

South & West STHF IMB - Annual Report 2025 – Action Plan

Ref	Recommendation / Issue / Concern	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted	Response	Progress Ongoing or completed	Planned Implementation Date
TO THE MINISTER					
1.	Review and amend Home Office policy to allow detained individuals with pre-existing medical conditions access to their prescription medication with the appropriate level of medical support and advice.	Partially accepted	<p>A review of access to medication is currently ongoing. As part of that work, consideration will be given to what if any medication detained persons can access. As such Border Force cannot agree in full to allowing access to any medication they might hold.</p> <p>This activity is being explored in conjunction with wider Home Office law enforcement partners to ensure consistency and alignment across detention settings. Engagement with policy, legal and operational stakeholders is continuing, alongside initial commercial preparatory activity to inform possible future engagement with the market. Any progression beyond this exploratory stage remains subject to governance, approvals and wider departmental decisions.</p> <p>Action taken:</p> <p>Ports continue to follow current instructions. For ports without access to Aeromed, these include following local procedures to contact a medical practitioner/paramedic. At a minimum this includes the option to call for assistance on 111 (and 999 for emergencies).</p> <p>Action planned:</p> <p>BF continues to explore jointly with IE, options for detained persons to safely access medication for the short period of time individuals are detained in STHFs at ports. This includes the use of telemedicine to support access to healthcare advice.</p>	Ongoing	01/10/2028
TO THE UK BORDER FORCE / HOME OFFICE IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT					
2.	Inform the IMB when someone is being detained in order to facilitate face-to-face contact and enhance the monitoring process.	Partially accepted	<p>Border Force recognises the importance of the IMB's statutory role and the need for members to have access to relevant information and evidence to support effective monitoring and reporting, to support effective monitoring and reporting, including the value of speaking directly with detained persons. However, BF cannot commit to informing IMB every time someone is detained at any port.</p> <p>Border Force's priority remains the timely and lawful processing of detained persons. Decisions on detention and case progression are taken independently of IMB engagement considerations and in line with operational and legal requirements. IMB notifications will therefore need to be managed in a way that does not delay or interrupt processing activity, particularly in high-throughput or time-critical operational environments.</p> <p>Action taken:</p> <p>Local arrangements or agreements are in place at many of the smaller ports for BF to notify the IMB when a person enters detention. These local arrangements will continue until any potential new options have been considered.</p> <p>Action planned:</p> <p>Border Force will continue to work in partnership with IMBs to support members in carrying out their duties, whilst also taking account of operational pressures, local capacity, and the need to prioritise core operational activity.</p>	Ongoing	01/05/2027

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			BF will work with IMB to understand the precise needs of the IMB (clarity of expectations) to ensure a reasonable national approach can be agreed upon which aligns operational and/or functional priorities for both parties. As appropriate, any new agreement may need to be updated in the MoU.		
3.	Share the standards for STHFs with IMBs.	Accept	BF agree to sharing the STHF Technical Standards with IMB. These standards are currently under review and being updated, and BF would welcome IMB feedback as part of this work. Although the technical standards apply to new builds, they may also be used to influence significant improvements. STHFs at ports are provided under Trader Provided Free (TPF) legislation and whilst Border Force is committed to working with port authorities to meet all required standards for border infrastructure and facilities, port infrastructures are complex, and Border Force is dependent on port operators aligning to the technical standards.	Ongoing	01/05/2027
4.	Include use of force in the monthly data tables.	Not accepted	There is no requirement under the current IMB/BF Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) to include use of force (UoF) data monthly, as the emphasis remains on immediate, incident-based reporting to preserve the integrity and timeliness of oversight. As per the MoU, Border Force will continue to make arrangements to ensure the Chair, or another designated member of the relevant Board, is notified without delay of any UoF that has resulted in injury and/or use of force beyond compliant handcuffing in accordance with Rule 36 of the Short-term Holding Facility Rules 2018.	N/A	
TO THE FACILITY MANAGER / DETENTION CONTRACTOR					
5.	Ensure that the IMB is informed about any instances of the use of force without delay.	Accepted	Under the current IMB/BF Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) the emphasis remains on immediate, incident-based reporting to preserve the integrity and timeliness of oversight. As per the MoU, Border Force will continue to make arrangements to ensure the Chair, or another designated member of the relevant Board, is notified without delay of any UoF that has resulted in injury and/or use of force beyond compliant handcuffing in accordance with Rule 36 of the Short-term Holding Facility Rules 2018. Action taken: A reminder was issued across BF in April 2025 including a summary of incident types and when to inform IMB. Action planned: A further reminder will be issued to Border Force staff.	Completed	