

Turks and Caicos: National Security Council (NSC) meeting communique

In attendance as members of the NSC were the Hon. Deputy Premier as acting Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon. Minister for Border Control, the Hon Deputy Governor, the Hon. Attorney General, the Commissioner of Police, incoming Commissioner of Police and the Superintendent of HM Prison.

At this meeting the NSC:

Received an update from the Commissioner of Police on:

- the procurement of a replacement police aircraft which should be in country by November 2019. Its main purpose will be to support the Police Maritime unit tackling illegal migration, DECR's work tackling illegal fishing and transporting high risk prisoners between Grand Turk and Providenciales
- the recent delivery of three armoured Land Rovers for use in response to high risk situations and specialist training which will be delivered for their use
- leadership and firearms training for police officers
- number plate recognition capabilities being brought into service
- reported crimes which stood at 505 between 1 April 1st to 30 June 2019, representing a reduction of 16% against the same period in 2018
- enforcement of licensing hours on Grand Turk and Providenciales in particular. The roles of both the Liquor Licensing Authority and Magistrate's Court and issues that need to be addressed through awareness raising, compliance checks, enforcement action and training

Received an update from the Hon Minister Immigration on:

- concerns over illegal migration and the removal of over-stayers. Three sloops landed and a further two sloops were intercepted between April and June 2019 culminating in 391 apprehensions (other than landings) and 83 repatriations from vessels, down 59% for the same period in 2018. Of these, 177 have been repatriated and 29 have been deported
- the pull factors – human smuggling, human trafficking and modern slavery
- the implementation of recommendations provided in a report by UK Immigration experts for enhancing the work of the immigration control regime
- the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS) which was introduced at the airports and cruise port on 1 June 2019, improving both security to the Islands and visitor experience
- a draft Code of Conduct for Immigration Officers and separate draft Repatriation Policy which will shortly be brought to Cabinet
- capital expenditure on operational equipment now delivered and provision for finger printing capabilities; and
- a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Bahamas on the patrolling of TCI waters which is expected to be completed for

submission to TCI in August 2019, reinforcing the work of the Immigration Task Force and Police Maritime Unit

Received an update from the Superintendent of HM Prison on:

- the implications of and arrangements for high risk trials for serious offences between July and October 2019
- proposed legislative amendments and changes needed for criminal trials by video link incl. a remand centre/prison on Providenciales
- planned works on the new Prison block, fencing and procurement mobile phone jamming equipment;
- hurricane preparedness and immediate minor works
- capital expenditure and prison infrastructure

Received an update from the Premier on the draft National Security Strategy (NSS):

- a draft NSS, strongly supported by HE the Governor, will be discussed at the next NSC in September 2019; and
- the Premier presented the outgoing Commissioner of Police a commemorative pin in thanks for his leadership during his tenure