

Home Office staff deployed to migrant camps in northern France

Border Force and Immigration Enforcement officers have been deployed to northern France to support French immigration and law enforcement agencies as a migrant camp in Dunkirk is cleared today (17 September 2019).

The deployment has been made at the invitation of the French authorities and is part of the UK's ongoing work with France to tackle the number of people attempting to reach the UK illegally by small boat.

Immigration Minister, Seema Kennedy, said:

People thinking about making the perilous journey across the English Channel in a small boat are taking a huge risk with their lives and the lives of their children.

We are determined to put an end to this reckless and illegal activity by stopping boats from leaving French shores. We are working closely with French authorities at all levels and the deployment of UK officials to Dunkirk is part of our ongoing joint commitment to tackling this.

Over the weekend Home Office staff were deployed to the camp to inform people about the harsh realities of crossing the Channel in small boats and entering the UK illegally, as part of Operation Focal. The initiative sees officers countering the misinformation being spread by other sources, including organised crime groups, about making the journey and what life is like for migrants who reach the UK.

Alongside this work, people who live and work near the UK's coastline are being encouraged to report suspicious activity as part of Project Kraken. This is a national Home Office-led initiative that supports the operational activity Border Force is engaged in every day to protect the UK from all forms of maritime crime.

The Home Office is dialling up the campaign in Kent by asking stakeholders to support the project, working with partners such as Kent Police to promote it.

Suspicious behaviour could include boats arriving at unusual times or to isolated locations, people making attempts to sign or guide boats offshore, boats showing signs of unusual modification or minor damage and people making large cash payments for maritime equipment.

People can [report suspicious activity online](#) or by calling the local police on 101. Information will be shared with the relevant agency and investigated. Anyone in Kent is also encouraged to use Kent Police's Country Eye app to report border crimes.