

26th February 2008

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION SERVICE

Review of Customs and Immigration investigative capabilities

An independent Review by HM Revenue and Customs comprehensively validates Jersey Customs and Immigration Service's ability to undertake complex, serious investigations.

In June 2007 Michael Robinson, the Head of Jersey's Customs and Immigration Service, asked Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to carry out an inspection of the Service's Investigations procedures.

The review took place between 10 and 14 December 2007 and was conducted by the Criminal Justice and Enforcement Standards Assurance Branch of HM Revenue and Customs.

The States of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service (SJCIS) undertakes the full range of investigative work including legally authorised surveillance, arresting and detaining suspects, searches of premises, formal interviewing of suspects and the preparation of prosecution case files for the Law Officers. The review team examined all the Service's procedures and documentation as well as holding interviews with key staff.

Of particular note in the report are:

- "SJCIS is held in high regard by the States of Jersey prosecuting authority who have commended the quality of case papers and the diligence of the case referral process."
- "SJCIS has a fully engaged senior management team."
- "There is an effective training programme in place."
- "Investigation instructions are clear and SJCIS staff understand and comply with published operating procedures."
- "The assessment of control objectives was GOOD and EXCELLENT." [Note. GOOD is defined as "*meets all essential criteria – occasional isolated problems but no particular weaknesses identified*"; EXCELLENT is defined as "*meets all essential criteria – no problems or weaknesses identified*".]

- The Report makes 7 recommendations and 7 further suggestions for improvements to documents and audit; clarification of roles and responsibilities; and control of property and equipment. All recommendations have been accepted and the conclusion on page 4 of the Report states that, “the implementation of the above recommendations will help to improve an already impressively run business.”

Deputy Andrew Lewis, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs, says:

“It is vital for the Island to have an effective and professional Customs and Immigration Service. A core function of the Service is preventing the smuggling of dutiable and prohibited goods and a priority is given to the investigation and prosecution of drug traffickers. The importation of drugs into Jersey is an ever present threat to the safety and well being of us all and the Service clearly has a lead role to play in protecting the Island. The Minister and I are delighted that the review has shown how well equipped the Service is to carry out this role.”

Steven Le Marquand, Director Law Enforcement in the Service, says:

“Obviously I am very pleased with the conclusions of the review as it clearly demonstrates that the investigation procedures of the Customs and Immigration Service are more than fit for purpose. We have already commenced work on implementing the recommendations that have been put forward by the review team.”

Notes to editors

A copy of the report on the review is attached. Some aspects of the report have had to be excluded as they contain references to confidential operational activities and sources of intelligence and are thus exempt from disclosure under paragraph 3.2.1(a)(vi) of the Code of Practice on Public Access to Official Information. Nonetheless the remainder of the review stands on its own and the overall conclusions can be clearly seen.

A post implementation review will take place in September 2008.

Questions relating to the role of the Customs and Immigration Service can be directed to Deputy Andrew Lewis - Tel. 734444

Question relating to specific elements of the review or the technicalities of investigation work can be directed to Steven Le Marquand - Tel. 448002