

News story: The Home Office's consideration of children's 'best interests' – Call for evidence

The Chief Inspector requests evidence for his inspection on how the Home Office ensures it acts in the 'best interests' of unaccompanied asylum seeking children

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) has begun work on an inspection into how the Home Office ensures it acts in the 'best interest' of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). This is the second in what is intended to be a series of inspections focused on the treatment of children within the context of borders, immigration and citizenship. The first report, published in July 2017, dealt with the [Home Office's application of the good character requirement in the case of young persons who apply for registration as British citizens](#).

This inspection will look at:

- the reception arrangements for the children, focusing on the support and information provided to the child, collation of information about the child, and referrals to other parties
- how the initial encounter and who that encounter is with affects the child
- the Home Office's role in carrying out age assessments (including initial age assessments), providing information and support to the child and how the Home Office works with local authorities in the case of age disputes
- the views of the Home Office and stakeholders about whether granting the UASC leave to remain is in the 'best interests' of the child, the impact of granting such leave, and the amount of information and support provided to children about it

The evidence gathering process has started and the inspectorate's established stakeholder groups will shortly be asked for their input. However, the ICIBI is keen to gather written evidence from anyone who has knowledge and experience of any of the above areas. Please write to chiefinspector@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that this inspection will not examine:

- the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) – The ICIBI is separately inspecting the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, which uses comparable processes to identify vulnerable children in the Middle East
- asylum processes and the quality of decision making, which were covered in an inspection report that is awaiting publication

- the 'Dublin III' and 'Dubs' schemes, except where the latter is relevant to the National Transfer Scheme
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[Press release: Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for people fleeing Burma reaches £3 million with UK aid support](#)

Within 24 hours of the Disasters Emergency Committee launching its [appeal](#) for Rohingya people fleeing Burma, more than £3 million has been raised.

Of the amount raised so far, £1.2 million has been provided by UK aid, pledged by the British Government to make public donations go that much further.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The generosity of the British public has been overwhelming and once again they have shown the rest of the world what the UK does best; acting without hesitation to help victims of brutal violence and persecution.

I want to say a huge thank you to those who have donated to the appeal and every penny is making a difference. Your contributions are saving the lives of hundreds and thousands of men, women and children who have been forced to leave behind their homes and loved ones to make the treacherous journey into neighbouring Bangladesh.

UK aid is reaching Rohingya refugees in desperate need, providing food, shelter and water. By matching pound for pound donations from the British public to the DEC appeal, the UK Government is doubling the impact that British people can have and making their money go further.

The UK will double all donations up to £3 million, meaning even more aid is available for those in need.

The British Government was quick to recognise the unprecedented scale of the crisis in Burma and the impact it is having on Bangladesh, and has already given £30 million to provide lifesaving food, water, shelter and healthcare to victims of the violence.

Notes to editors

- The DEC brings 13 leading UK aid charities together in times of crisis: ActionAid, Age International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE International, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam, Plan International UK, Save the Children, Tearfund and World Vision; all collectively raising money to reach those in need quickly.
- The UK is appalled by the violence taking place in Rakhine State, particularly by the hundreds of thousands of people fleeing that violence and the reports of grave human rights violations taking place.
- As of Monday, 2 October 507,000 people have fled the violence into neighbouring Bangladesh. Numbers are rising.
- The UK has been a leader in responding to the crisis – in speed and size – to help meet the urgent humanitarian needs of vulnerable men, women and children in both Bangladesh and Burma.
- Prior to the latest violence which began on Friday, 25 August 2017, we committed £5.9 million to meet the needs of the most vulnerable refugees and the host communities who support them.
- In response to the latest influx we have provided a further £30 million of support.
- Our existing work in the region meant that we were already in position to provide life-saving support when the crisis flared – without this, aid would have taken much longer to reach those in need. And we are sending more aid to Bangladesh.
- In Rakhine State in Burma, aid workers have been getting British-funded humanitarian assistance to many tens of thousands of people. DFID's partners are ready to provide emergency food to 30,000 people and to treat more than 3,000 severely malnourished children and pregnant women, but the Burmese authorities must stop refusing to grant access.
- This lack of access on the Burma side means vital needs will not be met and lives lost. Britain urgently calls upon the Burmese military to end the violence in Rakhine and the Government of Burma to allow immediate and full humanitarian access and support for the people and communities affected. *We have raised the situation in three UN Security Council meetings and led work in the Council to develop an international response. The Foreign Secretary also held a Ministerial meeting of General Assembly members at the UN General Assembly on 18 September to drive this process forward.
- Mark Field, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, visited Burma, including Rakhine State from Monday, 25 – Wednesday, 27 September. He held talks in Burma with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to press for an urgent resolution to the crisis in Rakhine.
- On Thursday 28 September Minister Burt and Minister Field hosted a series of high-level talks in Dhaka, Bangladesh with key Government officials and aid agencies to identify how best to provide lifesaving support to the large influx of refugees in Bangladesh.
- Britain is ready to support the recommendations of the Kofi Annan led Rakhine Advisory Commission to assist the long-term development of all people in Rakhine state, but right now the immediate action is for the

security forces to end the violence and the government of Burma to allow humanitarian access.

ENDS

[News story: CEN updates affecting chemical measurements \(animal feed\) September 2017](#)

The following lists of standards were published by the European standardisation organisation, CEN, during the period June to August 2017, some of which are relevant to chemical measurement in support of regulation.

[EN 16930:2017](#) – Animal feeding stuffs: Methods of sampling and analysis – Determination of carbadox and olaquinox by HPLC/UV

Carbadox and olaquinox are quinoxaline-N-dioxide derivatives and have been widely used in feed additives to prevent infectious disease and improve animal growth but are now prohibited in the EU.

This standard describes a method for the simultaneous determination of carbadox and olaquinox in compound animal feed and raw materials using high performance liquid chromatography with a UV detector (HPLC-UV) at levels up to 100 mg/kg. The limit of quantification (LOQ) in determining olaquinox is ≥ 3 mg/kg and for carbadox ≥ 4 mg/kg in animal feedstuffs and raw materials.

[EN 16939:2017](#) – Animal feeding stuffs: Methods of sampling and analysis – Detection of tylosin, spiramycin and virginiamycin – Thin Layer Chromatography and bioautography

Tylosin, spiramycin and virginiamycin are macrolide compounds and have been widely used in feed additives to prevent infectious disease and improve animal growth but are now prohibited in the EU.

This EN standard describes a screening method using thin-layer chromatography (TLC) with a reported limit of detection ≥ 1 mg/kg to detect spiramycin, tylosin and virginiamycin in animal feed originating from plants but excluding mineral and pre-mixture feedstuffs.

For confirmatory purposes liquid chromatography coupled with a mass spectrometer (LC-MS) is required.

EN 16930 and EN 16939 have been developed in accordance with European Commission Mandate [M/521](#) to prepare standards for the determination of food contaminants implementing the framework of [Regulation \(EC\) No 882/2004](#) on

official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.

[EN 15510:2017](#) – Animal feeding stuffs: Methods of sampling and analysis – Determination of calcium, sodium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, iron, zinc, copper, manganese, cobalt, molybdenum and lead by ICP-AES

The elemental composition of animal feed additives and pre-mixtures is required to be known for the purposes of authorisation of certain feed additive compounds under EU legislation.

The elements calcium, sodium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, iron, zinc, copper, manganese, cobalt, molybdenum and lead are present in compounds used as feed additives or contaminants that should not be present above specified concentrations.

This EN standard describes extraction methods for the specified elements in organic feed additives using dry ashing followed by dissolution into hydrochloric acid or for inorganic feed additives by wet digestion using hydrochloric acid. For the determination of extractable lead in minerals and feeds containing phyllosilicates (e.g. kaolinite clay) wet digestion with nitric acid is specified. The concentrations of the extracted elements are determined by inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES).

The limit of quantification for each element is dependent on the sample matrix and the instrument used but should not be greater than 3 mg/kg for the specified elements with these methods and requires verification.

[EN 15621:2017](#) – Animal feeding stuffs: Methods of sampling and analysis – Determination of calcium, sodium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sulphur, iron, zinc, copper, manganese and cobalt after pressure digestion by ICP-AES

The elemental composition of animal feed additives and pre-mixtures is required to be known for the purposes of authorisation of certain feed additive compounds under EU legislation.

The elements calcium, sodium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sulphur, iron, zinc, copper, manganese and cobalt are elements that may be present in compounds used as animal feeds and additives.

This EN standard describes an extraction method for the specified elements in animal feeds using pressure digestion. The concentrations of the extracted elements in animal feeds and additives are determined by inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectrometry (ICP-AES).

The standard advises that for potassium and sulphur the method is more applicable as a screening method and not for confirmatory purposes.

The limit of quantification for each element is dependent on the sample matrix and the instrument used but it is estimated to be around 1 mg/kg for the specified elements.

EN 15510 and EN15621 are referenced in Commission Implementing Regulations for [Regulation \(EC\) No 1831/2003](#) on additives for use in animal nutrition. Recent examples of Commission Implementing Regulations citing EN 15510 and EN15621 include the determination of total copper in the authorisation of copper(I) oxide as described in (EU) 2016/2261 and the determination of total zinc in the authorisation of acetate dihydrate, zinc chloride anhydrous, zinc oxide, zinc sulphate heptahydrate etc as described in (EU) 2016/1095.

[EN 15550:2017](#) – Animal feeding stuffs: Methods of sampling and analysis – Determination of cadmium and lead by graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrometry (GF-AAS) after pressure digestion

The elemental composition of animal feed additives and pre-mixtures is required to be known for the purposes of authorisation of certain feed additive compounds under EU legislation.

The elements cadmium and lead are contaminants that should not be present above specified concentrations in compounds used as feed additives.

This EN standard describes an extraction method for cadmium and lead in animal feeds using pressure digestion. The concentrations of the extracted lead and cadmium in feed additives are determined by graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrometry (GF-AAS). For the determination of extractable lead in minerals and feeds containing phyllosilicates (e.g. kaolinite clay) wet digestion with nitric acid is specified

The limit of quantification is dependent on the sample matrix and the instrument used but is estimated for both cadmium and lead to be around 0.05 mg/kg.

Further information on food legislation can be found on the Government Chemist website:

[Food and feed law: Compendium of UK food and feed legislation with associated context and changes during April to June 2017 – Government Chemist Programme Report](#)

[News story: Davis: Every region must flourish after Brexit](#)

Delivering on his commitment to meet with the Northern Combined Authority Mayors, David Davis has today held discussions with Andy Burnham, Steve Rotherham and Ben Houchen about the region's priorities for EU exit.

The Secretary of State was joined by Minister Steve Baker who will lead on future engagement with the English regions during negotiations with the EU.

This reaffirms the Government's commitment to work with all regions to ensure that we secure a deal that works for every part of the UK.

Today's meeting in York gave Ministers an opportunity to update the Mayors on the progress of negotiations. It also enabled the group to discuss future trading relationships with the EU, the new UK immigration policy and the future of European structural funding.

Speaking after the meeting, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, David Davis, said:

As we continue to make decisive steps towards our exit, we are committed to bringing all of the UK with us – ensuring that every region is able to flourish.

The Combined Authorities play a crucial role in representing the priorities of our regions which is why I'm pleased that we are continuing to build a productive relationship with their Mayors since their election in May.

We will continue working closely with them to understand the potential challenges and opportunities that leaving the EU presents to each of the regions, building on the productive meeting we have held in York today.

Minister for Exiting the EU, Steve Baker said:

With our negotiations well underway, delivering a deal that works for every part of the UK remains our priority. Meetings such as these are hugely important to ensure we do just that.

Today has been informative and constructive and I am looking forward to maintaining this engagement with the Combined Authority Mayors in the coming months.

Today's meeting follows the Prime Minister's recent speech in Florence and the fourth round of negotiations in Brussels. It also follows two recent regional tours by Minister Steve Baker – to the North East and Cornwall – as part of the Government's continued business engagement programme.

[News story: Government plans £80](#)

million smart ticketing rail revolution

The government has this week set out details of its £80 million programme to introduce smart ticketing across England and Wales by the end of 2018.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Passengers across the country want smart ticketing and this government will deliver it.

This significant investment will ensure that passengers across the network can use mobile phones, bar codes and smart cards across almost all of the network by the end of next year.

The £80 million investment will ensure:

- every passenger will have the choice of travelling without a paper ticket by the end of 2018
- mobile barcode ticketing will be rolled-out on every rail franchise in Great Britain
- passengers will be able to have smart cards hosted on their mobile phone – like a digital travel card – with a pilot of this technology expected in the next 4 months

The Department for Transport is also working on plans with the Rail Delivery Group to bring forward the next generation of ticketing systems to give passengers more tailored options to pay for their travel, saving them money and offering better value deals.

The investment will quickly deliver benefits to passengers across the country. Discussions with train companies about the introduction of mobile phone smart cards are at an advanced stage, with deals soon to be reached with 3 operators. This will mean that both mobile phone smart cards and mobile barcode tickets will soon be accepted by every operator in England and Wales and be interoperable across different franchises.

In addition, pay-as-you-go travel is being rolled-out extensively across the rail network, including with the introduction of KeyGo – a contactless travel card – by Govia Thameslink Railway. The KeyGo system allows passengers to use their card to tap in and tap out across virtually the entire Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern networks, from Cambridge to Brighton, and automatically be charged the most appropriate fare for their journey. Other train operators are soon to follow, with tests happening shortly on South Western Railway, c2c and Greater Anglia.