

July 2024 immigration update:

THE NEW HOME SECRETARY'S PLAN TO SMASH IMMIGRATION CRIMINAL GANGS

The first steps to establishing a new UK Border Security Command (BSC).

This initiative aims to enhance Britain's border security and dismantle the criminal smuggling gangs profiting from small boat crossings.

Rapid recruitment for an exceptional leader experienced in complex and challenging environments, such as senior levels of policing, intelligence, or the military, will commence on Monday, 8 July. The new recruit is expected to assume their role in the coming weeks.

Reporting directly to the Home Secretary, the Border Security Commander will provide strategic direction, coordinating efforts across agencies, including the National Crime Agency (NCA), intelligence agencies, police, Immigration Enforcement, and Border Force. This collaboration aims to better protect our borders and target the smuggling gangs enabling small boat crossings.

A core team in the Home Office, following the Home Secretary's instruction, is establishing the remit, governance, and strategic direction of the new command. Early legislation is being prepared to introduce new counter-terror-style powers and stronger measures to combat organized immigration crime.

Additionally, the Home Secretary has commissioned a bespoke investigation from the department and the NCA into the latest routes, methods, and tactics used by people smuggling gangs across Europe. This investigation will inform a significant law enforcement drive over the coming months.

The Border Security Command will draw on substantial additional resources, with efforts to recruit more investigators, experts, and analysts to tackle organized immigration crime starting on Monday. Many of these new recruits will be based across Europe, working with Europol and European police forces to disrupt the activities of the criminal smuggling gangs and ensure those profiting from people smuggling are brought to justice.

In a call to the Director General of the NCA, Graeme Biggar, the Home Secretary emphasized the need to dismantle the business model of the criminal smuggling gangs by targeting their communication networks, movement of people across Europe, and profits.

The Home Secretary will have further discussions this week with European interior ministers and the Director General of Europol to discuss strengthening security cooperation.

Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, stated:

"Criminal smuggling gangs are making millions out of small boat crossings, undermining our border security and putting lives at risk. We can't carry on like this. We need to tackle the root of the problem, going after these dangerous criminals and bringing them to justice.

The Border Security Command will be a major step change in UK enforcement efforts to tackle organised immigration crime, drawing on substantial resource to work across Europe and beyond to disrupt trafficking networks and to coordinate with prosecutors in Europe to deliver justice."

Efforts are underway to appoint a Border Security Commander to lead this work, and recruitment for additional capacity in the National Crime Agency will begin immediately.



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