



Summary of our report

Border security: Using information to process passengers



People are coming to New Zealand in greater numbers than ever before, increasing the number of risks at the border. Border agencies have to balance processing passengers as efficiently as possible while identifying those who could pose a risk. To keep up with these increasing demands, border agencies are increasingly refining the application of physical inspections by using an intelligence-led approach – using information to identify high-risk passengers, goods, and craft before they arrive.

We assessed whether staff working on the frontline at major air and sea ports have the information they need to effectively and efficiently process incoming passengers and their accompanied goods. Frontline staff include officers from the New Zealand Customs Service and the

Ministry for Primary Industries. We also looked at how frontline staff use information from Immigration New Zealand.

In our view, the Border Agencies are operating effectively. There are differences in the quality of some of the information agencies receive. For example information from airlines is different to the information they receive from cruise lines. This affects how efficiently the information is used. Agencies are working with cruise lines to further improve the availability and quality of pre-arrival passenger information.

We also looked at whether frontline staff have the systems, tools, and resources to best use and share information, and whether there is effective collaboration between agencies operating at the border. In both areas, improvements could be made to ensure that information is used in the most efficient way.

Both New Zealand Customs and the Ministry for Primary Industries need to focus on preparing and putting in place workforce planning tools that would improve the efficient deployment of staff.

A particular strength for the New Zealand Customs Service and the Ministry for Primary Industries is the recently updated training programmes for both Customs and Quarantine officers. However, in our view, more explanation about the roles of the other agencies is needed as part of the formal training for new staff.

At a strategic level, the Border Sector Governance Group has improved collaboration between agencies in recent years. We have recommended that they strengthen the vision and strategy so the border sector can work more collaboratively. The long-term strategy also needs to be effectively communicated to all staff.

Vital statistics:

- 28 pages
- Presented to Parliament on 22 June 2017
- Download from www.oag.govt.nz
- Contact: reports@oag.govt.nz