

	Concern Addressed By	HMIP Concern	Home Office Response to HMIP Concern Accept/Partial Accept/Reject Including Action Already Taken / Proposed to Address Concern
1	Home Office	Priority concern Safeguarding referrals were not always made when necessary to the Police aux Frontières (PAF) and there was no record of referrals for vulnerable detainees who were re-trafficked.	<p>Accepted A process is in place to ensure, where appropriate, safeguarding referrals are made to the PAF. However, HMIP has highlighted one occasion where Border Force did not refer an individual of 70 years of age or over as vulnerable, in line with that process.</p> <p>A record of referrals also exists for cases referred to the PAF. In the two cases highlighted by HMIP, although a copy of the original referral was not available, the explanatory case notes included details of the referral made.</p> <p>Action Taken Whilst Border Force consider these as isolated incidents, all staff have been reminded how to apply the guidance on adults at risk in immigration detention and to include full details of referrals, including copies of original referral forms, on Home Office systems. This will be subject to continued assurance,</p> <p>Action Proposed Local vulnerability training materials will be reviewed to consider whether changes are required to emphasise age vulnerabilities more clearly.</p>
2	Home Office	Priority concern Data were not systematically collated or used to help improve outcomes. For example, there were no data on the number or outcomes of PAF safeguarding referrals or on the outcome of age assessments, and there was no analysis of the reasons for longer detentions.	<p>Partially Accepted Border Force accepts that further work is required to enhance data capture and analysis of detention, safeguarding and age assessment data. However, whilst Border Force continue to engage in positive on-going discussions with the PAF there is no requirement for them to provide feedback on individuals referred to them by Border Force. As a competent law enforcement agency, who operate under their country's laws and regulations, Border Force does not track individuals once entrusted into their care. As such, Border Force cannot accept this recommendation in full.</p> <p>Action Taken Border Force are currently reviewing detention data held on Home Office systems to improve data quality and explore how that data can be used for analysis.</p> <p>Action proposed Border Force will continue to identify and improve data quality and analysis, including using reports to influence positive changes and improvements to reduce detention lengths. This includes access to enhanced vulnerability data from April 2025 which will provide a more detailed view of safeguarding cases across Border Force and juxtaposed locations. Separately, work is also ongoing to improve age assessment recording at juxtaposed locations.</p>

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3	Home Office	Priority concern There was weak governance of use of force by Border Force staff.	<p>Accepted Border Force has a clear governance process in place at Juxtaposed locations for the assurance of all use of force incidents by senior officers. However, Border Force accepts that improvements need to be made to ensure that sufficient audit trails of these reviews are in place.</p> <p>Action taken Representatives from juxtaposed locations attend a Border Force coercive powers board which discuss use of force incidents across Border Force and any issues or emerging concerns which might require further assurance activity.</p> <p>Action proposed In addition to attending the national coercive powers board, Border Force will establish a local Use of Force board for juxtaposed locations within the next 6 months. The board will ensure that all reviews of use of force incidents are recorded and any action points which emerge are fed back to the appropriate teams.</p>
4	Home Office	Priority concern The holding rooms in Coquelles Freight and Coquelles Tourist were in poor physical condition.	<p>Partially Accepted Whilst we accept that the holding rooms at Coquelles are in poor physical condition, Eurotunnel are responsible for detention accommodation and improvements at Coquelles.</p> <p>Action Taken Senior Border Force managers meet with Eurotunnel on a monthly basis where issues with accommodation and or infrastructure improvements are discussed.</p> <p>Action proposed Whilst Border Force will continue positively engaging with Eurotunnel to discuss issues and required infrastructure improvements, any work is dependent on the operator and their agreement to taking forward.</p>
5	Home Office & Mitie C&C	Priority concern The longstanding problem of poor phone and radio signals undermined communication and use of professional interpretation and had, in one case, delayed a Border Force officer's attempt to call a medical emergency.	<p>Accepted Border Force accepts there are signal issues in this particular location. There are panic buttons and CCTV in operation, and these are linked to the main building for use in emergencies.</p> <p>Action Taken While Mitie C&C implements their IT infrastructure project, staff have been reminded of how to access the Government Wi-Fi network on their work devices and make Wi-Fi calls, along with use of panic buttons during emergencies.</p> <p>Action proposed It is not clear whether there is a full, satisfactory solution at this stage. Mitie C&C plan to install updated signal booster antennas, Wi-Fi modems and updated telephones (subject to Eurotunnel's agreement).</p> <p>Border Force will continue to work with Mitie C&C to explore further improvements which can be made to their IT infrastructure.</p>
6	Home Office	Key concern Border Force staff were not sufficiently familiar with Home Office guidance on age assessment: in every case we looked at, officers had failed to apply the correct age assessment test.	<p>Partially Accepted Border Force does not accept staff were unfamiliar with guidance or failed to apply the correct age assessment test. At juxtaposed locations, unless an individual's physical appearance and demeanour strongly suggest that they are significantly over 18, they will be considered a child. The 4 cases highlighted were all considered significantly over 18 however Border Force accepts that the records in these cases did not make this clear.</p> <p>Border Force does accept that guidance could benefit from being more specific to Juxtaposed locations to reflect its unique processes</p> <p>Action Taken</p>

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			<p>Reminders have been sent to staff to accurately record the rationale and decision-making process when conducting an assessment. This will continue to be subject to assurance.</p> <p>Border Force is working with policy colleagues to provide express reference to the juxtaposed controls in the Assessing Age guidance.</p> <p>Action proposed Border Force will continue to work with policy colleagues to provide express reference to the juxtaposed controls in the Assessing Age guidance.</p>
7	Home Office	Key concern Responses to complaints were sometimes very slow, with one taking 10 months. Responses were generally helpful but did not always cover key issues that had been raised, including in one case a concern about discrimination.	<p>Accepted Border Force recognises that not all complaints are responded to within the Service Level Agreement (95% responded to within 20 working days).</p> <p>Action Taken Through a transformation project, Border Force has rolled-out phase one of a training programme which has focused on improving complaint responses. This has made a significant improvement to Border Force's communication with customers -- responses are now more informative, transparent and customer focussed and overall responses within SLA are being achieved at a rate of approximately 77%, (up from a rate of 63% seen pre-transformation).</p> <p>Action proposed Border Force are building an assurance process for complaints to further improve the quality of complaints management. Border Force are also enhancing performance MI reporting to regional and senior leaders. Further training is planned building on the success of the phase 1 transformation roll-out and positive feedback, to provide clearer, more empathetic responses to customers.</p>
8	Home Office & Mitie Care Custody	Key concern Detainees were not routinely offered the use of mobile phones or a phone call to family or friends after their induction.	<p>Partially Accepted</p> <p>Detained individuals are routinely offered the use of mobile phones or a phone call to family or friends after their induction. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as where facilitation is suspected and the detained person is considered vulnerable, this may not be offered until such concerns have been investigated.</p> <p>The welfare of those detained is paramount and limiting any access to a phone would be for the shortest time possible. This is in line with the STHF Rules (2018) which allows for reasonable limits and conditions on a detained person's use of the telephone in certain circumstances.</p> <p>Action proposed Border Force will ensure Mitie C&C understand all detained individuals should be offered a phone call, unless Border Force has identified risks (as above). Border Force staff will ensure this is for the shortest time possible and advise Mitie C&C as soon as any restrictions can be lifted, and phone calls can be allowed.</p> <p>Border Force also recognises HMIP observed not all detained individuals had the opportunity at induction to retrieve phone numbers from their personal mobile phones. Border Force will therefore remind staff of this process and reissue any supporting guidance.</p>