



Home Affairs Committee

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From the Committee Chair

Rt Hon. Robert Jenrick MP
Minister for Immigration
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
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31 October 2022

Dear Robert,

Follow up to Committee evidence session on channel crossings

May I first of all congratulate you on your new role at the Home Office and return to Government, and thank you for responding to my own Urgent Question in the House yesterday on Manston. The Committee looks forward to engaging constructively with you on what is a substantial and difficult brief.

As you'll know, the Committee took evidence from Home Office officials on Wednesday 26 October to consider the current position on small-boat Channel crossings. I would be grateful for a response to the following questions that arose from the session and from subsequent developments. Q numbers below refer to Question Numbers in the attached transcript.

Since our evidence session you have visited the Manston processing centre [Sunday 30 October]. Can you outline what you saw on your visit and what action you have taken to address your concerns, as a matter of urgency?

1. Is the Manston processing site being operated as a Short-term Holding Facility (STHF) i.e., under STHF Rules 2018?
 - If not, under what legal framework is it operating?
2. Of those people who crossed the English Channel in 2022, what proportion of asylum claims have been refused?
 - Of those claims that were refused, what proportion were subsequently successfully appealed?
 - How do these figures compare to data for 2021?
3. [Q29] Officials told us "This year alone, there have been nearly 3,000 Albanian nationals referred into the national referral mechanism. That is also linked to the number of Albanians who are appearing in small boats". How many of the Albanian nationals who have made the crossing during 2022 have claimed on arrival to be a victim of modern slavery?

4. Home Office statistics releases do not indicate how many people arriving in small boats apply for asylum, or how many may claim to be a victim of modern slavery.
 - Does the Home Office plan to publish these data routinely, in future, in Home Office statistics?
 - If yes, when? If no, why?
5. [Q30] Officials told us that “around 90% of Albanians” referred to the NRM get a positive ‘reasonable grounds’ decision that they are a victim of modern slavery and that “Ninety per cent go on to be concluded”.
 - What proportion of Albanian NRM referrals [including for small boat arrivals] reach the ‘conclusive grounds’ stage and what happens to those who don’t? [e.g., Do they withdraw their claim, seek asylum instead, or make a human rights-based claim]?
6. [Q41] How many Albanians who have found to be victims of modern slavery has the Government supported to return voluntarily? Please provide details including numbers of people aided and cost.
7. [Q41] How many Albanians who have been detained, and who are under investigation/or in prison, has the Government supported to return voluntarily? Please provide details including costs of these returns.
8. [Q95] How many Albanians have undertaken assisted voluntary return?
9. How many people have been returned to Albania since the UK/Albanian Readmission Agreement came into force in May this year?
 - What number of those returns were specifically made under the agreement?
10. [Qs49-53] You confirmed that a GP, as of Monday 24 October, is now available on site at Manston. Please confirm for what hours/days the GP is available?
 - Beyond the GP service, please outline how many healthcare professionals are available on site, including whether they are nurses, paramedics etc, and what hours they are available?
 - What access to mental health services do detainees have at the site?
11. [Qs56-59; Q75] Of those individuals currently held at Manston [circa 2,600], how many have been there for longer than 24 hours?
 - How many have been there for up to two weeks?
 - How many have been there for up to four weeks?
 - How many have been there for more than one month?
12. [Q88] What are the Home Office’s criteria for its choice of hotel sites to accommodate asylum seekers? Please provide outline the process applied.
13. Currently the Home Office does not provide data on the number of asylum seekers placed in initial accommodation (i.e., hotels) by local authority area. Can you confirm whether the Home Office plans to publish this data in future releases? If yes, when? If not, why?
14. [Q102] Please provide further detail on what may happen if a decision is taken to cease Operation Isotrope in January 2023.
15. [Q104] What is the annual attrition rate for asylum decision makers?

Given the urgency of the current situation, I would appreciate a response to these questions by Monday 7 November.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Diana Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Diana" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and the last name "Johnson" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature is centered horizontally.

Dame Diana Johnson MP