

7 Minute Briefing: CSPR HELEN United Kingdom Visas & Immigration (UKVI) RESPONSE

1. BACKGROUND

UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) agreed with the recommendations contained within the CSPR on Helen.

When Helen's case was first shared with UKVI a full case review was held by managers in Pretoria where the visa was issued.

One of the first actions taken was to appoint a Safeguarding Lead for Visas & Citizenship (V&C) to provide consistency in Safeguarding across all its thematic decision making hubs.

2. ACTIONS

UKVI has also agreed several actions to answer the CSPR recommendations:

- The report was shared with Border Force (BF). BF are currently updating their training to create a national vulnerability training package for all staff. BF have agreed to include the key learning point that Home Office (HO) IDs for refugees and their families are not always evidence based. BF will ensure practitioners are aware of this and will encourage staff to exercise appropriate professional curiosity into the age and developmental stage of an arriving passenger who presents HO issued ID for refugees and their families.
- Staff working within the IE National Command & Control Unit (NCCU) undertake immigration status identity checks for Rapid Reviews/Serious Case Reviews:

IE NCCU staff have also been made aware that HO issued IDs for refugees are not always evidence based.

- On publication of the CSPR report UKVI has committed to delivering a case study presentation to all staff making decisions on Family Reunion (FR) visas.

Staff will be encouraged to use interviews and view CCTV footage of the biometric process when doubts over age arise.

- Safeguarding in commercially run application points is under review. Part of that review will be on the support and training V&C can provide to help commercial staff when faced with identity problems, including age, when an applicant attends to provide their biometrics.
- V&C are committed to working with the SSCP to expand knowledge within the safeguarding profession of the visa process, including documentation to support visa applications. Where concerns arise over age and identity checks should be made through: ICESSVECWorkflow@homeoffice.gov.uk marking it for the attention of the HEO and giving the background to the request.

3. IMPLEMENTING CHANGE:

A progress review will be conducted by the V&C Safeguarding Lead in three months' time to ensure that recommendations from the CSPR have been acted upon.

Additional Information

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>
