



House of Commons  
Home Affairs Committee

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# Work of the Committee in 2008–09

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**Fourth Report of Session 2009–10**

*Report, together with formal minutes*

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## The Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

### Current membership

Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP (*Labour, Leicester East*) (Chairman)  
Tom Brake MP (*Liberal Democrat, Carshalton and Wallington*)  
Mr James Clappison MP (*Conservative, Hertsmere*)  
Mrs Ann Cryer MP (*Labour, Keighley*)  
David TC Davies MP (*Conservative, Monmouth*)  
Mrs Janet Dean MP (*Labour, Burton*)  
Mr Khalid Mahmood MP (*Labour, Birmingham Perry Barr*)  
Patrick Mercer MP (*Conservative, Newark*)  
Margaret Moran MP (*Labour, Luton South*)  
Gwyn Prosser MP (*Labour, Dover*)  
Bob Russell MP (*Liberal Democrat, Colchester*)  
Martin Salter MP (*Labour, Reading West*)  
Mr Gary Streeter MP (*Conservative, South West Devon*)  
Mr David Winnick MP (*Labour, Walsall North*)

### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

### Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at [www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom](http://www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom). A list of Reports of the Committee since Session 2005–06 is at the back of this volume.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Eliot Barrass (Second Clerk), Elisabeth Bates (Committee Specialist), Sarah Petit (Committee Specialist), Darren Hackett (Senior Committee Assistant), Ameet Chudasama (Committee Assistant), Sheryl Dinsdale (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Select Committee Media Officer).

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# 1 Introduction

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## Scope of this report

1. This report is a review of the Home Affairs Committee's activities during the 2008–09 Session of Parliament. We begin with an overview of the main developments in 2008–09 and then present an analysis of the Committee's performance in relation to the indicative 'core tasks' for select committees specified by the Liaison Committee. We conclude with some comments on our working practices and on our relations with the Home Office. Statistical data on the activities of the Committee in the Session 2008–09 can be found in the Annex.

## Overview of the Committee's activities in 2008–09

2. Our principal remit, as set out in House of Commons standing orders, is "to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies". These bodies include "agencies" such as the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), which possess a degree of autonomy but remain the ultimate responsibility of the Home Office. In carrying out our remit we aim to strike a balance between undertaking inquiries into major policy issues, examining the Department's discharge of its duties across the range of its activities—including legislation and legislative proposals—and responding rapidly to important developments relating to the work of the Home Office and that of its associated public bodies.

3. Our major activities this year have related to the completion of the following inquiries: Knife Crime; Managing Migration: The Points Based System; and The Trade in Human Beings: Human Trafficking in the UK as well work on topical issues, including Bogus Colleges and the Gurkhas. A full list of subjects into which we inquired is set out in the table below.

**Table 1: Subjects covered by the Home Affairs Committee in 2008–09**

Subject	Evidence sessions in 2008–09	Outcome
Monitoring of the UK Border Agency	Nil	Report, January 2009 <sup>1</sup>
Police and the Media	Nil	Report, January 2009 <sup>2</sup>
Policing Process of the Home Office leak inquiries	3	Report, April 2009 <sup>3</sup>
Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill	Nil	Report, April 2009 <sup>4</sup>
The Trade in Human Beings: Human Trafficking in the UK	1	Report, May 2009 <sup>5</sup>
Knife Crime	6	Report, June 2009 <sup>6</sup>
Policing of the G20 Protests	4	Report, June 2009 <sup>7</sup>
Project CONTEST: The Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy	3	Report, July 2009 <sup>8</sup>
The Cost of Policing Football Matches	1	Report, July 2009 <sup>9</sup>
Bogus Colleges	2	Report, July 2009 <sup>10</sup>
The Macpherson Report-Ten Years On	1	Report, July 2009 <sup>11</sup>
Managing Migration: Points-Based System	4	Report, August 2009 <sup>12</sup>
The Detention of Children in the Immigration System	1	Report, November 2009 <sup>13</sup>
The work of the UK Border Agency	3	Report, December 2009 <sup>14</sup>
Police Authorities	1	Evidence, June 2009
Violent Crime and Drugs	1	Evidence, June 2009
Preferred Candidate for HM Inspector of Constabulary	1	Evidence, June 2009

1 First Report, HC 77

2 Second Report, HC 75

3 Fourth Report, HC 157

4 Fifth Report, HC 425

5 Sixth Report, HC 23

6 Seventh Report, HC 112

7 Eighth Report, HC 418

8 Ninth Report, HC 212

9 Tenth Report, HC 676

10 Eleventh Report, HC 595

11 Twelfth Report, HC 427

12 Thirteenth Report, HC 217

13 First Report of Session 2009–10, HC 73

14 Second Report of Session 2009–10, HC 105

Subject	Evidence sessions in 2008–09	Outcome
Tasers	1	Evidence, June 2009
The rights of Gurkhas to settle in the UK	Nil	Evidence, May 2009
Settlement Rights of the Gurkhas	1	Evidence, June 2009
The work of the Home Office	1	Evidence, October 2009
Work of ACPO	1	Evidence, October 2009
The Cocaine Trade	3	Oral evidence to be resumed in 2009
Home Office's Response to Terrorist Attacks	2	Oral evidence to be resumed in 2009

### Visits

4. Below (Table 2) is a complete list of all of our visits as a Committee and when individual Members have represented the Committee overseas in the Session 2008–09.

5. As part of our ongoing inquiry into The Cocaine Trade we have undertaken two overseas visits. Given Iberia's position as a smuggling route for cocaine destined for Northern Europe, in September we visited Portugal and Spain to investigate the work done by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMDDA) and the European Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre—Narcotics (MAOC-N) which are both based in Lisbon, and the work done by Spanish enforcement authorities. In October we visited the Netherlands, as much of the cocaine which is smuggled into the United Kingdom enters Europe via the port of Rotterdam or through Schiphol international airport, and co-operation between Dutch and British law enforcement authorities is increasingly close.

6. In addition on three occasions individual Members have represented the Committee at inter-Parliamentary meetings of the European Union or during visits to supra-national European bodies such as Europol.

7. Members of the Committee have also travelled extensively within the United Kingdom to gather information, and to see first-hand the issues which are under our scrutiny. For example, as part of our inquiry into The detention of children in the immigration system, we visited Yarl's Wood Immigration Detention Centre in Bedfordshire, while the Chairman and Gwyn Prosser MP visited the port of Dover to investigate juxtaposed border controls as part of our inquiry into E-borders. During the course of the year members also visited Gatwick and Croydon, in relation to the Managing Migration: the Points-based system inquiry; Leeds, to hold a seminar for the Knife Crime inquiry; and Maidstone in Kent in relation to The Cocaine Trade inquiry.

8. We are most grateful to all of those who hosted us during our visits and in particular we thank the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and staff at UKBA who have often arranged domestic visits on our behalf.

**Table 2: Visits by the Home Affairs Committee in 2008–09**

Location	Purpose of visit
Prague	Inquiry into Human Trafficking; and Drugs
Lisbon and Madrid	Inquiry into the Cocaine Trade
Netherlands	Inquiry into the Cocaine Trade
Stockholm	Visit by Martin Salter MP in a representative capacity to attend the meeting of the Home Affairs Committees of EU Member States on the subject of Human Trafficking
The Hague	Visit by Keith Vaz MP to Europol, in a representative capacity
Brussels	Visit by David T.C. Davies MP in a representative capacity to attend the Joint Parliamentary Meeting on <i>Building a Citizens' Europe – The "Stockholm Programme" 2010-2014 – The Parliamentary dimension of a European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice</i>
Leeds	Inquiry into Knife Crime
Royal Opera House, London	Inquiry into Managing Migration: The Points Based System
Gatwick and Croydon	Inquiry into Managing Migration: The Points Based System
Firearms and Public Order Training Facility , Gravesend	Inquiry into Policing of the G20 Protests
Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre	Inquiry into the Detention of Children in the Immigration Service

9. In 2008–09 we have continued to explore new ways of working, and to extend the range of the Committee's work, by undertaking some shorter inquiries and holding one-off evidence sessions on topical issues, in addition to our more detailed scrutiny of major policy areas (see below at paragraphs 40-41).





## **Inquiries carried out into:**

### ***(a) Government policy proposals and implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives***

11. We have noted in our annual reports in recent years the high volume of policy proposals brought forward by the Home Office. This trend has continued in Session 2008–09 and we note that further legislative proposals have been proposed for the session 2009–10, despite the expected dissolution of Parliament.

12. Given the limited time and resources at our disposal, we have to be selective in deciding which policy proposals and initiatives to scrutinise. We carry out scrutiny in a variety of ways. We hold regular evidence sessions with the Home Secretary (for example in July and December 2009), to review Ministerial priorities and emerging policy areas. We also hold regular sessions with the heads of Home Office “agencies” such as Lin Homer, Chief Executive UKBA,<sup>15</sup> to scrutinise the performance of that agency. We aim to respond rapidly to developments where issues of major public concern are at stake (see paragraphs 40–41 below).

13. Our work on the Government’s counter-terrorism proposals has once again been amongst the highest-profile aspects of our work. We completed a major inquiry in this area in the 2008–09 Session and have begun another inquiry in this area which will Report in the 2009–10 session. In March 2009, the Government updated its counter-terrorism strategy, Project CONTEST. This was a significantly larger document than its predecessor and therefore required much deeper scrutiny. We established a sub-committee to investigate Project CONTEST.

14. The sub-committee held three oral evidence sessions as part of this inquiry and visited Transport for London’s Network Operation Centre, the British Transport Police’s Force Response Centre and the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism before presenting its Report to the full Committee.

15. The sub-committee concluded that the threat of terrorism remains severe, and it has taken a long time for security policies and institutions to be established in response to this threat. However, the new institutions that have been created, such as the OSCT and the police counter-terrorism units are impressive and coordination across government of counter-terrorism policy is improving. The sub-committee’s work, as well as being valuable in its own right has also provided a foundation for our forthcoming Report into the “Home Office’s response to terrorist attacks” which will be published in session 2009–10.

16. In July 2008 we decided to undertake an inquiry into Managing migration: the points-based system which examined the Government’s plans for implementation of the new immigration system, the impact of the proposed system on particular groups and sectors and made an assessment of the introduction of new sponsorship arrangements. We published our Report on 1 August 2009. During this inquiry we also received 69 items of

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15 In July and November 2009.

written evidence and visited India and Bangladesh in October 2008 to examine arrangements made under the system for visa control.

17. We made several recommendations to improve the technical working of the system, in particular about the calibration of points earned under different categories, the “shortage occupation list” and the workings of the resident labour market test. In terms of points calibration, we cautioned against placing too great an emphasis on easily-quantifiable “qualifications” as against ability or experience. We were concerned that this emphasis excluded those such as chefs and artists who do not always possess formal qualifications, and made no allowance for a highly experienced, highly skilled businessperson. We also made specific recommendations about different industry sectors.

18. More generally, we were concerned about the new sponsorship arrangements and the obligations these placed on employers and academic institutions, and that performance in meeting these obligations may not be reciprocated by the service that UKBA would provide in return. These services included help and advice available to sponsors under the points-based system and the issuing of biometric visas—recent difficulties around the provision of academic visas seem to have borne out our concerns.

19. The Government asked the Committee to conduct pre-legislative scrutiny of a **Draft (Partial) Immigration and Citizenship Bill**, published by the Home Office on 14 July 2008. The Draft (Partial) Bill contained about two thirds of the provisions the Government intended to introduce in the full Bill. We took written evidence and started a programme of oral evidence on this Bill. In November 2008 the Government announced that it was indefinitely delaying the introduction of a full Bill and would instead introduce a shorter Bill dealing only with provisions on citizenship. Accordingly, we suspended our programme of oral evidence, and instead took written evidence on the smaller Bill, the **Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill**, introduced in the House of Lords in January 2009. We published a Report on the Bill on 29 April 2009, commenting on two main concepts: that of “probationary citizenship” and that of an “activity condition”. We gave a cautious welcome to both elements, but urged the Government to be more transparent in the application of enforcement regulations; consult more widely with migrant groups and allow greater parliamentary scrutiny of the “prescribed activities” that migrants would be required to undertake to speed up their citizenship application.

### ***(b) Areas seen by the Committee as requiring examination because of deficiencies***

20. A reported sharp increase in “violent knife offending”, particularly homicides, led us to investigate the causes of and solutions to knife crime. Between November 2008 and March 2009 we took oral evidence from 35 witnesses and received 25 written submissions. We found that there was evidence to support claims of a rise in the incidence and seriousness of knife violence: while the majority of stabbings related to brawling or domestic violence, this rise could be attributed to escalating street violence between so-called territorial “gangs”. We identified that a small minority of individuals born into social deprivation were more predisposed to violence, but a perceived need for protection, along with peer pressure, sensationalist news coverage and the easy availability of knives could lead an unclear but worrying number of young people to decide to carry a knife

21. We supported some of the Government's current efforts to reduce knife crime such as stop-and-search. However, we concluded that a long-term solution to violence reduction lay in the replacement of a law-enforcement approach with a multi-agency public health approach that tackles the causes of violent behaviour. We stressed the importance of providing support for victims of knife crime to prevent "retaliation", efforts to reduce re-offending and reduce the numbers of custodial sentences for all except the most violent offenders and early interventions for those born into the most dysfunctional families.

22. Our Report was generally well-received across the political spectrum, prompting a debate on the floor of the House and a follow-up seminar to discuss the Government's response in November 2009.

23. The "G20 Protests" on 1-2 April saw upwards of 35,000 people demonstrate on the streets of London. While the policing of these protests was an ostensibly successful operation—little material damage was done—high-profile incidents such as the use of "kettling" or containment tactics and the death of Ian Tomlinson, led us to produce a Report into the policing operation at the G20 Protests, and more widely to investigate methods of policing public protests. Our Report, published in June identified serious problems with the methods and attitude of police in these situations.

24. We identified problems in how the police communicated with the crowds, the visibility of identification numbers and the police's seeming reliance on inexperienced, untrained officers. We also expressed concern that tactics which are viewed as legitimate and approved by the police, such as "kettling" tactics and "distraction" techniques risked alienating the public and appeared overtly confrontational. We concluded our Report by suggesting that the G20 Protests should act as a trigger for a wide-ranging discussion on the future of public protest policing; we are therefore pleased to note that both HMCIC in its Report, and Sir Hugh Orde, President, ACPO have endorsed our conclusions and echoed our call for more "consent based" tactics with clearer communication between the police and protesters. We look forward to examining the proposals that the police and the Home Office produce in response to our Report.

25. Following media reports into the phenomenon of bogus colleges we decided to inquire into the extent of illegitimate educational establishments set up primarily to enable non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals to come to the UK on fraudulently-obtained student visas. We produced a short report in July 2009, in which we concluded that insufficient quality assurance procedures on the Register of Education Providers by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills had allowed the initial abuse of the system between 2005-2009. We found no evidence of a link between bogus colleges and terrorist activity and we were also confident that the new requirements for independent accreditation, as demanded under the new points-based system for immigration would help curb the greatest abuses of the system; however, we remained concerned about UKBA's competence in running the inspection regime—in particular their practice of pre-announcing inspection visits—and at the amount of immigration fraud which had occurred before the introduction of the new system, although no-one could even provide an approximate figure on the scale of the abuse.

26. In July 2009, the Committee undertook a short inquiry into "special police services", i.e. policing provided at an extra cost for the purposes of music concerts or other commercial

events. In particular we investigated the costs incurred by the police and the taxpayer because of so-called “consequential policing” of football matches (consequential policing is policing provided because of, but not directly at the site of, a major public event. Police deployed at a train station to meet visiting football fans are an example). Our short Report into *The Cost of Policing Football Matches* highlighted the legal “grey areas” and inconsistencies that exist when calculating the additional costs incurred through the provision of police for commercial events. We suggested that these problems could be solved through guidelines mutually agreed by the police and the football clubs and greater consultation between both sides; only if this failed should the government consider introducing legislation to solve this problem.

27. The Macpherson Report into racism in the police force was published in 1999. In April of this year we took the opportunity of the ten-year anniversary of the Report’s publication to analyse progress made by the police towards implementing Macpherson’s 70 recommendations. The Home Office told us that 67 of Macpherson’s recommendations have been implemented “fully or in part” and we found that “police leaders have shown a clear commitment to increasing awareness of race as an issue”. We took this to be a sign of real progress by the police in tackling racism. We also highlighted issues which may require further investigation at a later date; black people remain proportionally far more likely to be subject to stop-and-search procedures and to be included on the DNA database, which in turn leads to an over-representation of black people in the criminal justice system. We concluded our Report by recommending that the police focus its attention on tackling issues of discrimination within the workforce.

28. We produced a short report connected with the relationship between the police and the media and the Policing Process of Home Office leaks. We were concerned at the activities of the police in this areas. We criticised the prevalence of off-the-record briefings and the leaking of information from police officers to the press. We made recommendations intended to distance the police from the perception of political interference during these investigations.

29. In this session we also finished a major inquiry into human trafficking. Our primary focus was the response to this crime—under the direction of the Home Office—by public authorities in the UK and the effectiveness of international co-operation in addressing the problem and we aimed to raise the profile of this crime as a priority not just for action within the UK but also for leadership on the international stage.

30. We were shocked at the lack of knowledge of this problem; trafficking remains a largely unknown problem among the public at large, and particularly public officials who could be expected to identify the victims—health service workers, social workers etc. We were therefore unsurprised, if disappointed, that accurate statistical data on the numbers of trafficking victims was unavailable.

31. We highlighted the many bodies who could play a role in identifying suspected trafficking victims—the police, UKBA, and local authorities among others—and suggested measures they could take to tackle the problem. We praised the work of the Metropolitan Police’s specialist Human Trafficking Unit and were very disappointed to see the Home Office withdraw funding. We concluded by suggesting that much more needs to be done. Greater efforts need to be made to protect the victims of trafficking, especially children in

the care home system and the prosecution of suspected traffickers must be much more vigorous while the victims themselves should be treated as victims not illegal migrants. We concluded that there needed to be a significant effort to improve international co-operation, given that this is a trans-national crime affecting many countries, whether as source, source or “reception” countries.

32. In response to rising public concern over the issue of extradition, in November we held a one-off evidence session on the workings of the UK-US Extradition Treaty. We took evidence from Janis Sharpe, the mother of Gary McKinnon, who is currently being extradited under the Treaty, representatives from the National Autistic Society, and the Home Secretary. After the session we wrote to the Home Secretary highlighting our concern at the lack of equality in the way the Treaty’s provisions apply to UK citizens, calling for the Home Secretary to use his discretion and intervene to prevent Mr McKinnon’s extradition and recommending a comprehensive review of the operation of the Extradition Act 2003.

### ***(c) Departmental actions***

33. As in previous years, the Committee has questioned witnesses on specific departmental actions. In 2008–09 we have continued such actions in the context of major inquiries into issues of ongoing concern and in response to developments as and when the need has arisen.

34. In March 2009 we produced a Report on the Policing Process of Home Office leaks. We expressed concern about the involvement of the police in investigating the leaking of government documents that had no bearing on national security. We made recommendations intended to distance the police from the perception of political interference during these investigations.

### ***(d) The work of the Department’s agencies and associated public bodies***

35. Throughout the session 2008-09, we have looked closely at the performance of the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and the work undertaken by Mr John Vine, the new Chief Inspector of UKBA. At the beginning of the session we arranged to receive 6-monthly updates from UKBA detailing the progress in tackling the “backlog” of unresolved immigration and asylum cases. Given increasing concerns at the performance of UKBA, since July we have subsequently arranged to receive updates every three months, focusing in particular on progress in deporting foreign criminals and resolving the so-called “legacy cases”.

36. We also took evidence from John Vine in July to question him on progress made in making the inspectorate fully “operational. we expressed continued concern over the extent of his workload. However, we were pleased to see that he had taken up our previous recommendation and inserted the word ‘Independent’ in front of his job title in correspondence. We have regularly written to the Home Secretary outlining our concerns over the performance of UKBA.

37. We also held two evidence sessions on the work of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, hearing from the outgoing Chairman, Sir Stephen Lander, and his successor Sir Ian Andrews, on such issues as SOCA's success in asset recovery, a perceived lack of operational police experience among SOCA's board of directors and a lack of accountability and transparency for the work of SOCA. In the forthcoming session, 2009–10, we will continue to take frequent evidence and will publish regular Reports on the performance of both UKBA and SOCA.

### ***(e) Major appointments***

38. On 21 April we took evidence from Mr Denis O'Connor, who was the Home Office's preferred choice as HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary. Before commenting on the suitability or otherwise of his appointment, we questioned him on issues such as police targets, "efficiency savings" and new models of policing. Given the timing of this session we also asked him at length about his initial views on the policing operation at the G20 Protests. Following this session we were happy to endorse Mr O'Connor's appointment.

39. While Mr O'Connor was the only appointment who we were able to subject to so-called "pre-appointment" scrutiny this session, we have also adopted the practice of hearing from major public appointees soon after they begin their tenure. We hope to question these appointees on how they see their role developing over the next 6-12 months, with the aim of judging their progress against these targets after a suitable period. To this end we have taken evidence from Sir Hugh Orde, the new head of ACPO, Sir Paul Stephenson Commissioner, Metropolitan Police, and Rob Wainwright, Director-General, Europol, soon after their appointments and have been impressed with their aims and targets in their new roles.

### **Examination of expenditure and Public Service Agreements**

40. As in previous years, we wish to express our gratitude to the Committee Office Scrutiny Unit for supplying us with specialist advice on expenditure issues, and in particular for its analysis of Home Office Estimates. We also wish to thank the National Audit Office for its Report on the performance of the Home Office in 2008–09. We have made use of the information provided by both sources in our six-monthly evidence sessions with the Home Secretary.

## Assisting the House

41. Our Report on *A Surveillance Society?*<sup>16</sup>, the Government's response<sup>17</sup> and *A Surveillance Society: Information Commissioner's Response*<sup>18</sup>, were debated in Westminster Hall on 19 March 2009. Our Report on *Policing for the 21st Century*<sup>19</sup> and the Government response<sup>20</sup> were debated in Westminster Hall on 11 June 2009.

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16 Fifth Report of Session 2007–08 (HC 58)

17 The Government Reply to the Fifth Report from the Home Affairs Committee Session 2007-08 HC 58 *A Surveillance Society?* (Cm 7449)

18 *A Surveillance Society?: Information Commissioner's Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2007–08*, Second Special Report of Session 2007–08 (HC 1124)

19 Seventh Report of Session 2007–08 (HC 364)

20 The Government Reply To The Seventh Report From The Home Affairs Committee Session 2007-08 HC 364 *Policing in the 21st Century*, (Cm 7553)

## 3 The Committee's working methods

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### Innovations in working methods

#### *Short inquiries, one-off sessions and more rapid response to developments*

42. In 2008–09 we have made a continued effort to ensure that our programme of work is flexible enough to allow us to run short, tightly-focused inquiries and complete brief reports to compressed timetables, alongside our more detailed work on major inquiries. When this has seemed appropriate, our recommendations have been made in the form of a letter to the Home Secretary, which is subsequently published alongside the oral evidence we received.

43. The above method has been used when the issue is of a highly topical nature, such as our work into the Rights of Gurkhas to settle in the UK and the “transformation” of the Forensic Science Service (FSS). Often these shorter inquiries follow-up specific areas identified in our larger Reports, (for example, we investigated the problem of missing, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children which was originally highlighted during our work into Human Trafficking), or they inform larger Reports—the one-off evidence session on the use of Tasers, for example, provided evidence which was useful for our inquiry into policing public demonstrations and the G20 Protests.

#### *Inquiry-based seminars and visits in the UK*

44. In 2007–08 we adopted the practice of holding introductory seminars in advance of the first oral evidence session in our major inquiries. In this session we have begun holding “follow-up” sessions after the production of a major Report. These follow-up seminars have enabled us to work with policymakers, experts in the relevant fields, politicians and those who have been directly affected by the issues we inquired into. They also allow us to examine what progress has been made in implementing our recommendations and encourage greater coordination between the bodies seeking to rectify the problems we raise in our Reports. So far we have held two of these seminars looking at the effects of our Reports into Human Trafficking and Knife Crime.

### Relations with the Department

45. We have maintained our good working relationship with the Home Office in 2008–09. The Department has on the whole been helpful in providing Ministers and officials to give evidence to our inquiries, often at short notice. The Home Secretary has taken care to set aside ample time for appearances before us and we have very much appreciated the willingness of Ministers and officials to answer questions connected with several inquiries or matters of current concern on the same occasion and again often at short notice. We also note the good relationship we have with the Home Office parliamentary branch who are assiduously helpful in responding speedily to, and co-ordinating our requests.

46. Last year we praised the Department for providing “prompt and helpful responses to our requests for written evidence and other material”. We regret that this has not been the case this session; we note a decline in the quality of written evidence and an increasing

number of late replies to our Reports. We hope that this is a temporary problem which will be remedied immediately and avoided in future.

# Formal Minutes

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**Tuesday 12 January 2010**

Members present:

Rt Hon Keith Vaz, in the Chair

Mr James Clappison  
Mrs Ann Cryer  
David T C Davies  
Mrs Janet Dean  
Patrick Mercer

Gwyn Prosser  
Bob Russell  
Martin Salter  
Mr Gary Streeter  
Mr David Winnick

Draft Report (*Work of the Committee in 2008–09*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 46 read and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the Fourth Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 19 January at 10.15 am]

# List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

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The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

## Session 2009–10

First Report	The Detention of Children in the Immigration System	HC 73
Second Report	The work of the UK Border Agency	HC 105
Third Report	The E-Borders Programme	HC 170

## Session 2008–09

First Report	Monitoring of the UK Border Agency	HC 77 (HC 381)
Second Report	The Police and the Media	HC 75
Third Report	The Work of the Committee 2007–08	HC 76
Fourth Report	Policing Process of Home Office Leaks Inquiry	HC 157 (HC 1026)
Fifth Report	Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Bill [HL]	HC 425
Sixth Report	Human Trafficking	HC 23–I
Seventh Report	Knife Crime	HC 217
Eighth Report	Policing of the G20 Protests	HC 418
Ninth Report	Project CONTEST: The Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy	HC 212
Tenth Report	The cost of policing football matches	HC 676
Eleventh Report	Bogus Colleges	HC 595 (Cm 7766)
Twelfth Report	Macpherson Report—Ten Years On	HC 427
Thirteenth Report	Managing Migration: Points-Based System	HC 217 (Cm 7767)
Fourteenth Report	The work of the Serious Organised Crime Agency	HC 730

**Session 2007–08**

First Report	The Government’s Counter-Terrorism Proposals	HC 43
Second Report	Bulgarian and Romanian Accession to the EU: Twelve months on	HC 59
Third Report	Security Industry Authority	HC 144
Fourth Report	Work of the Committee in 2007	HC 226
Fifth Report	A Surveillance Society?	HC 58 (HC 1124)
Sixth Report	Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage and “Honour”-Based Violence	HC 263 (HC 1165)
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