



PRESS RELEASE

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Borders and Coastguard Agency New Uniforms

After an extensive consultation process, including the implementation of a working group, the Borders and Coastguard Agency will introduce a new uniform as from Saturday 15th July 2017. This is the first major uniform change undertaken by the BCA since its inception in 2011.

The new uniform offers a strong, professional identity for the Agency and will offer more comfort to Officers who carry out over 10 hour shifts at Gibraltar’s entry points. The colour chosen to represent this change in direction will bring the Agency in line with modern practices when it comes to uniforms for other law enforcement departments.

The new uniform consists of fleeces (to be worn during the colder climate), cargo trousers and polo shirts which are made of a breathable material that will allow for easier movement whilst Officers cover their various daily roles and responsibilities. Also included is the placing of an updated BCA badge which will cause less friction to those wearing the polo shirts.

CEO Andrew Bonfante commented “Following extensive consultation with staff and unions alike and in line with the Government’s continued recognition of investing in our employees, I am very pleased that we are introducing a new uniform which is more practical and versatile and which will make long days on duty more comfortable whilst presenting a more professional look. I, along with all my Officers, look forward to this change in uniform which I am sure will assist them to better meet their operational needs”.

Background to the Borders and Coastguard Agency

The Agency, now in its fifth year of operation, carried out a review of its operations at the airport, frontier and the port; the review highlighted a number of deficiencies, which it is positively addressing; striving for a more professional, engaged and focused operation.



The review also highlighted the need for professional development, training and management development in particular. The Government in its continued commitment to providing opportunities for professional development for all staff, is supporting the Agency in its effort to address this issue with this and enabling managers at different levels to work towards Chartered Management Institute professional development qualifications.

The agency is working hard to become the focal point for a more centralised immigration service in Gibraltar, working in partnership with other Government departments and Law Enforcement Agencies to improve the level of immigration service Gibraltar provides. In the last year alone the Agency has processed well over 12 million people at our borders. In addition, the Government's initiative to introduce amendments to the Immigration, Asylum and Refugee Act, granting Tourist Visa Waivers to Moroccan, Russian, Chinese, Indian and Mongolian nationals in possession of Schengen visas, has proved extremely successful, and close to 7000 visitors, whom would otherwise not have been able to visit Gibraltar, have done so to date.

The Agency works very closely locally with the RGP, with whom it is currently operating in partnership a Ports Policing initiative. Further afield, it works closely and shares information with HMG's Home Office, the UK Borderforce, Spain's Policia Nacional, Interpol and more recently the Moroccan Immigration Service.

As part of the Government's programme to make use of information and communication technology more generally, the Agency has been engaged together with other Law Enforcement partners and Government IT contractors in the setting up of a modern fit for purpose IT infrastructure platform for the frontier. The Frontier Management Project will be available to the public very soon; it will enable us to access real time frontier queue information including cameras, statistics and an improved and digitised frontier queue hotline service. In addition, the Agency is also developing its online presence with a Twitter feed and an interactive webpage which amongst other things will enable visitors to apply for visa waivers online, thus improving the visitor experience.

In addition to immigration duties, the Agency carries out aviation and maritime security duties at the airport and port, where it is inspected regularly by HMG's Department for Transport to ensure compliance with strict EU legislation. These industries, particularly aviation, are highly regulated, and in order to protect the air and sea transportation of persons and goods, there are established common rules, applicable across the EU, which safeguard against acts of unlawful interference. The Agency continues to meet the high standards set by the DfT and the EU.

The Agency remains committed to improving the service it provides by maintaining a fluid and secure border and protecting against criminal acts that threaten the security of travel by enforcing the law in partnership with other law enforcement agencies, securing the confidence of travelers, being more



BORDERS & COASTGUARD AGENCY

Gibraltar

professional, engaged and focused and continuing to grow in line with Gibraltar's economic and social needs in order to keep our home safe and to keep Gibraltar open for business!