

News story: UK leading transparency revolution for empowerment and growth

The UK is behind a transparency revolution to make aid work better to end poverty, eradicate disease and help refugees survive brutal conflicts, with the Department for International Development (DFID) publishing a new Transparency Agenda, 'Open Aid, Open Societies' today (Tuesday 6 February 2018).

We are leading the way to drive transparency standards across the world to make governments, company ownership and the oil and mining sectors more accountable, more responsive and more open.

By opening up all areas of spending in the countries we work in, including national budgets and income from trading natural resources, we empower citizens, close down global opportunities for corruption, let people everywhere see how decisions are made and hold their leaders accountable – leading to better economic growth and helping countries stand on their own two feet.

The results of this work range from building trust in governments and increasing the number of people willing to pay tax, or making changes to mining laws which increase revenues going directly to public services.

This also sets out how DFID's work is being made as transparent as possible, so that British taxpayers know exactly how and where their contributions are being made to save millions of lives around the world. We are ensuring the public, both in the UK and elsewhere, have data and information that they can easily understand and challenge, enabling them to scrutinise how money is spent and build trust in aid.

Minister of State for International Development Harriett Baldwin said:

"Transparency transforms people's lives for the better by enabling countries to collect taxes, improve public services, and ensure a level-playing field in which businesses can flourish.

"We are encouraging developing countries to open up their governments to scrutiny by their own citizens – and in doing so we are making sure UK taxpayers know exactly how their aid is spent.

"Fairness and justice are core British values. This is why we will continue leading the global transparency revolution – starting with closing loopholes that hide illicit money. We all prosper in a fairer and more transparent world."

The Transparency Agenda sets out the various ways that DFID is a leader in transparency:

- DFID's Development Tracker was the first of its kind and has been widely

replicated by aid agencies around the world – showing exactly how the aid budget is being spent.

- The UK was the first G7 country to adopt the Open Contracting Data Standard ensuring transparency across the full procurement process and publishing who is winning public contracts. This helps eliminate the risk of corruption or collusion. We will support 16 countries to implement more open contracting in public procurement by 2020
- In 2011, we helped establish the Open Government Partnership which strengthens good governance by securing concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens and fight corruption. This work included a project supporting citizens in the Democratic Republic of Congo to vote on budget allocations using mobile phones, which led to a 16 fold increase in tax collection and increased trust in government.
- The UK was among the first countries to require companies to submit details of their real beneficial owners – information which is then made public by the UK government.
- We will lead an international effort to make global commodities trading more transparent – the physical sales by governments producing oil, gas and minerals to commodity trading companies where the national government receives an undisclosed share of production. This will address a black hole which can provides opportunities for corruption on a colossal scale that can hinder economic growth and foster national security challenges.
- The UK was a founding member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a global standard to promote the open and accountable management of oil, gas and mineral resources. Ghana, for example, revised its mining tax law after joining the EITI, which led to revenues more than doubling between 2010 and 2011, from \$210 million to \$500 million.
- DFID publishes its data every single month as opposed to every quarter, going beyond the highest international standards, and we hold our partners to the same high standards.

[News story: Director appointed for Faraday Battery Challenge](#)

[Jaguar Land Rover's](#) Director of Engineering Research, Tony Harper has been appointed as Director, Faraday Battery Challenge.

Tony will join [UK Research and Innovation](#) in April 2018 to lead the [Faraday Battery Challenge](#). This is government's £246 million investment to develop safe, cost-effective, durable, lighter weight, higher performing and

recyclable batteries in the UK. It is part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

He will work across Innovate UK and the [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (EPSRC), who will jointly deliver the challenge, and work closely with the [Advanced Propulsion Centre](#) (APC).

Leading industry experience

Tony has been working as Director of Engineering Research at Jaguar Land Rover since 2006. He is a chartered engineer, a fellow of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and the Royal Academy of Engineering, and an honorary fellow of the University of Warwick.

In addition, he is an elected member of the UK Automotive Council Technology Group and sits on a number of industry advisory councils.

Tony said:

This is a unique opportunity to maximise the advantage for the UK from the shift to the electrification of transport by creating a high-tech, high-value, high-skill industry in battery technology.

It is also a very exciting time to be joining UK Research and Innovation as it sets out to become the best research and innovation agency in the world.

Innovate UK Chief Executive, Ruth McKernan, said:

Tony's long-standing experience and expertise in automotive research and development means he is the ideal candidate to lead the ground-breaking Faraday Battery Challenge.

He will have an important role to play in ensuring the UK is a world leader in the development of automotive battery technologies.

Business Minister Richard Harrington added:

With 200,000 electric vehicles set to be on UK roads by the end of 2018, investment in car batteries is a massive opportunity for Britain and one that, through our flagship Industrial Strategy and the Automotive Sector Deal, the government is committed to seizing.

To realise our grand ambitions we need great leadership, which is why I am delighted that someone as talented and respected in the

sector as Tony Harper will be spearheading our efforts to make Britain the 'go-to' destination for the development and deployment of this game-changing technology.

Work so far

The Faraday Battery Challenge has already made strong progress.

This includes the multi-million pound Faraday Institution to speed up research, innovation and scale-up novel battery technologies, and a £80 million investment through the APC for the UK's first automotive battery manufacturing development facility

[Faraday Battery Challenge CWLEP Video](#)

Innovate UK has also invested [£40 million across 27 battery research and development projects](#).

Independent institute [HSSMI](#) are one such project to get funding. It will conduct research into batteries at the end of their life and look at how these could be reused, remanufactured or recycled.

[Faraday Battery Challenge HSSMI video](#)

Innovate UK is inviting applications in a second round of collaborative research and development funding under the Faraday Battery Challenge. [Find out more and apply](#).

[News story: PHE launches opioid treatment quality improvement programme](#)

Opioid substitution treatment (OST) plays a fundamental role in supporting people to recover from drug dependence. But sustained recovery is hard to achieve when addiction is combined with a lack of personal and social resources. Long-term recovery often needs high-quality treatment and a range of other support, tailored to each person.

Clinical guidance, including the new [Drug misuse and dependence: UK guidelines on clinical management](#), describes quality drug treatment. PHE is helping drug services implement the guidelines and improve treatment where it is not optimal.

The OST programme will support services to improve the quality of treatment so that people understand how their treatment works, comply with it and stick with it. That way they should get more from it and increase their chances of recovery. This will include a focus on using psychosocial interventions to support changes in behaviour. There is already a lot of good practice in this country, and the programme will aim to harness and build on that.

Among the issues that we plan to address, one is people continuing to use drugs, particularly heroin, while receiving treatment. [Drug treatment monitoring data](#) (NDTMS) and [PHE's drugs evidence review](#) both found that people who continue to use illegal substances (especially heroin) while on substitution treatment are less likely to fully benefit from treatment and to reduce the wider harms caused by their drug use. Cutting down, rather than stopping drug use, is still a good result for many people and they still benefit from being in treatment. Pushing people too hard to stop all 'use on top' can drive them out of treatment or prevent them seeking help in the first place. The programme will develop resources to support services in getting this right.

The programme will also enhance wider recovery support for those in treatment by supporting services to help more in other aspects of their lives beyond drug use, such as employment, living arrangements, family relationships, trauma and abuse.

PHE will be making contact with providers and service user organisations shortly to gain their input and involvement.

[News story: The IAGCI invites tenders to evaluate the UK Home Office Country Information Products](#)

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) is part of the Office of the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. Its purpose is to review the content of all Country of Origin Information (COI) produced by the UK Home Office. COI is information used in procedures that assess claims of individuals for refugee status or other forms of international and humanitarian protection. It is also used in policy formulation.

The IAGCI reviews UK Home Office COI products to provide assurance to the Independent Chief Inspector that the content is as accurate, balanced, impartial and as up to date as possible. COI is contained in:

- a Country Policy and Information Notes (CPINs); and
- responses to information requests

CPINs are generated on an ongoing basis for the top 20 asylum intake countries, and commonly address a specific type of common asylum claim(s) or provide general information for several claim types. They are compiled from material produced by a range of recognised external information sources (news sources, academic literature, independent research reports, fact finding reports from UK government or from other governments, etc.). These documents also contain Home Office policy on the recommended position to be taken with respect to various types of claims, based on the available and accepted country information.

Information Request (IR) responses are made directly by case workers or others to the Home Office. These relate to information that is not covered in the CPINs. The IAGCI includes in its reviews a consideration of the COI included in a sample of (not more than ten) IR responses. Each IR response is typically a maximum of 2 pages in length.

Tender Details

IAGCI commissions country experts or experienced researchers to evaluate and report upon the country of origin information contained in UK Home Office information products. At its next meeting, the IAGCI requires a country expert to review the use of country information used in the following CPINs (3 separate tenders, 1 for each country):

Tender 1: Democratic Republic of Congo

[Country policy and information note: women fearing gender-based harm or violence, Democratic Republic of Congo, June 2017](#) (36 Pages)

[Country policy and information note: opposition to the government, Democratic Republic of the Congo, November 2016](#) (32 Pages)

Tender 2: Iran

[Country information and information note: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation, Iran, December 2017](#) (69 pages)

Tender 3: Turkey

[Country policy and information note: Kurdish political parties, Turkey, August 2017](#) (33 Pages)

[Country policy and information note: Kurdistan Workers' Party \(PKK\), Turkey, August 2017](#) (29 pages)

For each tender, the expert is also asked to consider a selection of approximately 10 Information Request Responses (each is an average of 2 pages long). -

Description of work

Country Policy and Information Notes aim to provide an accurate, balanced and

up to date summary of the key available source documents regarding the human rights situation, with respect to the issues selected for coverage, in the country covered. The purpose and scope of the reports are clearly set out in an introductory section of the document. Reviews should evaluate the reports in this context and seek to identify any areas where they can be improved. Specifically the review should entail:

- Assessing the extent to which information from source documents has been appropriately and accurately reflected in the CPIN Reports.
- Identifying additional sources detailing the current human rights situation in the country with respect to main grounds for asylum claims (which are noted in each CPIN Report).
- Noting and correcting any specific errors or omissions of fact.
- Making recommendations for general improvements regarding, for example, the structure of the report, its coverage or its overall approach.

Reviewers should follow these specific guidelines:

- The review should focus exclusively on the country of origin information contained within the document, and not pass judgment on the policy guidance provided.
- The CPIN should be reviewed in the context of its purpose as set out above. It should consider the situation in the country up to the stated 'cut off' date for inclusion of information.
- When suggesting amendments, rather than 'tracking changes' on the original CPIN, a list of suggested changes should be provided as part of a stand-alone review paper, and each report should be reviewed separately. A reporting template will be provided to reviewers (for reference please refer to most recent reviews on the IAGCI webpage for examples of the template).
- Any suggestions for additional information (or corrections to information in the document) must be referenced to a source document for the Home Office to be able to use it (preferably Open Source). The Home Office may use foreign language source documents, but only if the information is considered essential and is not available in English language source.

Previous reviews of COI products can be viewed on the [ICIBI website](#)

The reviewers selected to review the CPINs for the above-named countries will be requested to attend an IAGCI meeting at the Office of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, when their review will be considered. This meeting is due to take place in April 2018. Alternative arrangements may be made, if attendance is not possible. Representatives from the UK Home Office will also attend the meeting to provide responses to comments and recommendations made in the review.

Reviews commissioned by IAGCI may be used as source documents for future CPIN reports or other Home Office information products.-

How to Apply Researchers interested in conducting any of the reviews should submit:

Payment for this work will be set at £2000. Expressions of interest should be submitted to the IAGCI Chair, Dr Laura Hammond laura.hammond@soas.ac.uk

Unfortunately, we are only able to accept expressions of interest from individuals and not from institutions or consultancy groups.

Reviews will be commissioned by Friday 23 February 2018.

Final reviews will be required to be submitted by 20 March, 2018. The reviews will be discussed at a meeting of the IAGCI in April 2018.

News story: Hayling Island people smuggler guilty

Vladyslav Kurtoglu, 50, was convicted of assisting unlawful immigration at Portsmouth Crown Court. His co-conspirator, Dmytro Kruik, 29, had earlier pleaded guilty to the same offence.

The men, both Ukrainian nationals of no fixed UK address, were caught when their yacht 'The Tazik' was intercepted by a Border Force Coastal Patrol Vessel (CPV) near Hayling Island on 20 May 2017.

The yacht was sailing towards the UK from Barfleur, France, when the CPV hailed the vessel and escorted it into Sparkes Marina. Kurtoglu was confirmed as the captain with Kruik as his deck hand. Kruik told officers that they had come to the UK on what he said was "just a trip". Border Force officers carried out a search of the vessel which revealed that there were 6 additional Ukrainian men on board.

Kurtoglu and Kruik were arrested by Border Force officers and the case was passed to Immigration Enforcement's Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) team. The 6 other Ukrainian men on the yacht were arrested and later removed from the UK.

When officers examined Kruik's phone they discovered a video he had filmed of a reconnaissance route from a harbour side in Barneville-Carteret to a nearby car park. Investigators believe that the car park was where the illegal entrants were dropped off, under the cover of night, before boarding the yacht. In the clip, Kruik can be heard commenting on the fact that there are no security cameras covering the area. The video was dated 21 April 2017, a month before the men were arrested. Officers also discovered paperwork on board the yacht which showed that it had been registered and insured using false details.

Kurtoglu claimed in his defence that after he purchased the yacht, he planned to hold his 50th birthday party on board. He wanted to employ the Ukrainians as crew for the event, so had sailed from Barfleur to the middle

of the channel to assess their seafaring abilities. He then claimed that a huge storm had moved in and the yacht had also developed engine problems. Becoming frightened, he said the Ukrainian crew turned on him and threatened to throw him overboard unless he brought them to the UK.

This story was disproved by evidence from a marine engineer who examined the engine of the Tazik yacht and concluded that it was running smoothly. The Met Office provided a marine weather report for the day in question which showed that conditions at the time were calm.

Lyn Sari, from CFI, said:

The video on Kruik's phone is indicative of the planning and organisation that went into this attempt. I cannot think of a reason why you would record such a film and comment approvingly on the lack of security cameras unless your intentions were criminal.

Kurtoglu's unlikely defence was readily undermined by mechanical and meteorological evidence. The reality was that these men were engaged in a quite deliberate attempt to undermine the UK's immigration laws.

My officers work closely with other law enforcement partners, such as the National Crime Agency who provided valuable assistance with this investigation, to bring people smugglers like Kurtoglu and Kruik to justice. Anyone involved in this kind of offending should understand that the consequences are considerable.

The judge also ordered the forfeiture of the yacht, which will now be sold and the proceeds returned to the public purse.

Border Force works closely with the marine community to gather intelligence about threats to the UK's coastline.

Where people witness suspicious activity near the coastline and require immediate assistance, they should call 999. If an emergency response is not required, the activity should be reported to local police on 101, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.