



‘Exporting the border’? An inspection of e-Borders

October 2012 – March 2013



John Vine CBE QPM

Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration



Our Purpose

We provide independent scrutiny of the UK's border and immigration functions to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Our Vision

To drive improvement within the UK's border and immigration functions, to ensure they deliver fair, consistent and respectful services.

All Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration inspection reports can be found at: www.independent.gov.uk/icinspector

Email us: chiefinspectorukba@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

**Write to us: Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration,
5th Floor, Globe House,
89 Eccleston Square,
London, SW1V 1PN
United Kingdom**

Contents

	FOREWORD	2
1.	Executive Summary	3
2.	Summary of Recommendations	7
3.	The Inspection: In order to assist readers we have provided a summary of the key terms used in this report.	8
4.	Background	11
5.	Passenger Data	16
6.	The National Border Targeting Centre	22
7.	How e-Borders is used at ports of entry	32
8.	Have the benefits of e-Borders been realised?	36
	Appendix A – Inspection Framework and Criteria	45
	Appendix B – Statutory Basis for e-Borders	46
	Appendix C – Glossary	47
	Acknowledgements	51

FOREWORD FROM JOHN VINE CBE QPM INDEPENDENT CHIEF INSPECTOR OF BORDERS AND IMMIGRATION



The e-Borders programme has been in development for over a decade now, and has cost nearly half a billion pounds of public money, with many millions more to be invested over the coming years. The intention of e-borders was to 'export the border' by preventing passengers considered a threat to the UK from travelling, as well as delivering more efficient immigration control.

I found that the sharing of intelligence and e-Borders information had resulted in significant benefits for the police, enabling them to arrest thousands of suspects and wanted individuals. Advance passenger information was also being used effectively to identify individuals who had left the UK following an adverse immigration decision.

I was encouraged to find that e-Borders high profile alerts were being used to inform deployment decisions at Heathrow to intercept high-risk individuals at the arrivals gate. Unfortunately, alerts were not being used in this way at the other ports I inspected, where all arriving passengers were allowed to proceed to passport control. The vast majority of routine immigration alerts, however, added little value because the information was already available to the Border Force Officers at the port of arrival.

I found that e-Borders had not delivered the planned increases in passenger data collection. Only 65% of all passenger movements into and out of the UK were covered. This was primarily because the original business case had not anticipated risks relating to the compatibility of the e-Borders scheme with EU law, nor the lack of alignment with rail and maritime operations. However, since April 2012, I was pleased to see that advance passenger information was being received in relation to all non-EU flights.

[REDACTED]

In relation to the interception and seizure of prohibited and restricted goods at the border, I found that poor data quality and the prioritisation of immigration over customs work had resulted in National Border Targeting Centre staff being unable to deal with all the matches generated by the Customs IT database. As a result, over a ten-month period over 649,000 records relating to potential drug and tobacco smuggling were deleted from the Semaphore system without being read. These deletions had a significant impact on the ability of staff at the border to seize prohibited and restricted goods and deal with those responsible.

The e-Borders programme has yet to deliver many of the anticipated benefits originally set out in 2007. It is no longer an aim of the programme to facilitate risk-based controls, which would have seen the levels of immigration checks on arrival tailored to the perceived risk posed by passengers, nor has it delivered a system to count all foreign national passengers in and out of the UK.

The Home Office should now define clearly what the aims of the e-Borders programme are ahead of the new procurement exercise, and be transparent about what e-Borders will deliver and by when.

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

John Vine CBE QPM
Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

1. Executive Summary

1. Ten years ago, work commenced in the Home Office on a programme aimed at delivering a modern and efficient model of immigration control. The proposed solution, called the e-Borders programme, involved the collection of Advance Passenger Information (API) for all scheduled inbound and outbound passengers, in advance of travel. The intention was to 'export the border,' preventing passengers from travelling where they were considered a threat to the UK, while at the same time delivering a more efficient model of immigration control, targeting resources to risk and improving passenger clearance times through the immigration control.
2. In 2004, a pilot was launched to deliver Project Semaphore, which aimed to test the e-Borders concept in advance of the procurement of the main e-Borders solution. This was considered successful and resulted in the Home Office Group Investment Board releasing funds to deliver the e-Borders programme in 2006.
3. A June 2007 version of the e-Borders business case described a number of anticipated benefits being delivered, which were linked to a gradual build-up of the volumes of API collected until the achievement of full operating capability in March 2014. This would see API being collected from all passengers travelling on scheduled services on all transport types into and out of the UK.
4. This inspection examined how Border Force had developed and used its e-Borders system to:
 - identify and track the movements of terrorists and national security targets;
 - identify individuals wanted by the police for a range of criminal offences;
 - facilitate an intelligence-led approach to identifying those who have abused or seek to abuse immigration control and/or UK customs laws, and where appropriate prevent their travel to the UK;
 - expedite the processing of bona fide passengers through UK border control; and
 - deliver a range of benefits outlined in the programme business cases, in co-operation with partner agencies and across government.
5. We found that the e-Borders system was providing real benefits to law enforcement agencies. It was providing valuable intelligence to the Police, SOCA and the Security Services, who all regarded e-Borders information as a key component in the overall intelligence picture relating to the fight against terrorism and serious organised crime.

We found that the e-Borders system was providing real benefits to law enforcement agencies

6. E-Borders information has resulted in the arrests of thousands of individuals wanted by the police in connection with various offences, including murder and rape. The facility to conduct travel history searches using e-Borders was also a valuable tool in the investigation of crime, because it allowed law enforcement agencies to establish the travel history of individuals of interest. The scale of these benefits should increase further as and when the volume of passenger data increases.

7. E-Borders information was also being used successfully to identify individuals who had left the UK voluntarily following an adverse immigration decision. This meant that immigration records could be updated with accurate information and files could be closed. It also helped to reduce the risk that Immigration Enforcement would waste resources looking for individuals who had already left the UK.
8. The ability to conduct travel history searches was also a valuable tool in helping Border Force and Immigration Enforcement with immigration casework decisions. The former UK Border Agency also used the movement search facility to check whether those issued with UK visas had overstayed. The results of these checks assisted in keeping risk profiles up to date. The National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC) was delivering a series of awareness workshops for staff working in ports about the movement search facility in order to encourage further take-up of this service.
9. We found that the e-Borders programme had failed to deliver the planned increases in API and this had a detrimental impact on the delivery of all anticipated benefits. In light of these difficulties, revised data collection targets were set in early 2012, but by the time of our inspection even these targets had been dispensed with, primarily because of:
- legal difficulties surrounding the collection of API on travel routes within the European Union; and
 - a failure to test the e-Borders concept in the rail and maritime sectors.
10. The failure to identify these risks in the 2007 business plan meant that the original data collection targets, set out in the e-Borders delivery plan, were unrealistic and were always likely to be missed. As a result, at the time of our inspection API was collected in respect of just 65% of total passenger movements; this is against an original target of at least 95% by December 2010. However, since April 2012, API was being received in relation to all non-EU flights.
11. The failure to meet key programme milestones resulted in the contract with the IT supplier being terminated in July 2010. This meant that e-Borders continued to rely on the original pilot Semaphore IT platform, although enhancements had been made over time to ensure continuity of service.
12. Further revised targets for air passenger data were to be put to Ministers following our inspection, along with a proposal to drop specific targets for rail and maritime data. This was sensible given the ongoing problems in the rail and maritime sectors.
- 13 – 15 [REDACTED]
16. The e-Borders programme business case indicated that e-Borders would allow foreign national passengers to be counted in and counted out of the UK, providing more reliable data for the purposes of migration and population statistics, and in planning the provision of public services. However, we found that the data set collected by e-Borders was not extensive enough for these purposes. A report from the Office for National Statistics¹ stated that e-Borders data would not be of use for the purposes of migration statistics unless virtually universal data capture could be achieved. The best case scenario was that no migrant count could be produced based on e-Borders data until 2018 at the earliest.

E-Borders information has resulted in the arrests of thousands of individuals wanted by the police in connection with various offences, including murder and rape

This had a detrimental impact on the delivery of all anticipated benefits

¹ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-news/delivering-statistical-benefits-from-e-borders/index.html>

17. The NBTC prioritised the processing of e-Borders matches concerning individuals considered a potential threat to national security – the Pre-Departure Checks Scheme (PDCS). There is a process in place designed to prevent such individuals from boarding an aircraft. This was an important capability introduced in July 2012, which had the potential to enhance aviation security and protect carriers’ assets.

18 – 19 [REDACTED]

20. While the e-Borders programme had the technical capability to receive data from the General Aviation (GA) sector, there is a need to improve the amount of passenger data received from GA operators. At the time of our inspection Border Force was aware of the limitations of the current reporting regime for GA flights. Border Force needs to resolve these issues quickly to ensure that the GA sector is managed effectively.

21. No consistent reporting regime was in place to inform Border Force of an intended arrival in respect of General Maritime (GM). The lack of a remote risk assessment for GM passengers and crew needs to be addressed.

22. NBTC did not use e-Borders information to prevent the arrival of a passenger, even where it was known that the passenger would be refused entry on arrival because they had either been deported or excluded from the UK previously. This was surprising given the prominence given to this benefit by Border Force when engaging with stakeholders prior to procuring the full e-Borders solution in 2006/07. Despite this, e-Borders alerts concerning such individuals were valuable to other parts of the former UK Border Agency (the ‘Agency’), in addition to frontline managers at ports, because they provided advance warning of such arrivals. This allowed managers to allocate resources to meet these individuals at the aircraft gate. However, a lack of guidance to operational staff on dealing with such alerts resulted in an inconsistent approach between ports.

NBTC did not use e-Borders information to prevent the arrival of a passenger, even where it was known that the passenger would be refused entry on arrival

23. Although there was a statutory power to refuse entry overseas it was no longer used but Border Force could recommend to carriers that boarding be denied. This was a practice already used by the National Air Passenger Targeting Team and had prevented 97 immigration offenders from travelling to the UK in 2011/12. We believe carriers might have welcomed such an approach, as this formed one of the promised benefits to them at the outset of the e-Borders programme, i.e. that they would not incur the costs of removing an individual refused entry after arrival at a UK port.

24. Poor quality data on some of the watch lists² used by the e-Borders system created inefficiencies in NBTC. Out-of-date and irrelevant entries on the watch lists resulted in a greater volume of work, which NBTC staff were unable to manage. This, coupled with a policy of prioritising immigration work over customs work, resulted in the deletion from the Semaphore system of over 649,000 records concerning potential drug and tobacco smuggling, over a ten month period. This amounted to three quarters of all the customs work generated in NBTC and impacted on the ability of e-Borders to deliver anticipated benefits in relation to the seizure of prohibited and restricted goods.

25. Further inefficiencies were caused by the lack of an audit facility for eliminated matches. NBTC staff were therefore instructed to progress all but the immediately obvious ‘no matches’ to the ‘confirmed hit’ stage, which would allow subsequent audit and management assurance. This placed a limitation on the usefulness of management information obtained from Semaphore for resource planning purposes, as it was not possible to determine the number of genuine hits against individuals of interest to the border and law enforcement agencies.

² Databases containing details of individuals of interest to one or more of the agencies operating at the border, i.e. the former UK Border Agency, Police and HMRC.

26. It was difficult to see the value in the large numbers of routine immigration alerts issued by NBTC. These provided no more information than was available to the Border Force officer at the port when scanning the passenger's document against the Warnings Index (WI) on arrival. For this reason, managers often decided not to tell staff on passport control about these alerts.
-
- It was difficult to see the value in the large numbers of routine immigration alerts issued by NBTC.*
-
27. We considered that the issue of these alerts was a poor use of resources in NBTC. They also caused reputational damage to the e-Borders system in the eyes of frontline staff. Our concerns were mirrored in a management review of NBTC alerts conducted in 2011, which recommended that the practice be discontinued. However, this recommendation had still not been implemented at the time of our inspection.
28. Commodity³ alerts, on the other hand, were of value because they provided information about previous attempts to smuggle prohibited or restricted items (drugs, cigarettes, tobacco etc.) of which frontline staff would not otherwise have been aware. There were problems however with the categorisation of these alerts. The B categorisation, requiring mandatory action, did not always appear justified given the low success rate (3% of commodity alerts issued), and required staff on occasions to prioritise these alerts often over better quality locally generated work, which had the potential to damage commodity results at ports.
29. Despite significant opportunities to use previous adverse customs history much more effectively in the passenger environment, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) told us that it doubted that e-Borders itself would produce any discernible impact on the volume of smuggled goods entering the UK. This was primarily because the overwhelming majority of seized goods came from the freight environment and even a large increase in the value of goods seized from passengers would be unlikely to have much overall effect.
30. The financial benefits that were expected to accrue from the identification of benefit and taxation fraud have not materialised, because the sharing of bulk passenger data had not yet commenced with either the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or HMRC, although HMRC did make movement search requests via NBTC. The e-Borders programme team stated that they were still hopeful that these benefits would be delivered following the selection of a new IT supplier, which was due to take place in the latter half of 2013.
-
- The financial benefits that were expected to accrue from the identification of benefit and taxation fraud have not materialised*
-
31. Alert feedback to NBTC needed to be improved to help Border Force understand and judge the effectiveness of e-Borders interventions. This is because often the feedback from Border Force staff at ports was either unreliable or was not provided, as demonstrated by our file sampling, where we found that:
- in nine immigration alert cases (27% of our sample), Heathrow reported that the passenger had not been encountered, when in fact the passenger had been encountered; and
 - in six commodity alert cases (38% of our sample), feedback had not been provided, but we were able to elicit feedback in all six cases.
32. The move away from the concept of risk-based controls to the maintenance of a uniform system of checks for all arriving passengers meant that faster processing times, based on e-Borders, had not been delivered.

³ A generic term used to describe prohibited and restricted goods such as illegal drugs, tobacco and alcohol.

2. Summary of Recommendations

We recommend that the Home Office:

1. [REDACTED].
2. Issues clear instructions to frontline staff on the actions they must take when they receive alerts about the arrivals of individuals who are subject of either a deportation order or exclusion.
3. [REDACTED].
4. Ensures that multi matches are dealt with by joint teams of Police and Border Force staff to ensure that high-profile matches are not missed.
5. Completes work to determine how best to mandate API from GA operators into the e-Borders systems, in advance of travel.
6. Introduces a process to identify non-compliance with reporting requirements for GA flights and takes appropriate action in such cases.
7. Introduces a reporting and risk assessment process for GM traffic based on the e-Borders system and a process to provide for interception of vessels on a risk basis.
8. Stops issuing immigration alerts, apart from those that are categorised as ‘high profile’ or where advance notification of the arrival of a passenger will assist in resourcing and deployment decisions.
9. Provides clear instructions in the Border Force Operating Mandate about how commodity alerts issued by NBTC should be categorised and dealt with.
10. Provides a technical solution to ensure that NBTC operators cannot log off the Semaphore system without having de-selected all unprocessed matches.
11. Issues clear guidance to frontline staff about the requirement to provide accurate and reliable alert feedback.
12. Prioritises the work to cleanse the WI of outdated and irrelevant data and ensures that it is kept up to date in future.
13. Works with HMRC to produce an extract from Centaur which is suitable for identifying commodity threats.
14. Ensures that advance passenger data is used to prevent the arrival of those clearly not admissible (those subject to deportation orders and exclusion) when identified by the e-Borders system.

3. The Inspection

In order to assist readers we have provided a summary of the key terms used in this report.

Key terms used in report	
Advance Passenger Information (API)	Biographical information taken from a passport or travel document including full name, gender, date of birth, nationality, document number and expiry date. Otherwise known as Travel Document Information.
Authority to Carry (ATC) scheme	A scheme where permission needs to be given to a carrier by a country's border authorities to transport a passenger to that country. This is achieved through the submission of passenger data in advance of travel.
Centaur	Legacy HMRC IT system used to collate and manage information and intelligence. Details of all commodity seizures are entered onto this database.
National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC)	Multi-agency operational hub which monitors the e-Borders system for passengers who either pose a threat to border security or are of interest to Police or other law enforcement agencies, alerting them as appropriate.
NBTC 'Hit'	Where NBTC confirms that an individual travelling is an individual named on a watch list (definition of watch list shown below).
NBTC 'Match'	When the Semaphore system identifies API which is similar or identical to details of individuals on a watch list. The match may subsequently be confirmed as a 'hit' or eliminated.
Passenger Name Records (PNR)	Unverified information taken from carrier booking systems and collected for the carrier's own commercial purposes. This typically includes ticketing information, method of payment, address and telephone number and details of co-passengers. Otherwise known as Other Passenger Information.
Rules Based Targeting (RBT)	Identification of passengers displaying patterns of behaviour which intelligence shows are indicative of higher risk.
Semaphore	The IT platform procured to test the e-Borders concept. Semaphore continues to be used pending procurement of a fully capable e-Borders IT system.
Watch lists	Databases containing details of individuals of interest to one or more of the agencies operating at the border, i.e. the former UK Border Agency, Police and HMRC.

Role and remit of the Chief Inspector

- 3.1 The role of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration ('the Chief Inspector') was established by the UK Borders Act 2007 to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of border and immigration functions. The initial remit was to consider immigration, asylum and nationality issues but this was subsequently widened when the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 gave the Chief Inspector additional powers to look at customs functions at the border and contractors who exercise those functions.
- 3.2 The Chief Inspector's responsibilities in respect of immigration and border customs issues continued following the separation of the Agency and Border Force on 1 March 2012.
- 3.3 On 26 March 2013 the Home Secretary announced that she was reintegrating the Agency into the Home Office and creating two new operational commands responsible for visas and immigration and for immigration law enforcement. The Independent Chief Inspector will continue to inspect UK immigration functions which were previously carried out by the Agency, as well as border customs functions, and contractors employed by the Home Office to deliver any of these functions.

Purpose

- 3.4 The purpose of this inspection was to inspect the efficiency and effectiveness of Border Force in the development and use of its e-Borders system in order to:
 - facilitate an intelligence-led approach to identifying those who have abused or seek to abuse immigration control and/or UK customs laws and where appropriate prevent their travel to the UK;
 - identify and track the movements of terrorists and national security targets;
 - identify individuals wanted by the police for a range of criminal offences;
 - expedite the processing of bona fide passengers through UK border control; and
 - deliver a range of benefits outlined in the programme business cases in co-operation with partner agencies and across government.

Methodology

- 3.5 The Chief Inspector's inspection criteria⁴ (set out in Appendix 1) were used to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the e-Borders system. A range of methods were used during the inspection, including:
 - pre-inspection familiarisation visits to the e-Borders programme team and to the NBTC;
 - an examination of management and performance data relating to the progress of the e-Borders programme and the operation of the live e-Borders system;
 - interviews with key government and industry stakeholders, including a survey of aviation carriers;
 - analysis of 300 e-Borders Semaphore⁵ records corresponding to alerts issued by NBTC in September 2012;
 - onsite inspection of the e-Borders system in operation at NBTC, Heathrow Terminal 5, Gatwick and Luton Airports and Dover Ferry Terminal;
 - discussions with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), National Crime Agency (NCA), the Security Services and the Home

⁴ All criteria of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration can be found at: <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Inspection-Criteria.pdf>

⁵ The IT platform procured as a proof of concept of e-Borders. Semaphore will continue to be used until the delivery of the full e-Borders solution.

Office's Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) and Immigration and Border Policy Directorate (IBPD);

- interviews with police officers, police staff and SOCA officers in NBTC; and
- interviews and focus groups with managers and staff across all the sites that we visited, and with members of the e-Borders Programme team and senior managers within Border Force.

3.6 Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the staff we spoke to by grade.

Figure 1: Staff interviewed during the inspection	
Equivalent Grade	Number
Administrative Assistant (AA)	2
Administrative Officer (AO)	8
Executive Officer (EO)	45
Higher Executive Officer (HEO)	19
Senior Executive Officer (SEO)	12
Assistant Director / Grade 7	8
Deputy Director / Grade 6	9
Senior Civil Service (SCS)	7
Total	110

3.7 On 13 March 2013 we provided Border Force's Chief Operating Officer and the Programme Director for e-Borders with the high-level emerging findings from the inspection.

3.8 The inspection identified 14 recommendations for improvement. These are outlined on page 7.

4. Background

What is e-Borders?

- 4.1 In 2003 the then Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)⁶ developed a business case for a programme of work designed to deliver a modernised immigration control that would be more effective, efficient and secure. The programme was seen as a necessary response to a range of strategic issues and drivers, including:
- legal obstacles which prevented information sharing amongst border and security agencies;
 - the impact that increases in aircraft numbers, airport capacity and passenger numbers would have on processing arriving passengers at immigration control;
 - concerns that disproportionate resources were being invested in arrivals control, given that only 0.3% of arriving controllable passengers were refused entry and removed; and
 - the need to enhance the limited information collected on entry and exit to help determine who was in the UK, aligned to the identification of any threats posed.
- 4.2 By harnessing passenger information and new technology, IND would be able to ‘export the border’⁷ across the globe, assessing passengers in advance of their arrival. It would also create new opportunities for working with other agencies operating at the border, the intelligence agencies and other relevant government departments. A set of high-level business requirements were drawn up. These were to:
- maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of border control resources by deploying them according to perceived risk;
 - minimise the numbers of individuals reaching the UK known to be inadmissible, or known as immigration or security risks, thereby reducing refusal and removal costs – in effect ‘exporting the border’;
 - develop a cross-agency approach, based on the information captured by e-Borders, for dealing with the travel to or from the UK of persons of interest to the agencies operating at the border; and
 - exploit common interests with external stakeholders, such as other government departments and the travel industry, to yield the maximum mutual benefit.
- 4.3 The evaluation concluded that the e-Borders solution was the only option that provided a satisfactory response to the strategic drivers, issues and business requirements. In summary, the proposed e-Borders solution encompassed:
- an Authority to Carry (ATC) scheme in which all passengers on scheduled services would be screened before travel to the UK and denied permission to travel where appropriate;
 - universal electronic collection of API in the form of passport bio-data, for both incoming and outgoing services;

⁶ Renamed the UK Border Agency, from which Border Force split away on 1 March 2012.

⁷ Conduct checks in advance of travel and where appropriate stop individuals travelling to the UK.

- electronic access to carrier Passenger Name Records (PNR) containing wide-ranging information on passenger travel details;
- a risk assessment process, using passenger data and tied to a new Primary Line System that would support effective and efficient arrivals control operations, including biometric controlled gates; and
- a complete audit trail of passenger movements, including a record of all entries to and exits from the UK (basically counting people into and out of the UK).

4.4 It was recognised that the programme would be heavily dependent on the introduction of new, complex, high-volume, highly reliable IT systems. Some secondary legislation would also be required but legislative provisions in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 already supported key elements of the programme.

4.5 Key dates associated with the development of the e-Borders Programme are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: e-Borders – Key programme dates

2003	Original e-Borders business case developed.
Nov 2004	Project Semaphore delivered with IBM.
Jan 2005	Joint Borders Operations Centre (JBOC) created.
2007	Full e-Borders business case with benefits.
Nov 2007	e-Borders contract awarded to Trusted Borders.
March 2010	National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC) created.
July 2010	e-Borders contract with Trusted Borders terminated.
Feb 2012	Further outline business case submitted covering period to March 2015 and beyond.
Mid 2013	Procurement process for new e-Borders contract due to commence.

The E-borders Pilot – Project Semaphore

4.6 In November 2004 a three-year contract was signed with IBM to deliver Project Semaphore, a pilot project aiming to analyse and eliminate the risks in the development and delivery of the main e-Borders solution, and to provide a working platform on which to test the e-Borders concept.

4.7 In January 2005 a seminar for carriers was held. A briefing document prepared for the seminar stated that e-Borders aimed to modernise UK immigration control in respect of scheduled services by providing:

- more effective levels of immigration control appropriate to the perceived risk;
- faster arrivals processing;
- greater flexibility in control operations; and
- a framework for sharing relevant information amongst border agencies.⁸

⁸ Border Force, Police, Serious and Organised Crime Agency, HM Revenue and Customs etc.

- 4.8 The document indicated that an ATC scheme would allow the pre-screening of passengers in advance of travel to determine whether they should be allowed to travel or not. The Semaphore system processed the API provided by carriers, checking it against details of people of interest to the former UK Border Agency and law enforcement agencies in the Joint Border Operations Centre (JBOC). Where appropriate, JBOC staff would alert the relevant agency of the impending arrival or departure of a passenger of interest.
- 4.9 The Semaphore platform also received PNR. This information was used to check for particular patterns of behaviour that intelligence gathering had identified as being indicative of higher risk. This was referred to as Rule Based Targeting.
- 4.10 The first year of operation (2005) was considered to be successful and additional funding was allocated in order to increase the capacity of the system. The continuing success of Semaphore in proving the e-Borders concept resulted in outline business case approval being given by the Home Office Group Investment Board in 2006 to release funds to deliver the e-Borders programme.
- 4.11 Appearing before the Home Affairs Select Committee in March 2007, Joan Ryan MP, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, provided information listing the significant operational success of Semaphore. This included the:
- arrest of individuals wanted for serious criminality (murder and rape);
 - identification of individuals travelling on fraudulently obtained passports; and
 - seizure of 4kg of cocaine at Heathrow Airport.

Business case – 2007

- 4.12 A June 2007 version of the e-Borders business case described a number of anticipated high-level benefits which would be delivered by the programme. Figure 3 describes the key benefits.

Figure 3: Key benefits to be delivered by e-Borders programme

Benefit

1. Improved security by supporting the security and intelligence agencies to track and analyse the activities of terrorists and other national security targets across the border.
2. Increased ability to identify and arrest those of interest to the police.
3. Improved effectiveness and efficiency of border control activity by providing a risk assessment of passengers, facilitating expedited processing of passengers at the border and providing a platform for automated clearance services.
4. Benefits will accrue from process cost savings as a result of the phasing out of landing cards and the ability to access electronic movement records when determining applications for extensions of stay.
5. Enable the identification of those involved in excise duty avoidance and impact on the market penetration of smuggled goods.
6. Enable HMRC and DWP to establish the length of time spent in the UK by an individual permitting easy identification of benefit claimants living outside the UK and those falsely claiming non domicile status for income tax purposes.

7. Benefits to ports and carriers such as:
 - reductions in removal and detention costs of those refused entry (subject to implementation of an authority to carry scheme);
 - more effective use of detention space at ports, provided free of rent to control agencies; and
 - remove requirement to procure and administer landing cards.
8. The ability to count all foreign national passengers in and out of the UK enabling the provision of accurate statistical data to support the provision of services.

Contract

- 4.13 A contract for the delivery of the full e-Borders solution was awarded in November 2007 to the Trusted Borders consortium led by Raytheon UK, who also assumed responsibility for managing the Semaphore system. In advance of a new IT system being delivered, this consortium continued to use Semaphore, which was moved from the developmental project phase into business-as-usual mode in December 2007. Figure 4 records the key milestones for delivery.

Figure 4: e-Borders Delivery Plan in respect of all modes of travel

Date	Programme Milestone	Passenger and crew movements covered by e-Borders
October 2008	Initial Go-Live and launch of e-Borders operations centre.	
April 2009	Advanced Operating Capability.	100m.
December 2009	Initial Operating Capability.	At least 60%.
December 2010	Major Operating Capability.	At least 95%.
March 2014	Full Operating Capability.	100%.

- 4.14 In July 2010, the e-Borders contract was terminated due to delays in the delivery of key milestones.⁹ The intention was to select a new supplier in mid to late 2013.
- 4.15 The Semaphore and WI systems were scheduled for replacement under the original e-Borders contract. A consequence of the termination of the contract was that it was necessary to continue using both systems – a situation which persisted at the time of our inspection. It was recognised that both systems would need work in order to:
- address critical system vulnerabilities;
 - provide a robust disaster-recovery capability; and
 - ensure that the system was ready for competitive re-procurement at the end of the current contract.
- 4.16 During our discussions with the e-Borders Programme, we were told that this work was progressing well. A further outline business case, setting out the plan for the e-Borders programme up to the end of the government’s current spending review period and beyond, was submitted to the Home Office Group Investment Board in February 2012. It re-iterated the need to:

⁹ Due to ongoing legal proceedings we make no further comment on this issue.

- identify individuals of interest for immigration, criminality and counter-terrorism purposes to prevent entry to the UK, monitor movements and apprehend where necessary;
- improve the efficiency of border force operations, including anticipated resource savings, given the anticipated 30% increase in air travel by 2017;
- ‘export the border’, which would be achieved by a phased rollout of a PDCS, with the aim of preventing high-risk individuals from boarding aircraft; and
- identify individuals fitting high-risk profiles.

4.17 The business case noted that failure to procure this enhanced capability would mean significant gaps in the ability to screen passengers in advance across all modes of transport. It would lead to a reduced ability to identify people of interest to the Border Force and other law enforcement agencies. It would also make it difficult to meet ministerial commitments to re-introduce exit checks and to count people in and out of the UK.

Cost

4.18 Figure 5 provides the cost breakdown for the e-Borders Programme for the period 2007/08 to 2012/13 (£472m) and forecast cost for the period 2013/14 to end of current spending period 2014/15 (£64m). Additional costs beyond the current spending review period will be subject to spending allocations but the February 2012 business case estimated total costs for the period 2015/16 to 2021/22 at £655m.

Figure 5: e-Borders Programme Costs

	2007/08 £m	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	2010/11 £m	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	Total
Resource	21.5	11.7	22.2	42.1	32.1	45.0	34.1	2.3	211.0
Capital	71.4	81.0	86.1	(32.3)	46.1	45.4	28.0	0.0	325.7
Total	92.9	92.7	108.3	9.8	78.2	90.4	62.1	2.3	536.7

Note: Information provided by e-Borders programme team.

The National Border Targeting Centre

4.19 In March 2010 the NBTC was created, replacing the former JBOC. NBTC was part of the Intelligence, Targeting and Watchlisting Command within the Border Force Intelligence Directorate. It was a multi-agency operation comprising Border Force, Police and SOCA. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, matching resources to meet demand. Its remit was to monitor the e-Borders Semaphore system and to alert the relevant agency where a threat to border security¹⁰ or a passenger of interest to Police or other law enforcement agency was identified.

¹⁰ For example, where a passenger fitted a high-risk profile or watch lists indicated that a passenger was of interest to former UK Border Agency, Police, or SOCA.

5. Passenger Data

Advance Passenger Information

- 5.1 API is the data contained in the machine-readable zone of an individual's passport or travel document. It typically includes information concerning a passenger's:
- full name and date of birth;
 - nationality;
 - gender;
 - travel document number, including the:
 - document expiry date;
 - type of document; and
 - issuing state of document.
- 5.2 At the time of our inspection, the provision of API was mandatory for passengers on non-EU flights into and out of the UK. For EU flights, API could only be provided to the extent that the carrier processed the information under its terms and conditions of carriage, where the passenger gave consent and where the country in which the data was collected did not object on data protection grounds. The provision of API was not mandatory for maritime or rail passengers. As of March 2013, 138 carriers were providing API covering 4,412 routes and 142 million passengers, representing 65% of all passenger movements annually.

Passenger Name Records

- 5.3 PNR contain unverified information provided by passengers at the time of booking, which is held in carriers' reservation and departure control systems. It contains information such as:
- the travel agent who made the booking;
 - ticket information, including travel dates, travel itinerary, seat number and baggage information;
 - contact details, and
 - method of payment.
- 5.4 The exact nature of the PNR collected by a carrier varies, depending on the type of information they choose to collect for their own commercial purposes. At the time of our inspection there was a power to require carriers to provide PNR to e-Borders.¹¹ Border Force was not using this power, preferring to wait for the draft PNR directive,¹² then under discussion in the European Parliament, to come into force. As of March 2013, Border Force was collecting PNR data voluntarily provided by 11 carriers covering 190 routes and 16.2 million passenger movements annually.

¹¹ Made under paragraphs 27 and 27B of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 and the Immigration and Police (Passenger, Crew and Service Information) Order 2008, S.I. 2008/5.

¹² European Commission COM (2011) 32 final, 2011/0023 (COD).

- 5.5 API was used for the identification of individuals known to the UK authorities, whilst PNR was used to identify individuals who fitted profiles which intelligence suggested were indicative of higher risk. Semaphore was used to identify potential targets for further analysis based on the risk profiles that had been entered. In addition, Border Force passenger targeting hubs conducted a manual analysis of PNR data provided by direct access to the booking systems of around 40 carriers. We were told that this access would cease when the PNR directive was implemented in the UK.
- 5.6 We were told that the draft directive included the provision to collect PNR in respect of intra-EU flights but that this provision may be removed. If it were, this would mean that PNR data in respect of flights between countries in the EU would be lost. We were told that the UK's position was that the EU PNR Directive must include a provision to collect data in respect of intra EU travel.
- 5.7 Staff in the Heathrow Passenger Targeting Hub told us that if the PNR directive did not cover intra-EU travel, they would lose their profiling ability for drugs targets on intra-EU flights when the directive was implemented in the UK. They added that there was a further risk linked to their ability to profile for inadequately documented passengers. This would be a significant loss, as management information showed that profiling of passenger booking data had prevented 97 inadequately documented passengers from flying to the UK in 2011/12.

Data collection

5.8 We examined the extent to which the programme had delivered against its original API data collection targets¹³, as described in Figure 4. We found that the programme had not met its targets to collect at least:

- 60% of all international passenger and crew details from a range of air, sea and rail carriers by December 2009; and
- 95%¹⁴ of all international passenger and crew details by December 2010.

Considerable progress remains to be made to meet the data collection targets that were originally set out in the e-Borders delivery plan.

5.9 However, the programme had met an interim target, following the termination of the e-Borders contract in July 2010, to collect 100% of non EU air passenger API by April 2012. Figure 6 shows the proportions of passenger data that had been received by March 2013.

Figure 6: e-Borders data received as at 04/03/13

Total Passenger Movements (air, sea, rail)	65%
International Air	80%
EU Air	70%
Non EU Air	100%

5.10 Considerable progress remains to be made to meet the data collection targets that were originally set out in the e-Borders delivery plan.

Barriers to achievement of data collection targets

5.11 We were told that a number of legal and practical issues had hampered the achievement of the programme's data collection targets including:

¹³ No data collection targets had been set for PNR.

¹⁴ The remaining 5% is General Aviation and General Maritime.

- incompatibility between the e-Borders scheme and EU free movement and data protection legislation;
- the lack of alignment between the e-Borders process and the business models employed in the maritime and rail sectors; and
- legal and practical issues hindering the collection of passenger data in respect of GA and GM services.¹⁵

Intra-EU travel

- 5.12 A significant barrier to the achievement of the e-Borders data collection targets was the view taken by the European Commission that it was incompatible with EU free movement rights to impose a mandatory requirement on EEA nationals and family members to provide passenger data to e-Borders in advance of travel. The Commission also considered that the collection and processing of personal data for e-Borders purposes in the member state of departure would only be permissible under the EU Data Protection Directive if a legal basis for it could be found in the domestic law of the member state concerned.
- 5.13 As a result of the Commission's indications, the UK decided that:
- passengers who were EU citizens or their family members would not be refused entry/exit to the UK on the grounds that passenger data was not provided;
 - providing passenger data was not compulsory for EU citizens or family members travelling to and from the UK;
 - carriers would be told not to deny boarding to EU citizens and their family members travelling to and from the UK who did not provide passenger data; and
 - the UK would make available to persons travelling to/from an EU member state the information required by the EU Data Protection Directive.¹⁶
- 5.14 On the basis of these undertakings, the Commission was satisfied that the e-Borders system would be compatible with EU free movement rights and data protection legislation, as long as member states recognised the interest being pursued by the UK and were satisfied that it met their domestic law requirements. Border Force was unable to mandate the collection and processing of advance passenger data from member states that did not do so, which included France and Germany.
- 5.15 As a result, the February 2012 Border Systems Procurement (BSP) outline business case contained revised passenger data targets to allow time to resolve these issues. The revised targets were:
- 95% of all air passengers and crew by the end of 2013; and
 - 95% of all passenger and crew movements (air, sea and rail) by end of 2014 – four years later than originally planned.
- 5.16 Senior Border Force officials told us that even these targets were no longer achievable because the EU legal issues had still not been resolved. They were continuing to work with individual carriers, member states and the Commission to resolve these issues. They added that further revised targets had been put to Ministers for approval. These were to:
- collect 75% of all air passengers by the end of 2013; and
 - increase this target to 95% by the end of 2014.

¹⁵ Non scheduled aviation and maritime services.

¹⁶ EU Directive 95/46/EC – The Data Protection Directive – Section IV Information to be given to the data subject.

- 5.17 We were told that it was no longer proposed to retain formal targets in respect of rail or maritime data due to specific difficulties, over and above the EU legal issues, faced by these sectors.
- 5.18 In January 2012 the e-Borders Programme Steering Group recommended to Ministers that they mandate the provision of API from non EU passengers on intra EU routes. Ministers accepted this recommendation and we were told that Border Force was now taking action to require carriers to provide this information.

Rail and Scheduled Maritime Operations

- 5.19 Rail operations included Eurostar (passenger traffic) and Eurotunnel services (car passenger and freight traffic). Maritime operations included commercial ferries and cruise ships.
- 5.20 A number of practical and policy issues remained to be resolved before a solution for Eurostar could be implemented, which was considered unlikely before 2015. Eurostar operators sold their tickets from a large number of stations and outlets and did not have the facility to collect and transmit passenger data to e-Borders.
- 5.21 Eurotunnel's business processes were also not well aligned to e-Borders requirements. The operator did not collect passenger data at the point of sale. Border Force also operated a juxtaposed control on the Eurotunnel route, meaning that UK passport control was located in France. This meant that there was no opportunity for the carrier to transmit passenger data to e-Borders before passengers were processed at UK passport control.
- 5.22 Further complications also remained, including the impact of the European Commission's proposal to extend the liberalisation of rail services to the passenger market. This could result in other European rail operators competing to run services to and from the UK. The programme team told us that it was working with rail operators to try to align their business processes with e-Borders requirements.
- 5.23 The British Chamber of Shipping told us that the industry had not been consulted prior to legislation being enacted. As a result, the e-Borders system had been devised with the aviation sector in mind, and did not align with the business models used in the maritime sector.
- 5.24 For example, the ferry business sold deck space and not individual seats. The booking systems used by ferry companies therefore had no facility to record details relating to passengers. Foot passengers were the only traffic stream where tickets were issued to individual passengers and as this was the least significant part of the business there was no way to obtain the data required by e-Borders other than at check in. Some work had been done to determine if the data could be collected by scanning passports but this would be very time-consuming and inconvenient for operators and passengers.
- 5.25 Neither had Border Force convinced the rail and maritime industry of the benefits of e-Borders for the passenger, the operator, or in many cases in terms of security. This was because by the time a passenger arrives at the ferry they will often have passed through a Border Force juxtaposed passport control.¹⁷ Even if e-Borders could be made compatible with rail and maritime business models, there would still be potentially significant gaps in e-Borders coverage due to issues with EU law.
- 5.26 Border Force told us that the programme team had been working with the shipping industry to make it easier for operators to provide the required data. A possibility under consideration was to use Border Force's Freight Targeting System (FTS). Ferry operators already submitted customs data

As a result, the e-Borders system had been devised with the aviation sector in mind, and did not align with the business models used in the maritime sector.

¹⁷ Refers to an arrangement between Belgium, France and the UK whereby immigration checks on certain cross-Channel routes take place before boarding rather than upon arrival.

to FTS and work was ongoing to determine if the same interface could be used to provide the data required by e-Borders.

- 5.27 Despite these issues we were told that eight ferry companies were providing some data to e-Borders. The future focus would be on increasing data collection from operators on non-juxtaposed routes. Further juxtaposed routes would only be pursued if and when operators were in a position to provide data prior to passengers arriving at the juxtaposed border control.
- 5.28 In respect of cruise ships, we were told that the technical capability was in place for e-Borders to receive the data using the Collaborative Business Portal (CBP), a secure web-based system for the exchange of data with external partner organisations. However, before the collection of data from cruise ships could commence, work was needed to ensure that Border Force operational units were ready to deal with any e-Borders alerts which arose.
- 5.29 In March 2013 we were informed by the programme team that a pilot implementation scheme for cruise traffic would commence in May 2013, to:
- test the capture of data by Semaphore from the cruise ship sector using the CBP;
 - improve the comprehensiveness of the intelligence picture concerning threats to border security from cruise traffic;
 - allow the programme to assess the technical capability of the industry; and
 - provide the potential for greater efficiency in the processing of passengers by, for example, permitting remote clearance and a focus on those passengers posing the greatest risk.

General Aviation and General Maritime

- 5.30 GA and GM is unscheduled international traffic which can use UK ports of all descriptions, which numbered approximately 4,500 at the time of our inspection. This included ports where there was no permanent Border Force or police presence.
- 5.31 Pilots or operators were required to notify Border Force of the intention to fly to the UK in advance of arrival using the General Aviation Report (GAR). This notification provided details of all passengers and crew on board. A decision on whether to meet the aircraft or clear the passengers remotely was then made by Border Force, following a risk assessment based on the information in the GAR. This approach was also supplemented by unannounced visits.
-
- The lack of compliance with the notification requirements in the GA sector underlines the importance of extending the collection of API to this sector.*
-
- 5.32 NBTC staff who conducted manual checks of passengers listed on the GAR told us that the details were often handwritten, and illegible and incomplete. [PART REDACTED].
- 5.33 Legal issues remained which prevented Border Force from mandating API from GA operators. Legislation provided that the requirement to provide API should be communicated in writing. However, because GA flights did not operate to a published schedule, Border Force did not know about the flights in advance and so could not serve the relevant notice. To resolve this issue Border Force was considering whether customs legislation could be amended to compel the submission of the GAR before departure. This would allow the use of information contained in the GAR to be used for e-Borders purposes.
- 5.34 The lack of compliance with the notification requirements in the GA sector underlines the importance of extending the collection of API to this sector.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- completes work to determine how best to mandate API from GA operators into the e-Borders systems, in advance of travel; and
- introduces a process to identify non-compliance with reporting requirements for GA flights and takes appropriate action in such cases.

5.35 Border Force believed that more effective management of GM traffic relied on better use of intelligence and the development of a national risk assessment and remote clearance procedure similar to that used for GA.

5.36 However, e-Borders was not yet receiving any data from the GM sector and there was no unified system by which arrivals were notified in advance. Border Force had information about commercial vessels and could assess risk to decide whether to meet the arrival but did not know about all pleasure craft movements. We were told by the Border Policy Unit that those representing the leisure sailing community were strongly opposed to the introduction of a system requiring advance notification of arrivals. There were also practical considerations; a leisure craft may set out with one destination in mind but divert to another due to poor weather.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- introduces a reporting and risk assessment process for GM traffic based on the e-Borders system and a process to provide for interception of vessels on a risk basis.

5.37 Given the obvious potential tensions between the e-Borders scheme and EU law, we were surprised that the risks to the achievement of the programme's data collection targets were not identified in the 2007 business case. We also noted that the Semaphore pilot only tested the e-Borders concept in the aviation sector. Had the pilot been extended to test the e-Borders concept in the rail and maritime environments, the difficulties which have resulted in the abandonment of data collection targets for those sectors would have been identified much earlier.

5.38 The legal and practical barriers and the successive revisions to targets means we are unable to conclude with any degree of certainty when or if Border Force will achieve comprehensive API coverage, or its 95% target in respect of aviation passengers by December 2014.

Data quality

5.39 The Semaphore system or any replacement system needs to effectively compare API with the details of individuals of interest to Border Force Police and security agencies. We were provided with management information concerning the level of accuracy of API provided by carriers to the e-Borders system in December 2012. Overall, API was received in respect of 22.47 million passenger movements of which:

- inaccurate data was submitted in connection with 380,000 records (1.7%); and
- incomplete data was submitted in connection with 686,000 records (3.1%).

5.40 We were told that the e-Borders Programme Carriers & Ports Team were working collaboratively with carriers to address these issues.

5.41 - 5.64 [REDACTED].

6. The National Border Targeting Centre

- 6.1 The NBTC was part of the Intelligence, Targeting and Watchlisting Command within the Border Force Intelligence Directorate. It:
- operated 24 hours a day all year round;
 - was a multi-agency operation comprising Border Force, Police and SOCA; and
 - monitored the e-Borders Semaphore system to alert the relevant agency where a threat to border security was identified.
- 6.2 There were separate line management chains for each of the three agencies working in NBTC. While the police team and SOCA officers sat together, Border Force staff were located in a separate area, although on the same floor.
- 6.3 We were told that the annual budget for NBTC in 2012/13 was £7.1m. This excluded staffing costs for the police and SOCA which were funded separately. Figure 11 shows the breakdown of staff in NBTC.

Figure 11: NBTC staff numbers

Equivalent Grade	Number
Administrative Assistant (AA)	15
Administrative Officer (AO)	20
Operators (EO)	90
Team Leaders (HEO)	15
Senior Team Leaders (SEO)	6
Assistant Director / Grade 7	1
Police Officers	4
Police Staff	18
SOCA	2
Total	182

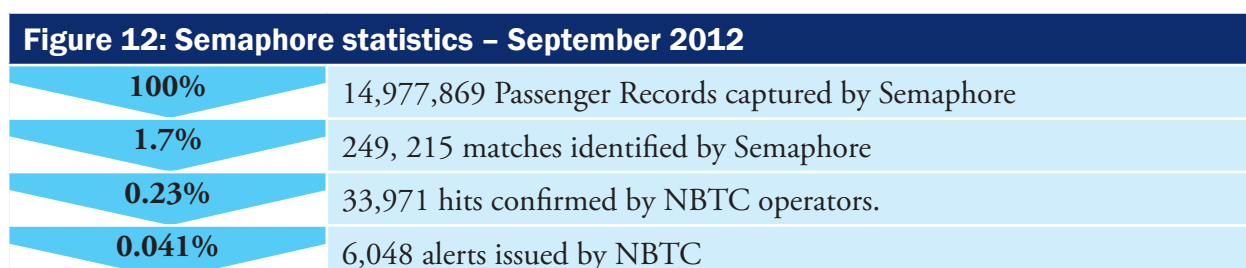
- 6.4 Staff in NBTC monitored the e-Borders system, which compared passenger data provided by carriers with various watch lists containing details of individuals of interest to Border Force and partner agencies. Staff also monitored the system for individuals who had not previously come to notice but who fitted profiles which intelligence suggested were indicative of higher risk. Finally, staff conducted travel history searches which allowed law enforcement agencies and border and immigration staff to establish the travel history of individuals.
- 6.5 Generally speaking, the police team monitored the system for potential matches of interest to police (crime and counter terrorism), while Border Force staff monitored the system for potential

matches connected with immigration or customs matters. SOCA officers dealt with their own serious organised crime targets.

- 6.6 Where NBTC Operators determined that the passenger and the individual on the watch list were different, the match was eliminated. If the passenger and individual on the watch list were the same, this was termed a 'hit'. Where a match was confirmed as a hit, the NBTC Operator could decide either to issue an alert to the relevant agency, or take no further action.
- 6.7 NBTC operators were not required to issue an alert in every instance where a passenger appeared on one of the watch lists. We were provided with a copy of a NBTC internal guidance document which stated 'The decision to raise an alert rests with the operator ... and will be informed by the training and mentoring they have received, by on-the-job experience and by the direction of Operational Team Leads.'
- 6.8 The guidance provided an example of where it may not be appropriate to issue an alert in an immigration case (where a watch list entry indicated that an arriving passenger had previously been refused a visa, but information on another system showed a visa had been subsequently issued). We were also shown training materials for new and experienced staff which provided further examples where the issuing of an immigration alert would not be appropriate.
- 6.9 However, during our focus groups and observations at NBTC we found inconsistent understanding of when an immigration alert (other than in a PDCS or high profile case) should be sent to frontline colleagues. For example, in the case of an arriving visa national, where there was no record of a visa having been issued, some operators said they would send an alert. Others believed sending an alert would be a waste of time, because Border Force Officer's would identify this issue when the individual presented themselves at immigration control.
- 6.10 The training material provided in relation to commodity matches advised operators to consider how recent the offending behaviour was and what quantities of seized goods had been involved when deciding whether or not to issue an alert. For example, in the case of a drug seizure it suggested that an alert should be issued where there had been:
 - one or more seizures of a commercial quantity of Class A drugs in the last 10 years; or
 - a drug related conviction in the last five years.

Semaphore

- 6.11 Figure 12 shows the total volume of passenger records captured by the Semaphore system in September 2012, along with the number of matches that were generated, the number of hits confirmed by NBTC operators and the number of alerts issued.



- 6.12 Six thousand and forty-eight alerts were issued by NBTC in September 2012. This amounted to four alerts for every 10,000 passenger records submitted to e-Borders. For every 100 matches generated by the e-Borders system, NBTC staff were able to eliminate just over 86 after determining that the passenger and the individual on the watch list were not the same.

- 6.13 Where NBTC staff confirmed that the passenger and the individual on the watch list were the same an alert was issued on 6,048 (18%) occasions. In other words, it appeared that in 27,923 (82%) instances, where NBTC operators confirmed there was a match, no further action was considered necessary or appropriate.
- 6.14 However, this figure masked a significant variation between Police and Border Force staff. Management information (April to September 2012) showed that police team operators issued an alert in just under half (48%) of all ‘hit’ cases. However, Border Force operators issued an alert in just 4% of ‘hit’ cases (one in 25 cases). We asked the e-Borders programme team and NBTC staff about the significant difference between these results. NBTC staff told us that the low ratio of alerts to confirmed watch list hits were primarily caused by:
- a system issue with Semaphore which meant it was not possible to audit eliminated matches; and
 - outdated and/or irrelevant data on the WI and Centaur.
- 6.15 The Semaphore system did not allow the audit of eliminated matches for management purposes. This was considered a weakness in the system because managers were unable to check whether an operator had correctly eliminated a match generated by the system. To overcome this issue, NBTC operating instructions required that ‘only obvious and clear no ‘hits’ should be eliminated at the match stage.’ Any matches which were not so obviously and clearly appropriate for elimination on immediate examination therefore had to be progressed by the operator as a hit. Where the operator subsequently determined that the passenger and the individual on the watch list were not the same it was necessary to record the hit as ‘no further action’.
- 6.16 This meant that management data concerning the number of confirmed hits was misleading and of limited use for analysis and resource planning purposes. This was because many of the matches progressed to the ‘hit’ stage were not in fact hits. Senior managers from the e-Borders Programme appeared unaware of this limitation and said that if operational staff had raised this issue through the appropriate channels it could have been resolved.
- 6.17 The interrogation of matches by NBTC on the WI generated by outdated information was an inefficient use of Border Force resources. Managers told us that the WI was a legacy system and had been due to be phased out under the terms of the discontinued e-Borders contract. We were told work was underway to cleanse the WI, although we were not provided with a timescale as to when this work would be completed.

The interrogation of matches by NBTC on the WI generated by outdated information was an inefficient use of Border Force resources

We recommend that the Home Office:

- prioritises the work to cleanse the WI of outdated and irrelevant data and ensures it is kept up-to-date in future.

Centaur data quality

- 6.18 Similar problems affected the extract of the HMRC Centaur watchlist, which contained information about:
- previous seizures of illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, products of animal origin and other contraband at UK ports;
 - searches of passengers and vehicles that had not yielded a positive result; and
 - operations connected with tax evasion and avoidance.

6.19 The maintenance of separate databases relating to ‘commodity’ threats and ‘immigration’ threats at the border was a legacy of the pre-2009 situation where customs responsibility at the border fell to HMRC staff, whilst immigration control was the responsibility of the former UK Border Agency. The impact of this was that a significant number of confirmed hits against the Centaur database did not warrant the issue of a NBTC alert because, for example, the:

- seizure record was old or insignificant;
- original customs search was negative; or
- matter related to HMRC and was unrelated to border security issues.

As a consequence there were insufficient resources available to deal with the large number of Centaur commodity matches

6.20 Another significant performance issue was that Border Force operators were required to examine all immigration matches. As a consequence there were insufficient resources available to deal with the large number of Centaur commodity matches.

6.21 NBTC operators told us they had received permission from managers to disregard any Centaur commodity matches that related to an arrival due within 90 to 120 minutes of them picking up the match. We were also told that commodity matches relating to departures were generally ignored, as they were considered less of a priority than arrivals.

6.22 Figure 13 shows the number of Centaur matches that were deleted between 1 April 2012 and 28 January 2013, without any assessment being made by NBTC staff.

Figure 13: Bulk deletion of Centaur matches April 2012 – Jan 2013

Month	Bulk deleted matches
April	58,369
May	63,137
June	80,713
July	100,528
August	98,209
September	73,462
October	62,591
November	41,795
December	26,429
January 2013	44,098
Total	649,331

6.23 Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the total of 895,014 Centaur matches generated in this time period were deleted. This is unacceptable.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the total of 895,014 Centaur matches generated in this time period were deleted. This is unacceptable

6.24 While we acknowledge the modest results achieved on those commodity alerts that were issued (circa 3% of commodity alerts resulted in a seizure), the bulk deletion of unprocessed Centaur matches did not bear scrutiny, not least because, unlike immigration alerts where a back-up WI system was

in place, no such system mirrored this in the secondary customs area where passengers were only stopped based on behavioural factors or intelligence.

- 6.25 Border Force must work with HMRC to produce more relevant and up-to-date information to improve targeting of passengers. It must also review its working processes in NBTC to ensure that it reduces the amount of nugatory work related to immigration alerts. This was an inefficient and unproductive use of resources and impacted negatively on commodity work.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- works with HMRC to produce an extract from Centaur which is suitable for the purpose of identifying commodity threats; and
- stops issuing immigration alerts, apart from those that are categorised as ‘high profile’ or where advance notification of the arrival of a passenger will assist in resourcing and deployment decisions.

High Profile Matches

- 6.26 Some categories of matches were termed high profile matches. They were regarded of such importance that they were prioritised. These matches were connected with:
- PDCS cases;
 - child protection issues;
 - deportation orders and exclusion cases;
 - travel bans; and
 - war crimes.
- 6.27 Where one of these ‘high profile’ matches was confirmed, NBTC always issued an alert. It also took additional steps to ensure that the passenger was not missed at passport control. These were:
- arranging for a warning to be placed on the WI, which an officer at passport control had to acknowledge when the passenger was encountered; and
 - telephoning Border Force at the relevant port.
- 6.28 The requirement to telephone the port was not contained in NBTC guidance but was communicated to staff in a daily briefing document whilst we were at NBTC.
- 6.29 In the case of a confirmed PDCS match where the passenger was flying to the UK, NBTC was also required to telephone the airline concerned and either deny ATC the passenger or recommend that the airline did not carry the passenger.¹⁸ Where such a passenger was leaving the UK there was no power to deny ATC, but NBTC was required to contact the carrier to recommend that the passenger was not carried because of legal restrictions on their travel.¹⁹
- 6.30 - 6.32 [REDACTED]
- 6.33 During the on-site phase of our inspection in NBTC, we observed the processing of a high profile match involving the subject of a deportation order. Once again, poor communication between the Police and Border Force teams meant that the Border Force operator was unaware of the match until the flight had actually landed at Heathrow. Following this incident police staff were reminded of the

¹⁸ Authority to carry could only be denied under The Security and Travel Banks Authority to Carry Scheme 2012 where the passenger was booked on a route in respect of which Form IS72 had been issued.

¹⁹ This could be the terms of a licence following release from prison or under the terms of Terrorist Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMS).

importance of communicating with the Border Force team concerning these matches. Team leaders were also told to include an additional check of all 'high profile' matches being worked on during sweeps of the system.

6.34 This limitation of Semaphore would not have been as problematic had both groups of staff had been located together in mixed teams. This would have allowed either one multi-skilled individual to process the match from start to conclusion, or at the very least would have significantly reduced the risk of a damaging breakdown in communication.

6.35 We found another area of silo working which involved access to the Police National Computer (PNC). Police staff in NBTC had 'live' access to this system while Border Force staff did not (and were not allowed to ask the Police team to conduct PNC checks on their behalf). Instead, Border Force staff had to telephone HMRC to conduct PNC checks and frequently wait for call backs, therefore delaying their work and adding time pressures to an already tight process. This was an inefficient use of resources, delayed alerts being sent out, and further added to the lack of effective working between staff in NBTC.

Once again, poor communication between the Police and Border Force teams meant that the Border Force operator was unaware of the match until the flight had actually landed at Heathrow

6.36 We were told that the main barrier to closer working related to Police concerns about confidentiality and jeopardising sensitive operations. We were not persuaded by this argument, given the significant risks which arose in connection with the highest harm categories as a result of silo working. We believe Border Force should now take action, together with ACPO, to eradicate this risk and to ensure there is a seamless approach to work within the NBTC.

6.37 Following the on-site phase of our inspection we were informed that work was being taken forward to:

- consider vetting Border Force staff to the same level as police staff;
- produce a joint paper for senior management with proposals to achieve the vision of fully integrated working between Border Force, Police and SOCA in NBTC; and
- co-locate five Border Force staff with the Police team in order start 'risk testing any proposals' to inform future joint working.

We believe Border Force should now take action, together with ACPO, to eradicate this risk and to ensure there is a seamless approach to work within the NBTC

We recommend that the Home Office:

- REDACTED; and
- ensures that multi-matches are dealt with by joint teams of Police and Border Force staff to ensure that high profile matches are not missed.

Routine Matches

6.38 Where an alert did not relate to one of the high profile match categories, or if it was a commodity alert, NBTC operators were instructed to refer to port-specific instructions setting out the process they should follow when issuing the alert. In some cases this meant telephoning a specific individual to inform them that an alert was being sent. However, our sampling identified two cases where NBTC Border Force staff had failed to telephone ports to inform them that an alert had been sent. Figure 15 is an example of one such case.

Figure 15: Case study – Port not informed that NBTC alert had been issued.

The individual:

- was flying to Manchester Airport, arriving at 12:25 on 24 September 2012;
- was known to Border Force in connection with previous attempts to smuggle quantities of cigarettes and tobacco above the legal limits into the UK.

NBTC:

- received API data at 03:56 on 24 September 2012.
- issued an alert to Border Force officers at Manchester Airport at 08:53 on 24 September 2012 to consider intercepting the passenger.

Border Force Manchester Airport

- did not attempt to intercept the passenger as they were unaware that the alert had been issued because no telephone call was received as per port specific guidance.

Chief Inspector's comments:

- it is disappointing that the interception of a known offender was not attempted because of a communication breakdown between NBTC and Border Force at Manchester Airport. This is particularly so because in this case the data was provided in good time for Border Force to be able to plan the intervention.

Border Force:

- NBTC acknowledged that there was no record of a telephone call being made to Border Force at Manchester Airport, despite an instruction requiring a telephone call to be made to advise that an alert has been sent.
- Issued a reminder to NBTC staff to check alert instructions for the port in question before issuing an alert.

6.39 There were other instances where under normal circumstances NBTC would have issued an alert but had not done so. Such instances were recorded by NBTC staff on a 'missed alerts spreadsheet'. Typically this was because, by the time the significance of the match was realised, it was too late to send an alert to the port. A contributing factor to this was NBTC guidance which required operators to select five Semaphore matches at a time and work through those before selecting the next five and so on. This was because:

- it was necessary to conduct a check against the WI for every match which could not immediately be eliminated;
- there were a limited number of WI terminals available; and
- it was considered to be more efficient to conduct a batch of WI checks in one go rather than one at a time.

6.40 When a match was selected it was no longer visible to other operators in the unclaimed matches screen. It was possible for the same operator to log off their system at the end of their shift without having worked through all selected matches. As a result a match would remain unprocessed until the operator came back on duty or until noticed by a manager conducting a sweep of the system. Figure 16 is an example of one such instance.

Figure 16: Case study – Failure to issue an alert due to NBTC fault.

The individual:

- was flying inbound to the UK on 29 September 2012;
- had permission to remain in the UK curtailed in August 2012 and had no right of appeal against that decision.

NBTC:

- received API data on 29 September 2012 within the required timeframe
- an operator selected the match on Semaphore but finished their shift without working through it and without de-selecting it;

Chief Inspector's comments:

- the shortcomings disclosed by this case study provide evidence of a serious risk in the NBTC processes
- Operators should not be allowed to log off the system without a warning being given to de-select any outstanding matches.

Border Force comments:

- An alert should have been issued in this case inviting frontline Border Force officers to investigate further.
- The member of staff concerned was reminded of the need to process all matches in a timely manner and de-select any outstanding selected matches before going off duty.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- provides a technical solution to ensure that NBTC operators cannot log off the Semaphore system without having de-selected all unprocessed matches.

Data management

- 6.41 We assessed the handling of personal data and the storage of information in NBTC. Staff and managers within NBTC confirmed that they had undertaken the mandatory e-learning course, 'Protecting Information'. However, during our visit we observed and were told by staff of information management breaches and data protection concerns.
- 6.42 We observed the processing of matches on the Semaphore system and found that staff adhered to information management best practice. Staff ensured that documents were stored in accordance with the file naming conventions. We found however, that after issuing alerts to ports, some staff would retain copies of the completed alerts on their personal drives. This was reinforced by our findings from the focus groups where staff confirmed that alerts sent to ports via personal mailboxes were then kept in the sent items of an individual officer's email account and not always deleted.
- 6.43 A senior manager within NBTC informed us that there was no clear guidance available on this issue. However, a recommendation had been made to review the process for deletion of personal data and retention periods.
- 6.44 We were pleased to note and observe that staff operated a 'clear desk' policy and that this was monitored by operational managers who carried out 'floor sweeps' at the end of each shift. Despite maintaining a clear desk policy, we were informed by staff in focus groups that GA reports containing

some personal data that had been printed from emails or received via fax were kept in a folder on top of a filing cabinet, and were not locked away in accordance with information management guidance.

- 6.45 Although all staff (whether visiting or permanent) are security vetted before entering the building, and there were strict access controls in place, we would still expect staff authorised to handle such information to comply with information management guidance.
- 6.46 During interviews and focus groups, staff raised concerns regarding a lack of access to the IT facilities needed to perform background checks before processing matches. Although we were told that all staff had signed the relevant security operating procedures, we were informed in focus groups that staff had been permitting other users access to the WI system they were already logged onto, predominantly to save time in having to log off and then log on again.
- 6.47 We brought this serious breach of security to the immediate attention of Border Force and an instruction was circulated reminding staff of correct procedures. All managers were also spoken to individually concerning their responsibility to ensure compliance with procedures.
- 6.48 We were told during our visit that as a result of concerns raised regarding data management, a review had recently been undertaken of NBTC's level of compliance with requirements under the Data Protection Act and related legislation when processing personal data. The review highlighted concerns with NBTC's data management obligations, and a number of recommendations were made to senior managers.

Training

- 6.49 During focus groups and interviews, some staff within NBTC expressed concern about the quality of training that they had received or that was currently available for 'new starters'. Some managers commented that previously, guidance and training had been 'too much PowerPoint' and not sufficiently 'hands on'. Managers assured us that as a result of poor quality training in previous years, measures had been put in place to ensure that staff received adequate and tailored training packages to carry out their roles, which included the introduction of mentoring and coaching to support staff once formal training had been completed.
- 6.50 We observed and spoke to staff in the newly formed Projects, Change and Training team, who had responsibility for:
- coordinating and delivering training (in-house or external courses);
 - implementing business improvement;
 - amending and reviewing guidance instructions; and
 - undertaking User Acceptance Testing.²⁰
- 6.51 We also noted that refresher training for all NBTC operational staff would be delivered annually. This was prompted by consistent issues identified from monthly assurance checks by team leaders. Team leaders would have monthly meetings with the Projects, Change and Training team, and the training team themselves would be placed in an operational role once weekly to ensure that their skills and knowledge of processes were maintained.
- 6.52 An example of NBTC taking steps to improve process and procedure was the introduction of a new operating model. We were informed that NBTC had recognised that previous guidance was not clear and that the alert process was resource intensive which resulted in delays in processing matches. In response to feedback from staff, a business case was written recommending a change in structure

²⁰ A process to confirm that a system meets mutually agreed requirements.

and the introduction of a dedicated duty desk which would act as a single point of contact. This recommendation was approved, and the new operating model was introduced on 1 October 2012.

- 6.53 Managers told us that staff were encouraged to contribute to guidance, processes, and training material. However, some staff felt that they were not being listened to when they made suggestions. There were mixed views among staff and managers regarding the effectiveness of communication within NBTC.

7. How e-Borders is used at ports of entry

Immigration alerts

7.1 The value of immigration alerts concerning high profile matches lay in the advance notification of the arrival which the alert provided. This provided an opportunity for Border Force managers to plan an appropriate response such as meeting the passenger at the gate. In fact Border Force was required to meet at the gate all passengers who were the subject either of a deportation order or exclusion decision. This requirement was brought in by means of the Salah Action Plan following the failure in June 2011 of Border Force to stop Raed Salah, a Palestinian activist who had been excluded from the UK by the Home Secretary, at Heathrow.

The value of immigration alerts concerning high profile matches lay in the advance notification of the arrival which the alert provided

7.2 In comparing the handling of alerts at different ports we looked at whether, in accordance with the Salah Action Plan, each used high profile alerts to plan deployment, and what action they took on receipt of a routine immigration alert. Figure 17 records our findings.

Figure 17: Comparison of alert handling at Heathrow, Gatwick and Luton

	Heathrow T5	Gatwick	Luton
High Profile Alerts – used to inform deployment decisions and to comply with Salah action plan?	Yes	No	No
Routine immigration alerts communicated to staff at passport control?	Less than 10%	Yes	Mixed response

Note: The fourth port visited was a seaport – Dover – which does not have an immigration control.

7.3 We found inconsistent practice across the three airports we visited. While Heathrow was compliant with the Salah Action Plan and deployed staff to intercept the subjects of deportation orders and exclusions at arrival gates, Gatwick and Luton did not.

We found inconsistent practice across the three airports we visited

7.4 We also found an inconsistent approach across these airports in relation to the way in which routine immigration alerts were handled. At Heathrow Terminal 5 we found that staff working on passport control were not made aware of non-high profile immigration alerts in over 90% of cases. Action logs completed by Chief Immigration Officers showed that they almost always chose to rely on the WI to intercept the passenger, rather than conveying the content of immigration alerts to staff. Staff at Gatwick South told us they were made aware of the content of all alerts while at Luton it depended on the team leader who was on duty.

7.5 Staff provided us with a number of reasons for these different responses, including that:

- the vast majority of immigration alerts were of no value, because the passenger would be intercepted in any event when the travel document was checked against the WI (all three ports);

- they would not be able to spare staff to meet passengers at the gate due to the need to control queues in the immigration hall; and
- they were not aware that they should deploy staff to meet passengers at the arrival gates for high profile alerts (Gatwick and Luton).

7.6 We examined the Border Force Operating Mandate²¹ and found that it contained no reference to a requirement to intercept passengers at the arrival gate who had been either excluded or deported (classified as high profile alerts). We also established that no other formal operational instruction had been issued to this effect, despite this being one of the requirements contained in the Salah Action Plan.

7.7 Border Force told us that the requirement to deploy staff to intercept passengers at arrival gates had been communicated to Regional Managers by email, but had not been incorporated into a formal instruction.

We found that eight of these passengers had in fact been encountered, because their passports had been swiped against the WI, this despite feedback to NBTC to the contrary

7.8 We were also told that there was some confusion as to whether the action plan should have referred to deportation orders as well as exclusion cases given that Salah was subject to exclusion and not a deportation order. We were told that submissions to Ministers had only referred to meeting individuals at the gate who had been excluded by the Home Secretary, so it was unclear why the Action Plan referred to deportation cases as well as exclusion cases.

7.9 Border Force told us that the confusion may have arisen because of another case that had occurred at around the same time as the Salah incident. This case affected a Foreign National Prisoner who was subject to a deportation order, but had gained entry to the UK. It was considered that some of the actions that followed a review of this incident may have been incorporated into the action plan developed as a result of the Salah case. It was not clear whether the inclusion of deportation orders was a deliberate extension to the Salah action plan or whether it was added in error. Border Force added it was trying to clear up the confusion that had resulted.

7.10 The lack of a properly documented policy and instruction setting out clearly what Border Force staff at ports should do was unacceptable.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- issues clear instructions to frontline staff on the actions they must take when they receive alerts about the arrivals of individuals who are subject of either a deportation order or exclusion.

7.11 Our sample of Semaphore records showed that in nine of the 33 (27%) cases where an immigration alert had been sent to Border Force, feedback indicated that the passenger had not been encountered. In all nine cases the alert related to Heathrow Airport, although not all to Terminal 5. We asked why so many of the passengers were not encountered. It was suggested to us that this issue had been looked at before and that the non-encountered passengers had probably transited through Heathrow and flown on to their final destination without going through UK passport control.

7.12 We were not convinced by this explanation and asked the Watchlist Information and Control Unit (WICU) to conduct a check to determine whether any of these nine passengers had passed through passport control. We found that eight of these passengers had in fact been encountered, because their passports had been swiped against the WI, this despite feedback to NBTC to the contrary. This

²¹ Border Force guidance for staff operating at the Border on the mandatory and discretionary checks to be carried out in respect of arriving and departing passengers.

was not surprising, as our evidence showed that in the majority of cases staff on passport control at Heathrow were not informed of the alert in the first place.

- 7.13 We asked WICU to confirm that these hits against the WI had been properly acknowledged on the WI IT system as required by Border Force operating instructions. We were disappointed to learn that in two cases staff had not taken this action. It was not therefore possible to confirm whether the Border Force officers had properly dealt with the individuals concerned.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- issues clear guidance to frontline staff about the requirement to provide accurate and reliable alert feedback.

- 7.14 We questioned the value of issuing routine immigration alerts which were often not even communicated to staff on passport control. Senior managers told us that staff were not infallible. While we can see the merit in this approach for high profile alerts, it was a poor use of scarce NBTC resources to generate routine immigration alerts. This was because the information contained in routine alerts:

- was no more than would be available from a check of the WI;
- was not always communicated to staff in any event; and
- had already been recognised in an internal Border Force management report as adding little or no value to frontline officers.

We questioned the value of issuing routine immigration alerts which were often not even communicated to staff on passport control

- 7.15 At the final port we visited (Dover) there was no passport control or WI system in place as immigration controls were carried out as part of the juxtaposed control arrangements in Calais. However, staff in Dover still received immigration alerts. Staff considered this a pointless exercise because they then had to contact Border Force colleagues in France to check whether the passenger had been encountered. This was an inefficient use of resources and diverted staff at Dover from their primary function of tackling the threat posed by illegal drugs and other contraband.

Commodity Alerts

- 7.16 Managers and staff at the ports we visited told us that the categorisation of NBTC commodity alerts was problematic. This was because they were issued as Category B, which meant they had to be actioned in accordance with the Border Force Operating Mandate, even though they considered that the strength of the information did not warrant this categorisation (unlike commodity targets issued by Border Force Targeting Hubs, where a category B target resulted in a better ratio of successful seizures). Port staff added that the majority of NBTC commodity alerts did not produce a positive outcome and this view was supported by the management information provided by the e-Borders programme, which confirmed that less than 3% of NBTC commodity alerts resulted in a seizure.

- 7.17 Port staff told us that the NBTC commodity alerts should rather be given a C categorisation, which would enable local managers to make an informed decision about whether to intervene based on available resources and other priorities. We were told that the over-categorisation of NBTC alerts had the potential to divert resources away from more important locally generated activity.

- 7.18 Managers at Luton told us that there was also a tension between the requirement to action commodity alerts and the need to control queues at passport control. They said that much stronger justification had to be provided for a breach of the queuing target than for failing to action a commodity alert. This led them to believe that queues took priority over commodity work.

7.19 Senior managers told us that the mandatory requirement in the Border Force Operating Mandate to action Category B alerts only applied to the risk-based targets from the national targeting hubs. The requirement in respect of NBTC alerts was that they must be examined and, where necessary, have appropriate action taken. This distinction was not understood by frontline staff, who continued to see NBTC commodity alerts as requiring action. This was not surprising, given that:

Managers at Luton told us that there was also a tension between the requirement to action commodity alerts and the need to control queues at passport control

- a very similar form was used by both NBTC and national targeting hubs; and
- all NBTC commodity alerts were marked as category B.

7.20 Border Force stated that clarification was being sought about whether the Operating Mandate needed to be amended to make clear what specific action ports needed to take upon receipt of NBTC commodity alerts.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- provides clear instructions in the Border Force Operating Mandate about how commodity alerts issued by NBTC should be categorised and dealt with.

7.21 We noted from our sample of Semaphore records that of the 16 commodity alerts sent to Border Force, feedback was not provided to NBTC in six (38%) cases. This was disappointing, as we were able to obtain feedback on all six cases when we requested it. It is important that feedback is provided to NBTC so that it can evaluate and report on the benefits provided by e-Borders.

Data management

7.22 We found differing practices at ports in relation to how alerts from NBTC were communicated to the Primary Control Point (PCP). Staff told us that every effort was made to inform staff at the PCP during the shift briefings of any impending alerts. When this was not possible slips of paper with alert details were handed to staff at the immigration desks by managers. Managers told us that this process minimised the risk of the subject to an alert being missed.

This distinction was not understood by frontline staff, who continued to see NBTC commodity alerts as requiring action

7.23 Staff we spoke to raised concerns about the difficulties they experienced in trying to ensure that the slips of paper were not seen by the public. Managers informed us that there were no issues with data loss as the slips of paper were collected and destroyed by the Chief Immigration Officer. However, staff told us that there had been security breaches involving slips of paper with alert details being left unattended, as evidenced by an alert being handed to Border Force staff by an airport security officer.

7.24 The lack of an end-to-end e-Borders IT system increases the risk of a breach of the requirement to protect personal data. We would expect Border Force to ensure that managers are undertaking regular and effective audit and assurance activity to ensure that staff within ports are handling personal data in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance.

8. Have the benefits of e-Borders been realised?

8.1 Figure 18 shows the progress that Border Force had made in delivering the anticipated benefits set out in the 2007 business case.

Figure 18: Key benefits to be delivered by e-Borders programme		
	Benefit	Delivered?
1	Improved security by supporting the security and intelligence agencies to track and analyse the activities of terrorists and other national security targets across the border.	Partially Delivered
2	Increased ability to identify and arrest those of interest to the police.	Yes
3	Improved effectiveness and efficiency of border control activity by providing a risk assessment of passengers, facilitating expedited processing of passengers at the border and providing a platform for automated clearance services.	No
4	Benefits will accrue from process cost savings as a result of the phasing out of landing cards and the ability to access electronic movement records when determining applications for extensions of stay.	No
5	Enable the identification of those involved in excise duty avoidance and impact on the market penetration of smuggled goods.	Partially Delivered
6	Enable HMRC and DWP to establish the length of time spent in the UK by an individual permitting easy identification of benefit claimants living outside the UK and those falsely claiming non domicile status for income tax purposes.	No
7	Benefits to ports and carriers such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reductions in removal and detention costs of those refused entry (subject to implementation of an authority to carry scheme); • more effective use of detention space at ports, provided free of rent to control agencies; and • remove requirement to procure and administer landing cards. 	No
8	The ability to count all foreign national passengers into and out of the UK enabling the provision of accurate statistical data to support the provision of services.	No

Benefit 1 – Counter Terrorism and National Security

8.2 A key deliverable of the e-Borders programme was to provide the security and intelligence agencies with the ability to track and analyse the activities of terrorists and other national security targets across the border.

8.3 The OSCT, ACPO, NCA and Security Services all indicated the vital importance of e-Borders intelligence in the fight against international terrorism and threats to national security. They were clear that e-Borders was an important component in helping to provide an overall intelligence picture.

They were clear that e-Borders was an important component in helping to provide an overall intelligence picture

8.4 Semaphore alerts provided information to the Security Services and Special Branch about individuals of interest. This information was used either to intercept individuals at the border, or for intelligence purposes. Our sampling of Semaphore alerts confirmed that information was being generated and passed to these agencies.

8.5 While welcoming the information already provided by e-Borders, these stakeholders all commented on the importance they attached to securing full coverage of passenger movements into and out of the UK. As a result we consider the e-Borders programme had only partially delivered against this benefit.

These stakeholders all commented on the importance they attached to securing full coverage of passenger movements into and out of the UK

Pre-Departure Checks Scheme

8.6 The PDCS includes an ATC scheme. It applies to persons falling within the scope of the Security and Travel Bans Authority to Carry Scheme 2012, and for those individuals:

- subject to Terrorist Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMS);
- released on licence from prison after serving sentences for terrorism related offences; and
- in respect of which a direction has been made under the Aviation Security Act 1982.

8.7 Details of these individuals were manually added to the NBTC 'no fly' watch list when requested by the Security Services, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the Department of Transport and the former UK Border Agency.

8.8 The purpose of the scheme was to prevent those who posed a terrorist threat from flying to or from the UK. The system was launched following the introduction of secondary legislation covering its use in July 2012. OSCT considered that these powers would be used, on average, three times a year.

Benefit 2 – identification and arrest of individuals wanted by the police

8.9 A major aim of the e-Borders programme was to facilitate the arrest of individuals wanted by the police for a range of criminal offences, including the most serious, i.e. murder and rape.

8.10 Our sampling of 300 Semaphore records in September 2012 showed that the Police were the biggest recipient of NBTC alerts, receiving half of the alerts generated (151). These were broken down as follows:

- 38 concerned individuals shown as wanted on the PNC for various criminal offences;
- 50 were intelligence reports concerning individuals of interest to the police; and
- 63 were intelligence reports concerning travel to or from the UK by a registered sex offender.

8.11 The alerts concerning individuals wanted for criminal offences gave Police the opportunity to intercept individuals at ports. This had resulted in a significant number of arrests for serious offences such as murder and rape. Without the e-Borders alert these individuals would have continued to evade capture. Figure 19 provides an example of one such case.

This had resulted in a significant number of arrests for serious offences such as murder and rape

Figure 19: Case study – Alert concerning individual wanted by Police.

The individual:

- who was wanted by Police in connection with an offence of rape, was flying inbound to Heathrow Airport with an arrival time of 11:10 on 22 September 2012.

NBTC:

- received API from the carrier at 04:16 on 22 September 2012 and issued an alert to Police at Heathrow Airport 26 minutes later (04:42) – this resulted in their arrest for rape.

Chief Inspector's comments:

- A very positive example of the e-Borders system in the apprehension of an individual for a serious sexual offence.

8.12 Management information shows that between January and September 2012, 2,200 arrests took place as a direct result of the identification of wanted persons. This was less than the original estimate provided in the 2007 business case, which had anticipated 8,200 arrests per year based on the Semaphore pilot. Nevertheless, this was still a very significant benefit directly attributable to the e-Borders system and has resulted in thousands of arrests over the lifetime of the programme to date. If Border Force increases the proportion of passenger movements covered by e-Borders, the number of arrests is also likely to increase.

Nevertheless, this was still a very significant benefit directly attributable to the e-Borders system and has resulted in thousands of arrests over the lifetime of the programme to date

8.13 ACPO confirmed that intelligence alerts concerning individuals of interest to the police (50 in our sample) provided valuable assistance in ongoing investigations. As a result e-Borders was regarded as a key tool in the investigation of crime.

8.14 In relation to alerts about sex offenders, ACPO told us that the majority of these added little value, as registered sex offenders were required by law to report their travel plans to their local police force in advance of travel anyway. As NBTC police staff could check their systems to see whether the individual had complied with reporting requirements, ACPO confirmed that from October 2012, alerts would only be issued where NBTC staff identified that individuals had not reported in advance. During the inspection we confirmed this change had been implemented.

8.15 NBTC also offered an additional facility to conduct searches which allowed law enforcement agencies to establish the travel history of persons of interest. We were told that this facility had produced tangible results and that feedback received from requestors had been overwhelmingly positive.

8.16 The Police team also used Semaphore to search for individuals fitting profiles of interest from a counter terrorism perspective, referred to as Rules Based Targeting. We were told that this had been very successful. During the Olympics they ran a counter-terrorism profile for three airports. 27

individuals matched the profile of which 19 were intercepted on arrival by Special Branch.

Benefit 3 – Passenger risk assessment and faster processing of passengers

- 8.17 The original 2007 business case stated that e-Borders would introduce a new risk assessment process for the arrival control, based on using API data. This information, tied to a new Primary Line System, would support effective and efficient arrivals control operations. We found that this benefit had not been delivered.
- 8.18 This was primarily because both the political and policy backdrop to e-Borders had changed in 2011, and there was no longer an appetite for risk-based immigration controls.
- 8.19 We identified concerns in relation to the issue of immigration alerts by NBTC. In 28 of the 33 immigration related alerts issued to Border Force (85%) in our sample the alert added no value, because the information provided:
- was no more than was available on the WI when the passenger concerned presented themselves at passport control; and
 - was not used to deploy resource as the alerts were not categorised ‘high profile’.
- 8.20 Our findings were supported by the evidence we obtained at the ports we visited. Staff said that most immigration alerts were of no value, because the passenger would be intercepted in any event when their travel document was checked against the WI.
- 8.21 We noted that an internal Border Force review conducted in 2011 made similar findings, concluding that these alerts diminished the perceived value of e-Borders to frontline staff and should therefore only be issued in high profile cases.
- 8.22 We found four immigration alerts concerned individuals suspected of previous involvement with the facilitation of an immigration offender or human trafficking. We were surprised that these serious cases were not dealt with under the high profile match process (see the section below on this categorisation of alert). Intercepting such individuals prior to them reaching passport control could be important, because we were told that the facilitator or trafficker would usually separate from the passenger before approaching passport control. The advanced notification was potentially valuable in the planning of an appropriate intervention. However, other than at Heathrow, we found no evidence that e-Border alerts were used in this way.
-
- Border Force needs to ensure that benefits aligned to the e-Borders programme can be clearly shown to be attributable to the e-Borders alert, rather than business as usual processes*
-
- 8.23 The final immigration alert concerned an individual who had been previously deported and was attempting to seek re-entry into the UK. There was value in this alert because it enabled Border Force to intercept the passenger at the gate.
- 8.24 One of the benefits associated with the e-Borders programme related to the refusal of leave to enter to approximately 390 individuals between April and November 2012. However, our findings showed that many immigration alerts were not given to frontline staff, who continued to rely on WI checks, in accordance with the Border Force Operating Mandate.
- 8.25 This meant that refusals of leave to enter would have happened regardless of any immigration alerts issued by NBTC. Border Force needs to ensure that benefits aligned to the e-Borders programme can be clearly shown to be attributable to the e-Borders alert, rather than business as usual processes.

Faster processing of passengers

- 8.26 The anticipated benefit of faster and more efficient processing of passengers, based on e-border's technology had not been delivered. This was because e-Borders was no longer considered a substitute for full checks at the border, but as one layer in a multi layered system of control.
- 8.27 We were told that it was now well-accepted in most developed countries that a multi-layered approach was best. We were told that faster and more efficient processing of passengers would still be delivered, but through the increasing use of e-gates, which would occur naturally as more and more UK nationals were issued with chipped passports.
- 8.28 A limited trial of the 'Smart Zone' concept, which relied on the segregation of suitable arriving flights (and where all passengers had been checked by e-Borders and no threats identified) ceased in 2011. Port operators were very enthusiastic about Smart Zones, citing them as the one tangible benefit to have resulted from e-Borders, benefiting not only those passengers directly affected by it, but also other passengers in the immigration hall. This was because queues were reduced, producing faster processing times as a result. Border Force stated that no decision had been reached concerning the reintroduction of Smart Zones.

Benefit 4 – Cost savings to the Agency

- 8.29 The e-Borders programme anticipated delivering a number of benefits linked to immigration casework processes. They included:
- delivering cost savings as a result of phasing out landing cards and closure of the landing card unit; and
 - providing casework staff with the ability to access e-Borders for travel history searches when making decisions.
- 8.30 The anticipated costs savings relating to phasing out landing cards²² and closing the landing card unit had not come to fruition. This was because API data coverage remained incomplete and the proposed IT solution had not been delivered.
- 8.31 We found that NBTC received approximately 200 movement search requests from immigration caseworkers, Risk and Liaison Overseas Network (RALON) and Border Force staff each day. RALON often made bulk requests which were used for visa compliance testing and to update risk profiles. We were told the service provided a clear benefit to those areas requesting these searches. However, there was no systematic attempt to understand what benefits were being delivered, either in terms of cost savings, or for example in terms of numbers of applications refused.
- 8.32 NBTC believed that the movement search facility could be exploited more fully across border and immigration functions and had started to deliver a series of staff awareness workshops across UK ports to encourage further take-up of this service.

Port operators were very enthusiastic about Smart Zones, citing them as the one tangible benefit to have resulted from e-Borders

Benefit 5 – Seizures of prohibited and restricted goods

- 8.33 Another deliverable linked to the e-Borders programme was the identification of individuals involved in excise duty avoidance, and a reduction in the market penetration of smuggled goods.
- 8.34 HMRC stated that only a tiny fraction of the total amount of prohibited and restricted goods seized annually came from passengers. The vast majority of seizures were derived from freight checks, and e-Borders had produced no notable impact on the entry of smuggled goods into the UK market.

²² Form that non EEA citizens are required to fill out and present to a Border Force Officer on arrival in the UK.

- 8.35 Border Force management information showed that e-Borders alerts accounted for only a small proportion of the total quantity of restricted and prohibited items seized from passengers. Far bigger quantities by comparison were seized as a result of passenger profiling by Border Force's Passenger Targeting teams. [PART REDACTED]. This was perhaps not surprising in light of our findings that over three quarters of commodity matches were deleted by NBTC without being examined. The passenger targeting hubs did conduct e-Borders movement searches in the course of their profiling activity using the remote access which they enjoyed.
- 8.36 There were 16 commodity alerts in our Semaphore sample. In all cases the subject of the alert was known because of previous involvement in smuggling drugs or tobacco. Details of the previous incidents were recorded on the HMRC Centaur database. Border Force officers are unable to check the details of arriving passengers against the Centaur database as they pass through customs controls. Therefore, they would not know that a passenger had a history of customs offences without the issuing of an alert. Two of the 16 commodity alerts (12%) resulted in the seizure of 85kg of hand rolling tobacco and 5,760 cigarettes respectively. Figure 20 refers to one of these seizures.

Figure 20: Case study – Attempted Excise Duty Evasion

The individual:

- was flying inbound to the UK on 6 September 2012;
- was known to Border Force in connection with previous attempts to smuggle drugs/tobacco into the UK.

NBTC:

- received API data on 5 September 2012 at 23:00;
- issued an alert to Border Force on 6 September 2012 at 00.06 to consider intercepting the passenger on arrival.

Border Force

- intercepted passenger and co-traveller and seized 85 kg molasses tobacco and 200 cigarettes which had not been declared.

Chief Inspector's comments:

- this is a positive example of the use of e-Borders to identify and intercept individuals suspected of involvement with excise duty evasion.

While e-Borders had delivered some limited benefits in identifying passengers involved in excise duty avoidance, there was much more that could be done to improve performance in this area

- 8.37 Management information showed that between April and December 2012 e-Borders alerts led to the seizure of goods valued at around £3m. Of this £2.8m was as a result of a single seizure of 10kg of Class A drugs. This did not compare well with the anticipated level of seizures, based on e-Borders modelling work, of £10m. As a result, the e-Borders Programme team was conducting further work to explore why there was such a discrepancy.
- 8.38 Rules Based Targeting led to 26 interceptions over the same period resulting in seizures valued in excess of £16m. These were modest amounts when compared with the 700kg of Class A drugs seized following targets issued by Border Force targeting hubs during 2011/12. While e-Borders had delivered some limited benefits in identifying passengers involved in excise duty avoidance, there was much more that could be done to improve performance in this area. We also noted HMRC's view that the vast majority of seizures were derived from freight checks, and e-Borders had produced no notable impact on the entry of smuggled goods into the UK market.

Benefit 6 – Identification of benefit and taxation fraud

- 8.39 The 2007 e-Borders business case anticipated that financial benefits would accrue to other government departments beyond those directly involved in border security. These included:
- The DWP, which it was thought would benefit from the identification of individuals who were abusing the benefits system (estimated value was £130m over 10 years); and
 - HMRC, which it was thought would resolve questions of country of domicile for taxation purposes and prevent the loss of direct and indirect taxation.

8.40 The e-Borders programme team told us that bulk data sharing with these departments had not yet started and was unlikely to in the immediate future. However, benefits identification work was ongoing and a range of potential beneficiaries had been identified. HMRC did, however, conduct movement search requests via NBTC.

It was disappointing that data sharing had not yet started to assist with the identification of benefit and tax fraud

8.41 It was disappointing that data sharing had not yet started to assist with the identification of benefit and tax fraud as these were some of the more significant financial benefits that were expected to be delivered as part of e-Borders.

Benefit 7 – Port operators and air/sea carriers

8.42 The materials used to market the e-Borders concept to ports and carriers, as well as to other stakeholders, stated that:

- e-Borders was an important enabler of the strategy of ‘exporting the border’;
- carriers would benefit financially because individuals would be denied boarding rather than be allowed to journey to the UK, where refusal would follow, thus saving carriers the cost of a return journey; and
- port operators would benefit by not needing to provide as much space for detention facilities, freeing up valuable space for other uses.

8.43 From our sample we identified one case where the Semaphore system revealed that a passenger flying to the UK was the subject of a deportation order, but had not been prevented from flying to the UK. We asked why no attempt had been made to prevent this individual from flying to the UK.

8.44 We were told that there were two main reasons why e-Borders was not being used in the way described above. The first was a decision to limit the statutory ATC scheme to those very high risk individuals who posed a threat to national and aviation security and public safety by the use of PDCS. This would be reviewed at a later stage and the extension of the scheme had not been ruled out.

8.45 The second reason related to the very large number of deportation orders in force which varied from overstaying after the expiry of a visa to instances of serious criminality. Denying boarding in these cases was seen as more difficult and less clear cut than in the case of an individual with links to terrorism.

8.46 We were not convinced by this reasoning. There will be instances concerning a PDCS match where there is no statutory power to deny boarding, for example where Form IS72 has not been issued but NBTC was still required to recommend that a passenger was not carried. Border Force passenger targeting staff have also had significant success in preventing inadequately documented passengers

from flying to the UK. This was not achieved using statutory powers but by working in cooperation with RALON and with carriers.

- 8.47 We were told that, although there was a statutory power to refuse entry overseas, this was no longer used. This would not prevent Border Force recommending to a carrier that they deny boarding to a passenger who was subject of a deportation order or exclusion, particularly as they would be refused entry on arrival. In such circumstances it would be in the carrier's interest to deny boarding in order to avoid the cost of the return journey which is borne by them.
- 8.48 This is an inefficient use of resources. It is also arguably unfair to impose the cost of removal on the carrier in these circumstances where it has not been given the opportunity to avoid it.

We recommend that the Home Office:

- ensures that advance passenger data is used to prevent the arrival of those clearly not admissible (those subject to deportation orders and exclusion) when identified by the e-Borders system.

- 8.49 As a result the anticipated savings to ports and carriers have not materialised. NBTC did not prevent passengers from travelling to the UK other than in PDCS cases.
[PART REDACTED].

It could not 'count in and out' for the purposes of population or migration statistics

Benefit 8 – Counting in and out

- 8.50 All the e-Borders business cases suggested that a key benefit would be the ability to count people in and out as they pass through the border.

- 8.51 We were told that whilst the e-Borders system could count out some people, such as those who had received an adverse immigration decision, it could not 'count in and out' for the purposes of population or migration statistics.

- 8.52 This was because the data set required for counting in and out was wider than that collected by e-Borders. For example, data on issues such as the purpose of travel and length of intended presence or absence would also be required. It was not clear why the language of counting in and counting out had survived in each of the business cases.

- 8.53 This view was consistent with the conclusions of a report from the Office for National Statistics which said that the production of reliable migration counts using e-Borders would require virtually complete coverage and high quality data. Even then it would take at least three years before a full year of migrant counts could be produced. It concluded that even if 95% coverage could be achieved by 2014, the first set of migrant counts would not be available until 2018 at the earliest. Therefore e-Borders had not yet delivered against this benefit.

E-Borders was providing a clear benefit to the former UK Border Agency in identifying individuals who had left the UK following an adverse immigration decision

Exit checks

- 8.54 E-Borders was providing a clear benefit to the former UK Border Agency in identifying individuals who had left the UK following an adverse immigration decision. This was achieved by NBTC staff monitoring the Semaphore system for 'outbound matches' to identify individuals who fit this criteria. The former UK Border Agency was then able to formally claim a voluntary departure and close the corresponding file.

8.55 This allowed the Agency to concentrate its efforts on other casework rather than looking for individuals that had already left the country. Management information provided to us indicated that approximately 2,700 cases had been closed between April and November 2012 as a direct result of e-Borders analysis.

8.56 However, this was only one element of what is involved in an exit check. In order for e-Borders to be used as the basis for the delivery of the Ministerial commitment to introduce exit checks by 2015, it must be capable of facilitating physical interventions where appropriate. We found that the Police did mount interventions against passengers leaving the UK as a result of information provided by e-Borders. In contrast Border Force was not able to exploit the system to intercept departing passengers because:

Management information provided to us indicated that approximately 2,700 cases had been closed between April and November 2012 as a direct result of e-Borders analysis

- outbound immigration matches were not processed in real time; and
- virtually all outbound commodity matches were deleted without further examination.

8.57 Border Force will need to address these issues and ensure that resources are available to conduct the necessary interventions at ports if e-Borders is to be used as the basis to deliver the commitment to introduce exit checks.

Appendix A – Inspection Framework and Criteria

The criteria used in this inspection were taken from the Independent Chief Inspector’s Inspection Criteria. Figure 21 refers.

Figure 21: Inspection Criteria used when inspecting the e-Borders system

1. Decisions on the entry, stay and removal of individuals should be taken in accordance with the law and the principles of good administration.
2. Customs and immigration offences should be prevented, detected, investigated and, where appropriate, prosecuted.
3. Resources should be allocated to support operational delivery and achieve value for money.
4. Individuals’ personal data should be treated and stored securely in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.
5. The implementation of policies and processes should support the delivery of Home Office objectives.
6. Risks to operational delivery should be identified, monitored and mitigated.

Appendix B – Statutory Basis for e-Borders

Primary legislation was enacted in 2006 to provide the framework-enabling powers for the programme. The primary legislation (paragraphs 27 and 27B of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 as amended in 2006, and sections 32 to 38 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006) created powers for the Agency and the police to obtain passenger, crew and service data from carriers in advance of all movements into and out of the United Kingdom and a duty for the border agencies to share that data amongst themselves.

This was followed by five statutory instruments in 2007 and 2008, which:

- commenced those powers;
- extended the powers to cover channel tunnel trains;
- specified the data that can be requested by the Agency and the police;
- specified the data that must be shared between the border agencies; and
- brought a code of practice regarding data sharing into force.

In July 2012 the Security and Travel Bans Authority to Carry Scheme 2012²³ came into force. The scheme gave the power to refuse a carrier ATC to the UK persons falling within the scope of the scheme. If the carrier did not seek such authority or if the carrier brought to the UK a passenger in respect of whom authority had been denied the carrier would be liable to a financial penalty.²⁴

The scheme applied to all passenger air carriers operating to the UK in respect of those routes for which Form IS72 had been issued, a form issued to a carrier requiring submission of passenger data to e-Borders.²⁵ Where a carrier had been issued with form IS72 in respect of some of its routes only, the Scheme only applied in respect of those routes.

²³ Made under section 124 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

²⁴ The financial penalty regime for failure to comply with the scheme is set out in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (Authority to Carry) Regulations 2012.

²⁵ Form IS72 issued under paragraphs 27 and 27B of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971.

Appendix C – Glossary

Term	Description
A	
Advance Passenger Information (API)	Biographical data contained within the machine readable zone of the travel document i.e. name, date of birth, nationality, gender, travel document type, date of issue, number and expiry date. Also known as Travel Document Information.
Assistant Director	Senior Manager within Border Force, equivalent to a civil service Grade 7 position.
Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)	Brings together the expertise and experience of chief police officers from England, Wales and Northern Ireland, providing a professional forum to share ideas and best practice, co-ordinate resources and help deliver effective policing which keeps the public safe.
Authority To Carry (ATC) Scheme	The concept of granting or denying a carrier the authority to carry a passenger to the UK based on real-time checks.
B	
Border Force	A separate operational command within the Home Office, responsible for frontline operations at air, sea and rail ports.
Border Force Operating Mandate	Document that brings together guidance and instructions relating to the work of Border Force.
C	
Carrier	A person or organisation that transports passengers or goods in and out of the United Kingdom.
Centaur	Legacy customs IT system used by Border Force to collate and manage information and intelligence. Details of seizures made at ports are stored on this system.
Chief Immigration Officer (CIO)	Team leader, equivalent to Higher Executive Officer grade, responsible for the effective running of the Primary Control Point.
Collaborative Business Portal	A secure web based system for the exchange of data with external partner organisations.
Commodities	This refers to goods such as drugs, cigarettes and money.
Customs	Collecting and safeguarding customs duties and controlling the flow of goods including animals, transport, personal effects and hazardous items in and out of the UK. This function is carried out by Border Force staff.
E	
e-Borders	A multi-agency programme delivered by Border Force in partnership with the police and the security and intelligence agencies. It focuses on the capture and analysis of passenger and crew data from carriers, in advance of movements into and out of the UK by air, sea and rail.

e-Gates	Border security technology which scans each passenger's face against a digital photo recorded in their passport. If there is a match, the automated gates allow the clearance of EU passengers across the border. Also known as automated clearance system (ACS) gates.
European Economic Area (EEA)	<p>The European Economic Area (EEA) was established on 1 January 1994 following an agreement between member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Community, later the European Union (EU).</p> <p>All European Economic Area national enjoy free movement rights in the EEA. This means that they are not subject to the Immigration Rules and may come to the United Kingdom and reside here in accordance with the 2006 Regulations. They do not require permission from UK Visas and Immigration to enter or remain, nor do they require a document confirming their free movement status.</p>
G	
General Aviation	Non-commercial private flight/unscheduled international aviation traffic.
General Maritime	Non-commercial private boat/unscheduled international maritime traffic.
H	
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	UK government department responsible for customs and taxation. The HMRC customs function was one of the legacy organisations that made up the former UK Border Agency. The function is now carried out by Border Force staff at air, rail and sea ports.
Home Office	The Home Office is the lead government department for immigration and passports, drugs policy, crime, counter-terrorism and police.
I	
Immigration Officer (Now referred to as Border Force Officer)	Employees of the Border Force, appointed by the Home Secretary, whose powers are conferred by the Immigration Act 1971 and who act in accordance with Immigration Rules. They have the power of arrest and detention conferred on them by the Immigration Act 1971, both at ports and inland.
Intelligence	The information that is gathered by the Agency and recorded, assessed and developed into a format that can be used by the Agency.
Intelligence Unit	A team that collates and disseminates intelligence, usually for LIT arrest teams.
J	
Joint Border Operations Centre (JBOC)	Predecessor to National Border Targeting Centre.
Juxtaposed controls	UK immigration controls based in France and Belgium where immigration checks are conducted on passengers before they travel to the UK. There are no further immigration checks once they arrive in the UK.
L	
Legacy customs functions	Term used to describe the customs functions undertaken by the former UK Border Agency, and more recently Border Force since integration.
Legacy immigration functions	Term used to describe the immigration functions undertaken by the former UK Border Agency, and more recently Border Force since integration.

M	
Movement requests	The e-Borders system can be searched for historical movements of persons. Searches can be requested via specific form and information that NBTC will be able to supply for historical record matches includes: document type, issuing state, full name, travel document number, nationality, date of birth, gender and expiry date of travel.
N	
National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC)	A central hub staffed by Border Force staff, Police and SOCA, undertaking operational activities integral to the e-Borders programme.
National Crime Agency (NCA)	An operational crime fighting agency that has taken on the work of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. It has also incorporated the functions of the National Policing Improvement Agency.
P	
Passenger Name Records (PNR)	Data the carrier collects in the course of its business which is generally held on a carrier's reservation system. This may include details such as passenger name, address, telephone numbers, ticketing information and travel itinerary. Also known as Other Passenger Information.
Police National Computer (PNC)	The PNC holds details of people, vehicles, crimes and property that can be electronically accessed by the police and other criminal justice agencies.
Port	A point of legal entry to the UK, including airports, seaports and the channel rail terminals.
Passport Control, or Primary Checkpoint or Primary Control Point (PCP)	The area in an arrivals hall where Border Force staff make an initial decision on whether a passenger should be allowed entry into the UK without delay. All passengers must submit their passports/travel documentation to the officer making this decision.
R	
Risk and Liaison Overseas Network (RALON)	An amalgamation of the former Airline Liaison Officer Network and Overseas Risk Assessment Unit Network. RALON has responsibility for identifying threats to the UK border, preventing inadequately documented passengers from reaching UK shores, providing risk assessment to Visas and Immigration visa issuing regime and supporting criminal investigations against individuals and organisations which cause harm to the UK.
Regional Director	Senior manager responsible for one of the former six Immigration Group regions.
Removal	The process by which a person is removed from the UK voluntarily or forcibly by a removal or enforcement team.
Risk Assessment	Process by which Border Force assess the risk to the UK border of particular activities/flights/passenger profiles.
Risk Profile	An outline that determines the relative potential harm (to the UK of a visa applicant/travelling passenger) based on characteristics of an individual when compared to existing evidence of adverse activity either in the UK or overseas.

Rules Based Targeting	The use of rules based software to input intelligence led risk rules into the NBTC system. PNR data is then washed against active risk rules and those passengers most closely matching the rules are flagged to operators. Further analysis enables Border Agencies to target interventions against “unknowns” more effectively.
S	
Semaphore	Project Semaphore was a pilot project to help develop the e-Borders programme, which received advance information on passengers from carriers on journeys to and from airports outside the UK. Semaphore has since moved from a developmental project phase and since 2010 has been upgraded, stabilised and used as the basis for e-Borders data collection business as usual until a new IT system is delivered.
Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)	An Executive Non-Departmental Public Body of the Home Office responsible for proactive operations against serious and organised crime.
Smart Zones	The use of e-Borders semaphore system to identify passengers travelling on specific flights who merit closer attention, whilst passengers who do not, are allowed to proceed through the PCP quicker.
T	
Targeting and Selection (T&S) hub	A central hub where staff scrutinise flight manifests to identify those whose routing or other indicators suggest that an individual(s) may be importing illicit goods.
U	
United Kingdom Border Agency (the Agency)	
W	
Warnings Index (WI)	A database of names available to Border Force of those with previous immigration history, those of interest to detection staff, police or matters of national security. Also known as the Home Office Warnings Index.
Watch list Index Control Unit (WICU)	The unit within Border Force responsible for updating and maintaining the Home Office Warnings Index (WI) system.
Watch list	A database holding names of individuals or organisations of interest.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Border Force for its help and co-operation throughout the inspection and for the assistance provided in helping to arrange and schedule inspection activity within NBTC and across the ports that we visited.

Assistant Chief Inspector: **Garry Cullen**

Lead Inspector: **Cliff Buckley**

Inspection Officers: **Remmy Ahebwa**
Akua Brew-Abekah

