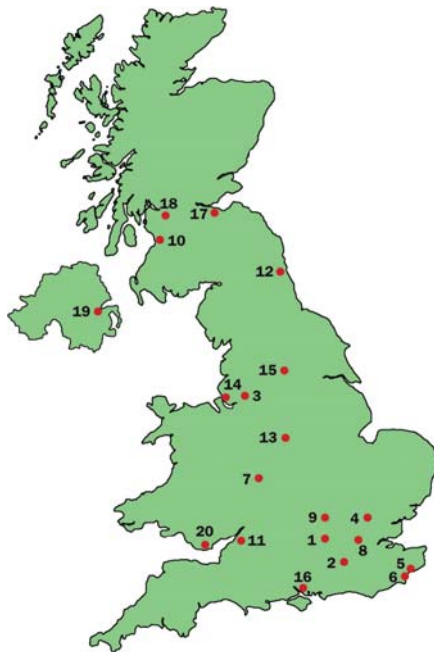
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Triesman".

Lord Triesman
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

...more people, more quickly, more securely...

Chapter 1: The UK's new borders

- 1.1 The border has traditionally been understood as a single, staffed physical frontier, where travellers show paper-based identity documents to pass through. This twentieth century concept can be subject to abuse, with controls often geared to fairly crude risk indicators such as nationality.
- 1.2 This philosophy will not deal effectively with the step change in mobility that globalisation has brought to our country. We believe a new doctrine is demanded, where controls begin off-shore and where we use information, intelligence and identity systems to allow scrutiny at key checkpoints on the journey to and from the UK.
- 1.3 Managing identity is fundamental to delivering this new approach. Using biometric technology we can permanently link people to a unique identity. We can check this against other records that can reveal, for example, if someone poses a security risk, has previously committed crimes in the UK, or has tried to enter the country under false pretences. It provides us with confidence in who we count in and out.
- 1.4 We want, therefore, to fix people's identities at the earliest point practicable, checking them through each stage of their journey, identifying those presenting risk and stopping them coming to the UK. By the time a passenger has been identified at the border as posing a threat, it can be too late – they have achieved their goal in reaching our shores. Off-shoring our border control is the keystone of our border defence.
- 1.5 This new approach will change the way we grant permission to come to the UK, increase checks on those in transit and strengthen the UK border itself. We are putting in place a border security system which makes life easier for legitimate travellers but stops those who would cause harm. This model will not be achieved by the Border and Immigration Agency alone. We will work closely with other border agencies, wider government, international partners, industry and the public to deliver our objectives.



1	Heathrow	(28.6%)
2	Gatwick	(13.6%)
3	Manchester	(8.7%)
4	Stansted	(8.4%)
5	Dover	(6.6%)
6	Eurotunnel	(4.7%)
7	Birmingham	(3.8%)
8	Eurostar	(3.7%)
9	Luton	(3.4%)
10	Glasgow	(1.9%)
11	Bristol	(1.7%)
12	Newcastle	(1.6%)
13	East Midlands	(1.6%)
14	Liverpool	(1.5%)
15	Leeds/Bradford	(1.5%)
16	Portsmouth	(1.2%)
17	Edinburgh	(0.9%)
18	Prestwick	(0.7%)
19	Belfast	(0.7%)
20	Cardiff	(0.6%)

Main ports of entry to the UK by passenger numbers (percentage of passengers – 2005)

Wider checks abroad

1.6 We will change the way we decide who to check in depth before they visit the UK.

- All non-EEA countries will be subject to a **Visa Waiver Test**. This will be an assessment against a series of benchmarks, by which we will consider whether a visa regime should be maintained, lifted or imposed. The test will be run over the remainder of 2007 with any consequent changes taking place in 2008/09;
- Consult on new measures to combat **forced marriage**, including a Code of Practice for interviews with couples, raising the minimum age of the spouse and sponsor to 21, and examine the case for the introduction of an English language test before entry for spouses who intend to settle in the UK;
- Overhaul the **rules for visitors** coming to visit the UK for less than six months. We will consult on options in 2007, making changes in 2008. This will be in parallel to our reform of routes for workers and students through the Points Based System; and
- Introduce biometric visas worldwide by 2008. The **biometrics** of increasing numbers of other lower-risk non-EEA nationals coming to the UK for more than six months will be captured through biometric immigration documents, issued from 2008, and through registered traveller schemes.

A new offshore border control

1.7 Working closely with our **international partners**, we will introduce offshore border controls covering all modes of transport worldwide. Specifically, we will:

- Introduce an **Authority to Carry scheme** that will allow us to refuse a carrier the authority to bring passengers to the UK, based on real-time checks against government databases. This will be introduced from 2009;

- Strengthen our network of **overseas border security advisers** to help airlines deal with people who may not have the necessary documents for travel and to stop those who do not from boarding; and
- Enhance our **juxtaposed controls** in France and Belgium.

A stronger UK border

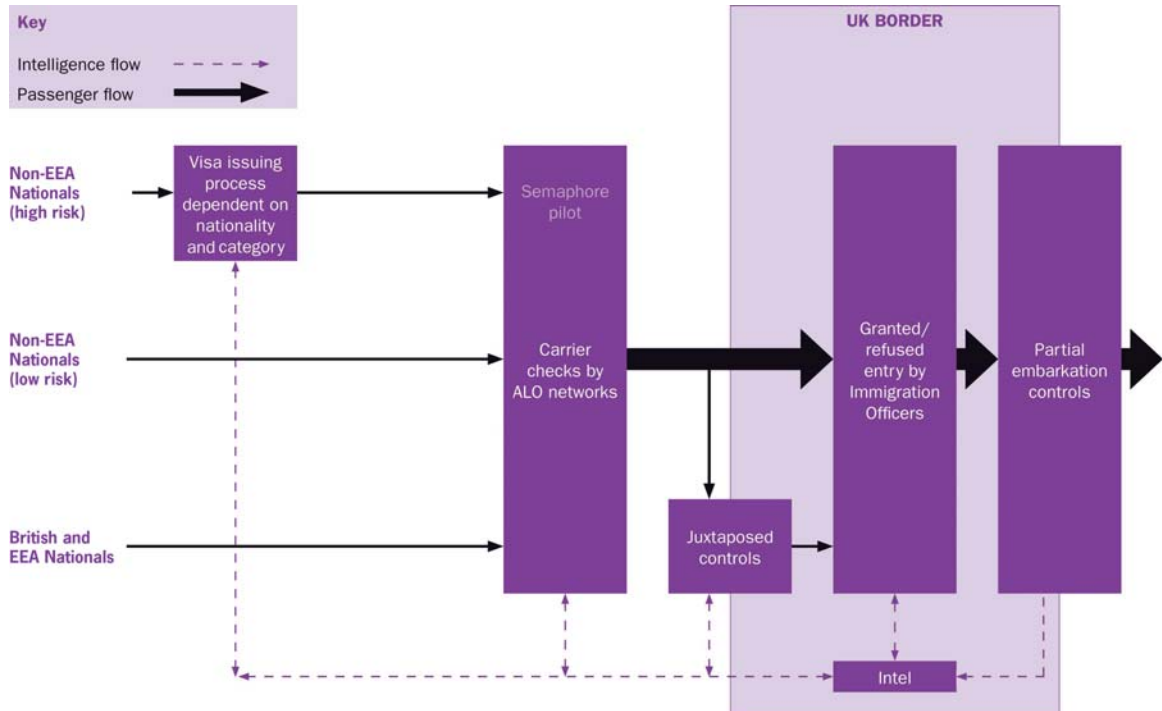
1.8 We will:

- Strengthen the **powers for immigration officers** and more widely for the Border and Immigration Agency through the UK Borders Bill, introduced in January 2007. We will make the physical UK border and staff **more visible**, and improve **skills and equipment** for staff. As co-operation deepens across the border security network through the Border Management Programme (the Border and Immigration Agency, HMRC, police, SOCA and UKvisas) over 2007 and 2008, we will ensure that powers are in place to facilitate further collaboration between the border agencies;
- Complete our commitment to a unique, secure ID for all non-EEA nationals by 2011, by collecting the biometrics of all remaining non-EEA nationals not previously biometrically registered in the UK on arrival;
- Strengthen the **Common Travel Area**, covering the UK and Ireland, and improve the control of **small ship and aircraft movements**. This will not affect the intra-Irish land border; and
- The majority of passengers will be checked in and out of the UK by 2009 and 95 per cent by 2011.

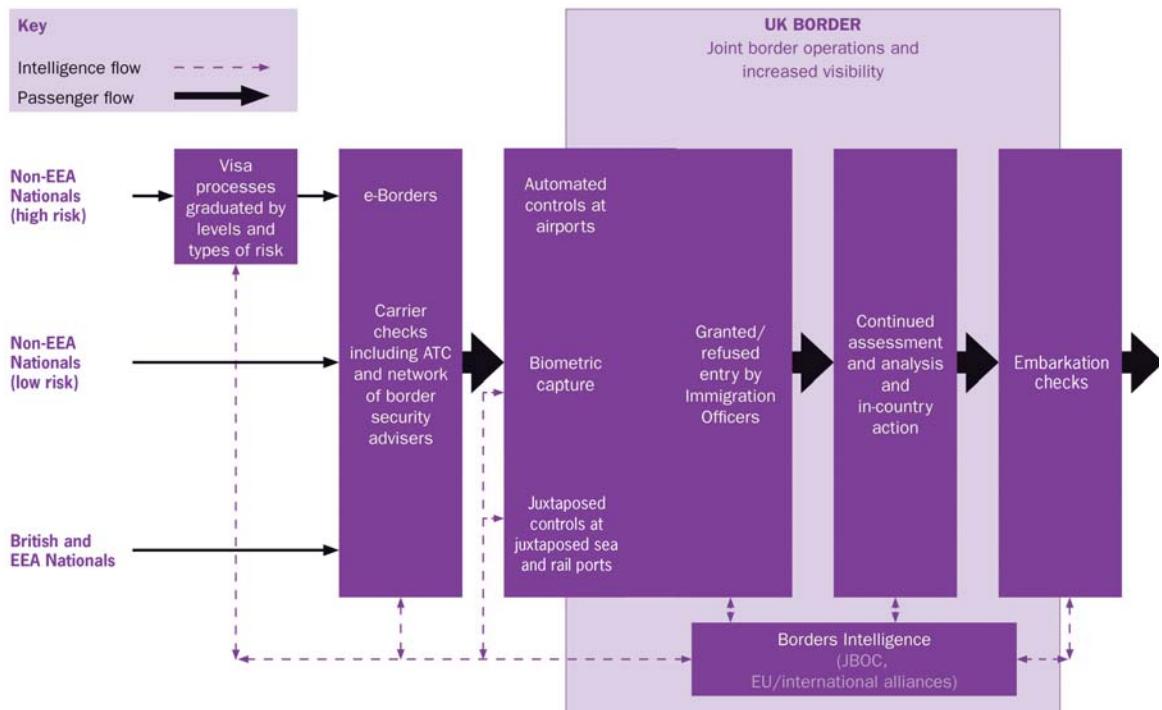
IND Review: “extend exit controls in stages based on risk, identify who overstays, and count everyone in and out, while avoiding delays.”

The Border Operating Model: stages of the control

Current model



Future model



Chapter 2: Threats and challenges

Key challenges to the border

2.1 After a decade of uninterrupted growth, Britain is the world's fifth largest economy and one of the world's great trading nations. A greater share of our GDP is traded than any other nation in the OECD. This strategy for **Securing the UK Border** sets out what we intend to do over the next decade to respond to the principal strategic threats and challenges to our borders, against the background of great growth in Britain's global trade and traffic.

- International air traffic is increasing: passenger numbers entering and leaving the UK through our airports could reach 320 million by 2015, almost double their level of five years ago;
- Freight traffic is growing at 2.9 per cent a year (and around 6 per cent through the major Kent ports). Eurostar destinations are also likely to increase, raising passenger traffic; and
- Over 2,500,000 visa applications were received in 2005/06 and over 2,000,000 visas issued. Demand has grown by 45 per cent since 2001/02. Provisional figures for the first ten months of 2006/07 show almost 9 per cent growth over the same period in the previous financial year.

IND Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen our borders, use tougher checks abroad so that only those with permission travel to the UK, and ensure we know who leaves so that we can take action against those who break the rules.

2.2 The UK's border system must, therefore, meet three challenges:

- Process rapidly increasing numbers of travellers;
- Keep out or monitor the travel of those individuals who could cause harm to the UK; and
- Facilitate legitimate travel in the interests of Britain's people and economy.

IND Strategic Objective 4: We will boost Britain's economy by bringing the right skills here from around the world, and ensuring Britain is easy to visit legally.

2.3 The British economy continues to benefit from globalisation. It is important for the UK to offer a positive welcome to tourists, students, business travellers and legal migrants.

- Continued growth has come from international trade and investment, and from the ability of British business to fill gaps in the labour market that cannot be filled from our own workforce. Engineers, teachers and other **experts from abroad** fill these gaps, making important contributions to the UK through tax and revenue, as well as developing our links with foreign countries;
- Britain remains the destination of choice for many **visitors** from overseas. In 2005, 11.8 million non-EEA travellers entered the UK – 3.9 million from the USA, the majority as tourists or short business visits. People from overseas spent £14.2 billion in the UK in 2005, with the tourism industry alone directly employing 1.4 million people;
- **Overseas students** in UK further and higher education, English language and independent schools contribute an estimated £5 billion annually to the UK economy. Students as individuals also contribute substantially towards the economy. The UK is second only to the USA as a global leader in the international provision of education; and
- The **travel industry** itself is an important part of the British economy. Carriers, in a highly competitive market, need to be able to meet the public's demands for secure and rapid travel with minimum necessary hindrance.

2.4 A minority, however, travel to work illegally in the UK, engage in criminal activity or even terrorism. Due to its very nature it is difficult to fully estimate the precise scale of abuse.

- As the number of legitimate travellers to the UK increases, so it is likely that the numbers of those who try to enter the UK illegally will also grow, driven by pull (opportunity, media images, communal and family ties) and push factors (poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and conflict);
- While some individuals break UK immigration law through, for example, submitting fraudulent applications for visas or by seeking to enter the UK clandestinely, illegal entry is increasingly connected in some way to organised crime such as human trafficking and people smuggling. The number of transnational criminal gangs providing transport and false documents and operating to circumvent immigration control has grown. Up to 75 per cent of illegal entry is facilitated by organised crime;
- British and foreign criminals exploit the jurisdictional and bureaucratic boundaries created by international borders; and
- Terrorism poses a severe threat. Planning, training and facilitation of a terrorist plot could be carried out by any national and from any number of countries abroad before implementation is attempted in the UK.

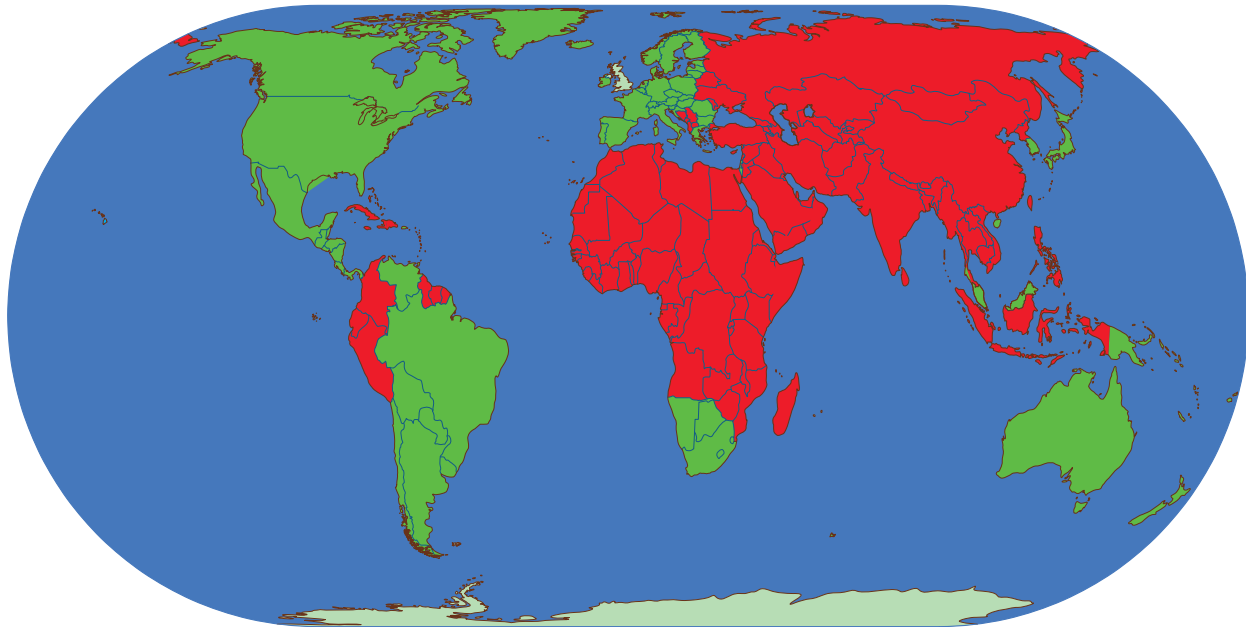
2.5 Specifically, there are four principal methods of entering the UK illegally which we must combat: fraudulent use of a travel document or visa; travelling on a legitimate or illegitimate document or visa to the UK, but destroying these means of identity before arrival; clandestine entry; and entry through the Common Travel Area covering the UK, Ireland and the Crown Dependencies.

- Certain **travel documents** or visas are attractive to criminals and abusers, either because they carry prestige and entitlements, or because they and their issuing processes are weak. During 2006, over 4,000 forged/counterfeit documents were detected at our ports. UK passports are highly prized,

but, due to security features and processes, they are difficult to forge or counterfeit successfully. EEA documents, including ID cards, which allow freedom of movement throughout Europe, are also valuable, as are other documents of nationals not subject to UK visa control;

- **Undocumented passengers** arrive at UK immigration control having destroyed or disposed of their travel documents, or handed them back to an agent. These people generally also use forged/counterfeit documents at boarding: knowing that false identity will impede asylum, re-documentation and return processes. During 2006 we caught over 2,000 undocumented passengers trying to enter the UK;
- **Clandestine entrants** circumvent immigration controls through concealment in cars, lorries, containers or ships. We have already had major success in reducing illegal entry to the UK through the introduction of juxtaposed immigration controls in France and Belgium, including through the use of New Detection Technology. The risks posed by small ports and airfields are monitored by the border agencies and targeted on an intelligence-led basis; and
- The **Common Travel Area (CTA)** consists of the UK, Republic of Ireland and the Crown Dependencies and allows for the movement of all CTA nationals without being subject to immigration control. However, there are also risks of illegal entry. To counter these, we work closely with other CTA authorities and run intelligence-led enforcement and security controls on inbound traffic from other parts of the CTA.

Wider, tougher checks abroad



Visa and non-visa nationals worldwide

Key:

■ Visa nationals

■ Non-visa nationals

A new visa regime: the Visa Waiver Test

3.1 We will change the way we check people before they come to the UK. Traveller information is first collected through the visa system. Since 2002 we have embedded risk assessment throughout our visa network to identify abuse of the visa system and enhance decision making. By mid-2008 Risk Assessment Units will cover over 75 per cent of all visa applications, co-ordinated through the UKvisas Risk Assessment Operations Centre. This facilitates worldwide, real-time exchange of intelligence between border agencies and individual posts to support the development of analytical and profiling tools and watchlists. Entry Clearance Officers (ECOs) use these tools to scrutinise applicants according to the type and level of risk posed.

Since October 2004 the Risk Assessment Unit in Accra has been working closely with local police to arrest and prosecute those submitting forged documents in support of their visa applications. Around 2500 individuals have been arrested and their applications refused. This has had a significant deterrent effect, reducing the number of applications containing forged documents by 75 per cent. We will expand this initiative to other key posts by mid-2008.

3.2 Fixing individuals to their identities and checking against biometric databases is vital. Through the visa system, we already capture fingerprint and facial biometrics for individuals from over 60 countries before they travel to the UK. We will enrol the biometrics of all visa applicants by 2008. This gives ECOs significant additional information on which to base decisions. Already over 280,000 applicants have provided biometrics: over 2,700 of these

- have matched fingerprints taken in the UK in connection with previous immigration matters or asylum applications.
- 3.3 Nationals of over one hundred countries – three-quarters of the world’s population – must apply for permission (or visa) to come to the UK. Nationals of over sixty countries outside the EEA only need clearance if they intend to be in the UK for longer than six months or are coming here on a basis that requires a visa – for example, for work or study. Visa regimes have traditionally been imposed on a largely reactive basis as a result of detection of immigration abuse by people bearing a particular passport. We will change this approach by introducing a **Visa Waiver Test**.
- 3.4 The test will consist of a set of criteria determining the overall level of harm posed by travellers from a particular country. The presumption will be that all non-EEA countries failing the test will, unless risks can be mitigated satisfactorily, be subject to a visa regime, while those meeting the specified benchmark will not. Criteria for this test will include:
- Issuing a secure passport, maintaining secure passport application, production, storage and delivery processes and reporting lost or stolen travel documents to international standards;
 - Co-operation in re-documentation and return of nationals being deported or removed from the UK for immigration and other offences;
 - A sufficiently low incidence of identified immigration abuse, including denial of visas or entry to the UK owing to presentation of false documents, overstaying, illegal working and clandestine entry;
 - A sufficiently low risk posed by the country’s nationals in terms of terrorism and criminality;
 - The steps taken by the country to combat terrorism, crime and immigration abuse internally; and
 - The economic impact of the imposition of a visa regime.
- 3.5 The test will enable us to target our visa regimes more effectively in order to minimise harm to the UK while allowing nationals of those countries that do not present significant risk to travel to the UK with less scrutiny. We will apply the test to all non-EEA countries by the end of 2007. Following the test, some additional regimes may be imposed while others may be lifted in a phased process over 2008/09. Some countries failing the test may be able to take steps to mitigate the risks presented by some of their citizens. We would seek to assist them in doing so. For example, some risks presented by criminality could be mitigated by the government in question agreeing to share data on criminality.
- 3.6 In tandem, using similar criteria, we will also review the **Transit Without Visa (TWOV)** concession and **Direct Airside Transit Visa (DATV)** by the end of 2007. The former lifts the visa requirement if transiting through UK airports for a short period rather than visiting the UK itself. The latter requires nationals of a particular country to have a visa to transit through UK airports even if they do not intend to enter the UK. As part of this review, we will reduce the DATV fee to Schengen levels.
- 3.7 In the short to medium term, existing categories of visa and non-visa national will continue to exist. Our ultimate vision is to use intelligence, risk assessment and analysis to apply scrutiny based on individual risk rather than nationality. For example, low-risk travellers from current visa countries might in the future be able to enter the UK without a visa once they have registered their biometrics. High-risk travellers will continue to be subject to a level of scrutiny dependent on the risk they pose, before being granted a visa or refused permission to enter the UK.

An accessible visa service for legitimate travellers

- 3.8 We will provide greater accessibility to our customers and increase efficiency as we outsource more visa application services. By the end of 2007, we will be working with commercial partners in 73 different countries, accounting for 87 per cent of current applications. This will mean, for example, that in the cases of India or China it will be possible for visa applicants to register biometrics at 12 different locations by the end of 2007.
- 3.9 We will continue to improve decision quality and will make processes clearer for staff and applicants. We issued new decision quality guidance to staff in January 2007. In response to recommendations from the Independent Monitor for Entry Clearance, we have improved the structure and format of refusal notices. We will extend structured decision-making processes and issue new simplified application forms by the end of 2007.

Welcoming visitors

- 3.10 Although visitors come to the UK for a range of reasons, the vast majority are covered by one general set of immigration rules granting admission for six months for whatever purpose. This does not reflect the varied needs of the modern visitor. We will therefore change the rules governing visitors and explore a range of options by which we can tailor the rights and responsibilities of different visitors, while strengthening our overall control. We will engage with those with an interest, within and outside government, to ensure the new arrangements will be:
- Coherent, transparent and sensitive to customers' needs;
 - Effective in combating potential abuse; and
 - Supported by appropriate compliance and enforcement measures.

IND Review: "strengthen and streamline the law and Immigration Rules, to speed up and simplify the immigration system, including deportation."

- 3.11 This will support our objectives of boosting Britain's economy and making this country easier to visit legally, and of strengthening and simplifying our immigration laws while upholding the security and integrity of our borders. We will consult over 2007, introducing new arrangements in 2008.

Rationalising the visitor category

- 3.12 The main reasons people visit the UK are for tourism, business, to study, or to visit family. The current immigration rules – which have developed piecemeal over time – do not distinguish between these very different purposes. Additionally, whereas a visit to Britain ought, by definition, to be relatively short, this has been eroded by those seeking to abuse the route by overstaying or working here illegally.
- 3.13 We have begun to implement our programme for reform of longer-term migration through the **Points Based System**, which we will be introducing between now and April 2009, with the first part of the system, Tier 1 for highly skilled migrants, to be introduced by April 2008. The new system, advised by the Migration Advisory Committee, will help us better identify and attract migrants who have most to contribute to the UK, and will reduce the scope for abuse. The entry criteria will be more objective, so there will be more certainty of outcome for all. The current two-stage process, in which an employer applies for a work permit in the UK and the migrant then applies for entry clearance abroad, will be abolished. Underpinning the new system will be the concept of sponsorship, making it easier for trusted employers to bring in migrant workers, to whom they have issued a Certificate of Sponsorship. We are working closely with

employers, especially through the Employer Taskforce (established to consult employers on the design of the new system), to ensure that the requirements we make of sponsors meet the needs of business as far as possible.

3.14 We now need to rethink the visitor route from first principles. Our aim is a simpler, clearer and more relevant system for visitors. We propose to divide the visitor rules into categories related directly to the purpose of visit, and clarify an individual's status and entitlements. This would mean having categories for tourist, business, student and sponsored family visitors. We will develop a full package of proposals during 2007, consulting as appropriate, with a view to full introduction of changes by the end of 2008.

3.15 **Tourists** bring substantial economic benefit to the country. We want to ensure that the UK is easy to visit legally. We will pursue a range of measures to enhance the UK's attractiveness as a tourist destination, foster a greater sense of welcome and generate positive perceptions of the value for money of a tourist visa, whilst ensuring that adequate controls are in place. These will include:

- Looking at the number of entries and length of stay allowed with a tourist visa to reflect better the needs of tourists, the vast majority of whom only require leave to enter for periods of less than three months, and whether it should be reduced to this length;
- Exploring specialised or time-limited visas in co-operation with DCMS and VisitBritain. These could include a "Schengen-plus visa" for people already committed to group travel in the EU; a discounted, time-limited "Olympics" visa to help support the promotion of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad and the Games; and different visa products for major events and for visiting arts companies and teams. We will also explore cost options for visas which allow shorter stays and are of limited validity, and longer-term validity visas for more frequent, trusted travellers; and

- By June 2007, establishing a **Visitor Taskforce** so that we can work with partners across and beyond government to seek improvements to our customer service standards and the part we play in welcoming visitors to Britain. The taskforce will involve VisitBritain, UKTI, and members of the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors.

In line with IND's strategic objective to boost Britain's economy, we will work with VisitBritain and the Welcome to Britain Group to promote the UK tourist industry through its forthcoming Welcome Visitor Charter, which pledges to make the UK a more welcoming place to visit in the run-up to 2012.

3.16 The UK is a hub of international business. In consultation with the Department for Trade and Industry, we will improve the way legitimate **Business visitors** are able to come to the UK. Business visitors are fundamentally different from other visitors as they are allowed to undertake short-term business activities in the UK. We will reflect this by creating a separate Business Visitor category, which will also set out the activities that they are entitled to undertake. We will look at a range of options to make travel more flexible, from quick and simple short-term business visit visas to longer-term, multiple entry visas, and whether we can link some of these with expedited clearance at the border through our Registered Traveller Schemes. For example, we will widen the scope of expedited schemes for visa nationals such as Business Express.

3.17 **Student Visitors** bring significant benefits to the UK. At present, visitors to the UK can also study here, and may enter either as a visitor or as a student. There are no rules governing this distinction – it depends almost entirely on what information the student gives an immigration officer on entering the country – which can lead to confusion around their status, entitlements and obligations. We want

to clarify the arrangements for short-term students studying here for six months or less.

3.18 From September 2007, short-term students from countries not subject to a visa regime (coming for six months or less) who do not wish to work will still be able to come to the UK without a visa. However, all will be required to demonstrate that they are attending a registered educational institution, that they can maintain and accommodate themselves during their stay, and they intend to leave at the end of that period.

3.19 Many people come to visit friends and relations in the UK for short periods, for holiday or other reasons, and will continue to be able to do so under the proposed Tourist Visitor category. We also recognise that there are circumstances in which a family member from abroad may wish to come to the UK for a longer period, or need the support of the relation they are visiting in order to be able to do so. We will consult on the creation of a new **Sponsored Family Visitor** category for use in these circumstances.

3.20 The Sponsored Family Visitor route would allow family members in the UK to give stronger support to such applications. This will simplify the process for those applying to come to visit family in the UK as we will be able to verify relationships easily and the willingness of the UK family member to support the application. We will explore options for requiring sponsors to undertake to maintain and accommodate, and fund any non-emergency medical care their sponsored visitors may require during their stay in the UK. We will also examine the status of the sponsor in order to be sure that sponsors can meet their obligations. We could require them to hold settled status in the UK (be it holding British citizenship, EEA nationality, the right of abode in the UK or Indefinite Leave to Remain). We would also examine sanctions against those sponsors who fail to meet their obligations.

3.21 We intend to consult on the options for tourist, business and sponsored family visitors. The following table seeks to summarise how the proposed visitor categories might look in the future.

Category	Tourist		Business		Student		Sponsored Family
MAXIMUM STAY	3 months		6 months		6 months		6 months
	But with potential for short stay visas and longer multiple entry ones						
CONDITIONS	No work No benefits		Defined business activities No benefits		No work No benefits		No work No benefits
ADDITIONAL CONTROLS	No extension beyond the maximum length of stay						
					Study at registered educational establishment		Sponsor to be a defined close relation and be settled in the UK
VISA OPTIONS	Visa	Non Visa	Visa	Non Visa	Visa	Non Visa	There may be an entry clearance requirement
APPEAL STATUS IF VISA REFUSED	On limited grounds		On limited grounds		On limited grounds		Right of Appeal on full grounds

Targeting areas of abuse

3.22 We will also develop a range of potential measures to reduce the scope for abuse of our processes. These will include:

Marriage to partners from overseas – protection for the vulnerable and the skills to integrate

3.23 A forced marriage is one which takes place against the wishes of one of the parties. This is different from an arranged marriage whereby both parties consent to the marriage taking place.

In 2005, our High Commission in Islamabad established the Consular Immigration Link (CIL) Team to meet the rising numbers of forced marriage victims being coerced into sponsoring visa applications, and spouses being abandoned in Pakistan. The CIL Team works closely with the joint FCO and Home Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) to protect vulnerable clients. In 2006 the CIL Team and FMU have assisted over 200 forced marriage victims who have been coerced into sponsoring their husband or wife's entry to the UK.

3.24 There are sometimes situations in which a young person is forced by family pressure into an unwanted union. One party will normally be overseas and need a visa to be able to come to the UK. This will either be a visa to enter the UK as a fiancé(e) and marry here, or the British citizen will have been taken overseas to marry and then apply for a visa for their spouse. We will consult on the following:

- A Code of Practice, building on work carried out by ECOs in Islamabad, in relation to in-depth interviews with couples applying for marriage visas, including scope for views to be given in confidence. At appeal, it would be incumbent on the Immigration Judge both to follow the guidelines in the Code and to ensure that any interview

evidence had been properly obtained and appropriately disclosed;

- Raising the **minimum age of a spouse** and their sponsor from 18 to 21. This would allow the young people involved to have completed their education as well as allowing them to have gained in maturity and possess adequate life skills; and
- In light of the recent changes to settlement in the UK, we will examine the case for introducing a new requirement for those applying for a spouse visa and planning to settle in the UK to pass some form of English test before arrival. This will include consideration of what level of preparation is appropriate.

Sanctions against people who provide false documents and information

3.25 False documents submitted in support of applications are a huge problem when determining if someone should come to the UK; in some countries fraudulent documents are endemic. Currently we co-operate with local law enforcement agencies where false documents are submitted to bring criminal proceedings under their domestic legislation where this is possible. But it remains open to fraudsters to submit further visa applications, and further false documents. We will examine options for ending this abuse, including automatically refusing applications from people who have previously used fraudulent documents in applications unless satisfied that this was without their knowledge.

3.26 When considering the imposition of new obligations on family visitor sponsors, we will also consult on taking powers to place responsibility on sponsors for the overstay or breach of conditions by family visitors. Sponsors who fail to meet their obligations of support could also be sanctioned. If a person is found to have acted in breach of the family sponsor requirements, then future applicants may not be able to cite that individual as a sponsor.

Streamlining and expediting appeals processes

3.27 It is important that all documents provided in support of visa applications are produced at an appropriate stage in the application process rather than later during the appeals process. Appeals should be focused on whether or not the ECO made the correct decision on the basis of the information available at the time, and not based on later evidence which has not been considered by the ECO. Additionally, with fraudulent documents becoming increasingly sophisticated, it is important that all documents are seen by an appropriately skilled person to establish their authenticity before any appeal can be brought. We are already acting to prevent this under the Points Based System and will now examine how to address this problem for those refused entry clearance in the new Sponsored Family Visitor route. We will consult on the fairest way to achieve this.

Global alliances to manage migration

3.28 We will also enhance our watchlists through sharing more data internationally and deeper liaison with UK and overseas law enforcement and security agencies. Our ultimate goal is a model where high value criminal and migration data is easily and securely shared by all EEA countries and those with a visa waiver, subject to domestic data protection and other legal requirements. Intelligence and risk analysis will underpin all border and visa operations. Towards this goal, we will:

- **Promote more data sharing within the EU.** We have already benefited from the introduction of Eurodac, which stores fingerprints of all asylum seekers across the European Union. We are negotiating access to the EU Visa Application System, and we will have access to policing data and Interpol records of lost and stolen passports on the Schengen Information System (SISII) from 2010; and

- **Deepen collaboration with other international partners, such as the Four Countries Group** (the migration authorities of the UK, USA, Australia and Canada). Over recent months the UK, USA and Australia have tested the exchange of a variety of immigration data. This April we aim to agree with our partners a new data-sharing framework for operation from 2009.

IND Review: “working jointly with European and international partners to tackle the challenges of global migration, including measures to address cross-border criminality.”

3.29 Collaboration with EU and international partners to strengthen common border security extends beyond increased data sharing. We support border and visa capacity building in a number of countries, including through the sharing of best practice, and the provision of trainers and equipment. Central to this approach in the EU is the work of **Frontex, the European Border Agency**. We are enthusiastic supporters of Frontex. We have contributed to Frontex operations and made available New Detection Technology to Member States for selected operations at outer EU borders. The strength of the EU external border is an important component in our own border security. We will say more in this area in the forthcoming International Strategy.



Equally important is our work with the police and other agencies and with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), and its international counterparts, to combat organised immigration crime. Organised immigration crime is one of SOCA's top two priorities. SOCA, both in the UK and through collaboration overseas, attacks the gangs and gangleaders who facilitate illegal entry to this country. There have been a number of recent successful prosecutions of immigration gangs. Tackling the gangs is crucial to reducing illegal immigration.

- Increase action with law enforcement agencies, the Airline Liaison Officer (ALO) network and our international partners against counterfeiters and fraudsters;
- Have real-time access to the Interpol Lost and Stolen passport database from 2010;
- Encourage our EU partners to meet the 2009 deadline for fingerprint-enabled documents as soon as possible and to meet the 2005 inter-governmental agreement on common minimum standards for Member States' ID cards;
- Support interoperability between EU Member State passport databases; and
- Work with our international partners to improve issuing and verification processes.

3.30 We will also continue to improve **document security** both at home and abroad. The security of UK and EU passports, with the introduction last year of biometric passports with an image of the holder stored in the chip, continues to improve. The inclusion of fingerprints is due to be rolled out across the EU from 2009. The National Document Fraud Unit (NDFU) and the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) are world-acknowledged centres of document expertise and brief Border Control and UKvisas on countering new document fraud trends and methods. We have refused, and will continue to refuse, to accept foreign travel documents that become subject to systematic abuse. We will:



Chapter 4: Our new offshore border control

- 4.1 Our aim is to build up as rich a knowledge of the travelling public as possible and use this information to stop those who could cause harm to the UK from coming here. We will do this in a manner consistent with data protection legislation.
- 4.2 With biometric visas to help lock down travellers to a single identity, the second part of our offshore border control will be an electronic borders programme.

Electronic borders

- 4.3 Through our **electronic borders (e-Borders)** programme we will capture information on individuals before they travel to the UK, with the aim of authorising or denying permission to set off for Britain. The process will involve carriers sending us passport data prior to travel, both inbound and outbound. The data will be analysed in the Joint e-Borders Operations Centre (J-BOC – operated by the border agencies) and alerts will be issued to the partner agencies on individuals of interest. The capture of information is currently being piloted through Project Semaphore. e-Borders will cover the majority of passenger movements by 2009 and 95 per cent by 2011.

'Project Semaphore' has already captured data on 21 million passenger movements, and issued over 9,000 alerts to the border agencies. By April 2008 it will be capturing 30 million movements annually. Through advance access to information about passenger and crew movements, border agencies are able to take a more pro-active, intelligence-led approach to prevent harmful visitors from coming to the UK. To date over 800 arrests have been made.



For further information see www.misense.org

- 4.4 The **Authority to Carry (ATC)** scheme will cover all passengers who do not pass through a juxtaposed control. Passengers will be checked before take-off or commencement of their journey, allowing us to refuse a carrier the authority to carry passengers to the UK. Passenger details will be checked against appropriate UK watchlists prior to travel, and boarding will be denied where, for example, they are seeking to travel on a passport reported as stolen. During transit, passenger data will continue to be processed and risk assessed in the J-BOC so that the border agencies can take action at the port of arrival in cases of interest or where circumstances have changed since the initial check. ATC will be implemented in phases based on levels of risk from 2009.
- 4.5 In advance of ATC, we are working with carriers to close the gap on those arriving in the UK without appropriate documents. Where carriers copy the documents of passengers coming to the UK, particularly on high-risk routes, this assists with identification, re-documentation and removal of individuals who have disposed of their documents before arrival. With the co-operation of carriers we intend to develop further means of **copying travel documents** in advance of travel.

Juxtaposed controls

4.6 For surface or Channel Tunnel journeys to the UK, we will strengthen juxtaposed controls.



4.7 Juxtaposed controls in France and Belgium have contributed to a 70 per cent reduction in unfounded asylum claims since 2002. The juxtaposed process is an excellent example of what we can achieve when we work with our European partners. We will build on this success by:

- Sharing more intelligence and working more closely with our overseas counterparts;
- Aligning our checks with the French and Belgian authorities wherever possible, enabling a faster, more efficient process for travellers;
- Modernising our vehicle and freight controls over 2007–09, for example integrating Automatic Number Plate Recognition and a range of new technologies to detect people hiding in vehicles; and
- Introducing more automation, linking e-Borders and using biometric checks to facilitate secure clearance.

Airline Liaison Officers

4.8 To further strengthen offshore controls, we will reinforce our global network of overseas border security advisers.



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4.9 **Airline Liaison Officers (ALOs)** have a particularly important role in helping to check that people have the right documents before boarding; the use of forged documentation and swapping of travel documents and boarding cards after check-in are common methods of abuse. Supported by intelligence and risk assessment, ALOs have dramatically reduced the numbers of inadequately documented passengers arriving in the UK. 150,000 people without proper documents have been prevented from boarding aircraft to the UK in the last five years alone. Fifty-five staff now operate in 32 countries, supported by a rapid response team. The ALOs also work closely with other countries' Liaison Officers and local officials, and help others build their own networks. We will in 2007:

- Integrate the ALO role more closely into border control intelligence systems;
- Improve links with local law enforcement;
- Establish more formal co-operation agreements, as in Johannesburg, South Africa, between Liaison Officers from different countries, and host nations;

- Improve carrier training and help carriers implement the Authority to Carry scheme; and
- Examine the concept of a Sea Carrier Liaison Officer, who could perform a similar function to the ALO at major maritime ports of embarkation to the UK.

A stronger UK border

Biometric capture

5.1 The most reliable identifiers are biometrics. We will exploit the global roll-out of biometric systems to enhance our identity management processes at the border, using all types of biometric capture and verification of biometric passports, ID cards and visas. We will start to issue biometric immigration documents and complete roll-out of biometric visas by 2008. By summer 2007, frontline staff at all major ports will be able to read the biometric data in e-enabled passports and ID cards and compare it to the biometrics of passengers presenting those documents.

IND Review: “by 2011, require non-EEA nationals to have unique, secure IDs before they are allowed to travel to Britain, so that entry and exit can be tracked, prior criminal activity in the UK can be identified and permission to travel can be refused.”

5.2 To meet the commitment made in the IND Review to require a unique, secure identity from all non-EEA nationals by 2011 we will, in consultation with government and industry and with due consideration to economic and regulatory impact, roll out capabilities to **capture biometrics** from all non-EEA nationals not previously biometrically registered with the UK on arrival, and check them against our watchlists. This will enable us to:

- Refuse individuals at the border who are known to be a threat;
- Prevent people who have been refused entry from circumventing the control by trying again in a different identity;
- Clamp down on purported clandestine entry – people who have passed through a non-EEA border control point at a UK entry point will no longer be able to present themselves inland to Border and Immigration Agency offices claiming to have arrived clandestinely; and

- Link people encountered in country with the identity in which they arrived, eliminating a spectrum of abuse and making it easier to re-document and remove abusers.

Fixing all non-EEA identities by 2011 will provide a robust defence against many existing patterns of immigration abuse as well as playing an important role in national security and the fight against criminality from overseas.

5.3 We will develop models for **joint biometric capture** whereby other countries can capture biometrics on our behalf, both through the Four Countries Group and the EU BIODEV trial. The more we can share biometric collection, the greater the benefits for industry, law enforcement agencies and most of all for the traveller, who may only have to register once for multiple purposes.

We will send a strong message that the UK welcomes bona fide travellers, but will prevent dangerous and undesirable individuals from entering our country. People who abuse our hospitality are unlikely to be allowed to return.

Powers and joint working at the border

5.4 Using our **border security network**, we ensure that specialist agencies operating on the front line both in the UK and overseas through the Border Management Programme (the Border and Immigration Agency, HMRC, UKvisas, police forces and SOCA) share intelligence, work collaboratively to increase coverage, strengthen our response, and ensure that border threats are met by those equipped with the right skills and knowledge. Using the provisions of the UK Borders Bill, currently before Parliament, as a starting point, we will keep the powers of the borders agencies under review to ensure they are legally and operationally aligned so that, for example, any border agency could deal with a vehicle at any port containing differing nationals of immigration concern and carrying suspected

contraband. We will look to enhance the sharing of powers if required, through further legislative mechanisms.

5.5 Early trials have already resulted in the arrest of offenders who would previously have been undetected. Co-operation will spawn new areas of working. Our objective is a border security network with powers to tackle all threats to the border, working together to form a comprehensive border defence combined with deeper targeted activity by each individual agency. We will develop formal agreements on inter-agency collaboration by July 2007 and put in place practical co-operation across all ports over 2007 and 2008. An annual delivery plan will be produced and regularly reviewed by the Asylum and Migration Cabinet Committee.



5.6 We will give **immigration officers new powers** to defend our border. The UK Borders Bill includes a number of measures to strengthen the border, tackle immigration crime and underpin the border security network:

- Greater powers for immigration officers to intervene at the border on behalf of the police to combat non-immigration crime;
- Tough measures to tackle organised immigration criminals. Foreign nationals helping people enter the UK illegally, for whatever reason, will no longer be able to hide behind the fact that their criminal activity was undertaken abroad. We are also strengthening our prosecution powers to make clear that facilitators or traffickers who are active at our ports will be arrested;

- A power to require those subject to immigration control to apply for a biometric immigration document. We will begin issuing these documents in 2008; and
- A new statutory gateway for information sharing between HMRC, the police and the Border and Immigration Agency. This consolidates and builds on existing gateways with HMRC and is an essential requirement for effective cross-government working in the fight against organised crime and illegal immigration.

IND Review: “enhance the powers and surveillance capability of our border service, to enforce our physical borders more effectively and deter illegal entry, and make it a visible, uniformed presence.”

Common Travel Area and movements of small craft

5.7 The **Common Travel Area (CTA)** consists of the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland. Movement without clearance for all nationals of the CTA is an important component of the special relations which exist between the peoples of these islands, and provides long-established political, economic and social benefits. Equally, the use of **small craft** either by air or sea between the UK and its neighbours for business or pleasure is an important component of modern tourism and communications. However, both present immigration risks.



5.8 To counter these risks, we run intelligence-led enforcement and security controls on inbound traffic from other parts of the CTA; joint operations between UK and Irish law enforcement agencies successfully prevent foreign nationals attempting to cross the boundary illegally in both directions. Similar risk-based interventions take place on small craft and general aviation traffic. But more is needed. Building on action to date, we will:

- Monitor all major air and sea movements across CTA borders via e-Borders by 2011;
- Share more data with our Irish counterparts and increase the number of joint operations;
- Deepen coverage of the CTA borders by closer collaboration between UK border agencies;
- Explore the potential for additional checks on passengers travelling within the CTA, consulting CTA authorities and industry;
- Review the rules governing CTA border activity, based on the principle that CTA nationals are not subject to immigration control on the internal borders; and
- Modernise the arrangements for clearance of individuals coming to the UK by general and business aviation and small sea ports, developing web-based solutions through e-Borders to replace the current reporting system, in consultation with other border agencies and industry.

New skills, new processes

5.9 We will increase the skills, equipment and visibility of our border controls. All our frontline staff will be uniformed by the end of 2007.



Immigration officers trial new uniforms

5.10 We will have clearly identified border control zones at all major ports by the end of 2008. Our border control staff are our most important asset in providing a secure and welcoming frontier. We will ensure that they have the right training and skills for the job. We will continue to use and develop New Detection Technology, one key means of frustrating clandestine entry, such as CO₂ and heartbeat monitors.

5.11 At larger ports, **automated barriers** using biometrics will enable clearance to be expedited for many passengers. The key principle is that passengers for whom a biometric identity check is sufficient will be cleared by the automated barrier, which will make real-time checks against our watchlist. Those refused by the gates or of higher risk or without reliable biometric documents will be examined by immigration staff. Most EEA nationals will in future be able to use the automated barriers once they have secure, biometrically enabled documents.

5.12 This model builds on the IRIS system and *miSensePlus*, a proof of concept trial supporting the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Simplifying Passenger Travel (SPT) initiative (supported by airlines, airports, government authorities and technology suppliers).

IRIS (Iris Recognition Immigration System) is a quick, convenient and secure way to clear immigration controls, open to British citizens, and foreign nationals with permission to enter the UK. Those enrolled are able to use automated biometric gates at selected ports in the UK, making their journey easier. By the end of February 2007 there were over 67,000 registered users and over 250,000 crossings. It is particularly attractive to frequent business travellers. We will expand such schemes in the future to more travellers.

5.13 There will not be a faceless border. Automated controls will be supervised and, where necessary, validated by immigration officers who will be able to intervene to provide assistance or further scrutiny, if required.



Exit controls – counting people out

5.14 In 2006 we began to check more departing passengers. Under Project Semaphore, we are processing data on passenger departures, enabling targeted interventions using mobile teams where appropriate. We have the ability to establish fully staffed **embarkation controls** very quickly in response to specific threats and currently operate these on a risk-assessed basis at major ports.

5.15 We will check the majority of passengers in and out of the UK by 2009. This will build a complete picture of movements in and out of the UK that will buttress national security, support the fight against terrorism and crime, and transform the Border and Immigration Agency's intelligence capabilities. We will know which people do or do not comply with our rules, and intervene where required, leading to huge benefits for the country as a whole.

The *miSensePlus* trial has successfully tested elements of the SPT Ideal Process Flow vision which seeks to improve passenger movement and enhance security by capturing biometrics for identity verification at key points in the departures and arrivals process. Recently completed at Heathrow Terminal 3, *miSensePlus* captured all 13 biometrics, as well as biographical information, to allow background checks to be conducted on enrollees and membership cards to be issued to verify identity on arrival in the UK. Once the checks had been satisfactorily completed, the membership card containing biometric information was activated for use at the automated barrier to verify identity on arrival in the UK.

Chapter 6: Making it happen

Partnerships

- 6.1 We cannot achieve our aims in isolation and we will work in partnership not only with the rest of government but also with our international partners, industry and the public.
- 6.2 Our plans to secure our borders do not just affect how we work within the Border and Immigration Agency but also with other border agencies (police, SOCA and HMRC) and the UK's security and intelligence agencies. We already enjoy a close, collaborative partnership through the Joint Border Operations Centre. Through the **border security network** we will put in place formal agreement covering collaboration on joint intelligence, mobile teams and facilities by July 2007 and develop further new forms of joint working across the UK by the end of 2008.
- 6.3 We will use new cross-government mechanisms established to improve enforcement action and co-operation with **other government departments** (particularly DfES, DCMS, FCO, DfT and DTI) and bodies with an interest in transport, education, tourism and travel to take forward our plans.
- 6.4 We will, by June 2007, establish a **Visitor Taskforce** so that we can work with partners across and beyond government to improve our customer service standards and the part we play in welcoming visitors to Britain. The Taskforce will involve VisitBritain, UKTI and members of the travel, tourism and hospitality sector. We will also ensure that we work with the wider tourist industry to continue to promote the UK as a destination of choice.
- 6.5 We recognise that there are a number of **other organisations, professional, educational and NGOs** with an interest in migration and border and visa issues specifically. We will continue to engage them and have promised to consult on changes to the visitor category and visa rules.
- 6.6 We also recognise that some proposals will have an impact on the **travel industry**. We are committed to continuing engagement. We want to ensure that we benefit from the knowledge and skills built up by the industry to deliver a programme which will not only preserve the security of our borders, but also facilitate speedy and smooth legitimate travel with the minimum necessary regulatory burden. We know that the border must be both welcoming and secure.
- 6.7 We will enhance our already good, collaborative relationships with European partners, both bilaterally and within the EU, and with international partners in the developed and developing world to make borders stronger, while promoting schemes to expedite clearance of legitimate UK and other travellers. Fundamentally, we want to enhance our working relationships internationally to develop our ability to share intelligence and tackle abuse at source. Specifically, in 2007 we will contribute to the review of Frontex and strengthen our contribution to EU border security. We are also working within the **Four Countries Group** (the USA, Canada, Australia and the UK) to agree in 2007 a framework for data sharing that will be operational from 2009. This area will be explored in more detail in the forthcoming International Strategy.
- 6.8 A global approach to data and identity management that is joined up between government and industry, working to common international standards, promises substantial long-term benefits for all. Streamlining juxtaposed controls, through data sharing, automation and joint working, is one area where collaboration with sea and rail operators, hauliers and coach operators is critical. Another key partner is IATA, the global trade organisation for the air transport industry, which comprises 265 airlines representing 94 per cent of international scheduled air traffic.

- 6.9 We will continue to work with all concerned to minimise the impact and maximise the benefits. We will conduct and publish full Regulatory Impact Assessments as necessary and consult as appropriate.
- 6.10 Finally, we recognise that expediting border movements and improving border security requires the tolerance and support of the travelling public. We do not take this for granted.

Future funding

- 6.11 The overall timetable for developing and implementing our proposals will be determined by our total resources: central funding, efficiency savings and income from charging. It will also need to take account of technical and commercial feasibility.
- 6.12 Many of our proposals are about building on what we currently do with our existing resources. Some of them – such as utilisation of advances in technology – will generate savings in the longer term. This will also help us to off-set costs for some of the new initiatives we plan to implement.
- 6.13 We also charge for some of the services, such as visas, and we will ensure that we are charging a fair and economic rate for those services that reflects the true cost while recognising the economic benefits that travel and migration bring.

Annex:
Summary milestones

Key Deliverables	
2006–2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-arrival data covering 20 million passenger movements on 55 routes • Roll-out of first phase of biometric visas • Intelligence-led exit controls in place at selected ports, supported by mobile teams and pre-arrival data • Roll-out of e-passport readers at UK and juxtaposed control ports • Specific arrangements for short-term students coming here for six months or less • Legislation on new powers introduced • Pilot of uniforms at borders
2007–2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-arrival data covering 30 million passenger movements over 90 routes • Global roll-out of biometric visas complete • Further development of intelligence-led exit controls, supported by pre-arrival outbound data • Visa Waiver Test run against all non-EEA countries • Review of Direct Airside Transit Visa (DATV) regime and Transit Without Visa (TWOV) concession • Commercial partnership arrangements in place to deliver more efficient and customer-orientated visa service • Risk Assessment Units rolled out to cover 75 per cent of all visa applications • Consultation on changes to rules for visitors • Roll-out of Tier 1 of Points Based System • Consultation on introduction of English language testing for those seeking to settle in the UK through marriage • Clarifying processes – introduce new application forms and guidance for entry clearance staff, applicants and sponsors • Inter-agency border co-operation framework agreed • 4CG data-sharing framework agreed • Visible, uniformed border service in place at major ports, including Heathrow Terminal 5
2008–2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-arrival data covering 100 million passenger movements over 90 routes • Biometric immigration documents introduced for people here for work or study • Changes to visa regimes • Roll-out of remainder of Points Based System • Changes to rules for visitors (following consultation) • Inter-agency border co-operation framework implemented • Uniform standards in place for all frontline border control staff
2009–2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biometric-enabled automated clearance points implemented at selected ports • Fingerprint biometric included in UK passport • Majority of passenger traffic covered by e-Borders • 4CG data-sharing framework in place • Introduce an Authority to Carry scheme
2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique, secure identity required for all non-EEA nationals travelling to the UK • 95 per cent of passenger traffic covered by e-Borders • Biometric-enabled automated gates at all major ports

