

## **Update to Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group**

### **ASYLUM**

Case Resolution Directorate

All the pre 2004 cases have now been looked at. There are approximately 70 families who will be referred to the Lead Professional and Clan Alba process. During the month of May we will review the subsistence only families and Manchester will review the singles. From June onwards we will start on the post 2004 families. There are approximately 300 families in this tranche.

### **Childcare at Asylum interviews**

We consulted with our colleagues in Wales about the changes that they have implemented to provide their pilot childcare service at asylum interviews. We have taken this information and asked for advice from the National Care Commission of Scotland. Under the recommendation of the Children's commissioner Kathleen Marshall we contacted the National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries, who viewed the Festival Court site to advise us of its ability to provide the service required.

The National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries have in turn met with Glasgow City Council Culture and Sport who have confirmed that they are willing to take this forward: registration will take about 3 months

Within the next few weeks we will be holding a meeting with all parties concerned to discuss the business requirements and balance these with the facilities that can be provided. We will endeavour to keep you updated on the progress in this area.

### **MANAGED MIGRATION**

Foreign workers hoping to fill skilled vacancies in Britain's labour market will have to meet strict new criteria.

The Home Office have published proposals for much tighter skilled and temporary worker tiers of its new Points Based System (PBS). The schemes -known as Tier 2 and Tier 5 - sweep aside around 30 different routes to the UK, including the old work permit system.

British-based companies will have to prove they cannot fill skilled posts with a resident worker and must show that the job vacancy has been advertised in the UK,

unless the job is on the shortage occupation list. Would-be migrants will need a job offer before they even apply for a visa.

To qualify, skilled foreign nationals will have to earn a certain number of points before being allowed to work in Britain. These points are awarded only if a person can prove they will be doing skilled work, speak a good standard of English, and are earning more than £24,000, or have a decent qualification. Employers will need a licence from the UK Border Agency to offer jobs to skilled workers.

Home Office analysis showed if the tighter Tier 2 and 5 rules had been in place last year, close to ten per cent fewer skilled and temporary migrants from outside the EEA would have been allowed into Britain to work in equivalent categories - around 20,000 people. In addition the Home Office confirmed that from this year low skilled workers from outside the EU will be barred.

Employers who break the rules and employ illegal workers are already facing much tougher sanctions.

The Government has published its proposals for Tier 5 of the PBS which covers those travelling temporarily to the UK for primarily non-economic reasons, such as sportspeople, entertainers and charity workers. To ensure entertainers continue to contribute to British cultural life, those coming to the UK for permit-free gigs or festivals - such as the Edinburgh Fringe - will be assessed outside of the PBS under visitor visa rules. The Government is due to publish details of the new visitor visa category in the near future.

### **Employer Checking Service becomes available to all employers**

The new Civil Penalty regulations were implemented on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008. These introduced fines for employers who do not carry out the proper checks to ensure people they employ have the right to work. The Agency is providing support to employers through the Sponsorship and Employer helpline and the employer checking service

Both services are based in the Work Permits Contact Centre, Sheffield.

The Evidence & Enquiry Unit based in Croydon is also a contact centre which gives general advice and guidance on enquiries received from the Police, Immigration Officers and a number of other government departments, local government and agencies.

### **Sponsorship and Employer Helpline**

Sponsorship and Employer Helpline can be reached on **0845 010 6677** and is open Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.

## **GENERAL UKBA NEWS**

### **UK BORDER AGENCY CHIEF INSPECTOR APPOINTED**

On 21 April 2008, the Home Secretary announced in the House that John Vine currently Chief Constable for Tayside Police is to be appointed the new Chief Inspector of UKBA from July 2008 .

The Chief Inspector will provide an independent external analysis of our systems with a focus on efficiency and effectiveness. John will work with us and our stakeholders to identify our strengths and weaknesses and share good practice. He will produce an annual report for the Home Secretary which will be laid before Parliament, helping provide assurance about our performance to both MPs and the public.

He will work closely with Anne Owers, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons, who retains responsibility for inspecting the detention estate, Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary who has responsibility for inspecting HM Revenue & Customs, and Mrs Linda Costelloe Baker, Independent Monitor for Entry Clearance Refusals, who retains responsibility for monitoring visa application refusals, without the right of appeal.

As part of his assessment, John will consider the quality of our decision making, the effectiveness of our enforcement, the quality of the information we use and provide for others and how we treat our customers – including the handling of complaints. He will take on the roles of the Complaints Audit Committee, the Race Monitor, the Non-Suspensive Appeals Monitor and the Advisory Panel on Country Information. We are bringing these roles together to provide John with a wider knowledge and understanding of the Agency, in order to ensure he is able to make an effective end to-end analysis of our systems.