



Public Accounts Committee

Dame Antonia Romeo DCB
Permanent Secretary
Home Office

By email

25 April 2025

Immigration Removal Centre Expansion Programme

Dear Permanent Secretary

Your predecessor, Sir Matthew Rycroft, shared the latest Accounting Officer Assessment (AOA) of the Immigration Removal Centre Expansion Programme (IRCEP) with the Committee. As you may know, the Committee has an enduring interest in this subject and is keen to see meaningful progress with the programme's aim to manage the immigration detention estate and increase removals of individuals with no legal right to remain in the UK. Whilst I am grateful for the update on the status of the programme, having reviewed the information provided, the Committee has further questions about the programme.

First, we note that the AOA withholds the programme's cost on commercial grounds and that 'independent experts' have been engaged to ensure value for money. The Committee would find it helpful to receive more information to assess the full costs associated with the programme. I would be grateful if you could confidentially share details on the whole-life cost of the programme, including the costs of employing these experts.

Secondly, we note the references to risks related to the delivery and mobilisation of the two immigration removal centres at Campsfield and Haslar. The AOA indicates that renovation has now been replaced with reconstruction in some areas due to the sites being in worse condition than anticipated. It also states that the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is leading the construction procurement. The Committee would appreciate further details on how the programme is managing these risks, particularly given your department's past record of overoptimism in respect of the asylum accommodation sites in Bexhill-on-Sea, Scampton and Wethersfield. Additionally, please explain how you are ensuring that MoJ's involvement will not introduce further challenges to the programme's delivery.

Finally, the AOA notes that challenges arising from EU Exit and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have affected supply chains. Could you clarify what impact, if any, this has had on the overall delivery and costs of the programme?

My Committee seeks to make available as much information as possible for Parliament and the public. I would therefore be grateful if you would provide the information requested and where detailed information is of a sensitive nature, please label it as such and the Committee will respect that.



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For information which is, for example, commercially sensitive at the current time, I would be grateful if this could be shared confidentially with the Committee. The Committee secretariat is available to discuss with your officials the most appropriate way to do this.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Clifton-Brown'.

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts