

1 May 2012

Dr Julian Lewis MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Julian

YELLOW NOTE: NO REPLY EXPECTED — UK BORDER

Today we hear that travellers wait two hours to get through the UK border at Heathrow.

Surely we must be concerned on three fronts:

- We are *open for business*, yet our chance of attracting entrepreneurs is lessened as visitors find difficulty even getting here.
- The London Olympics showcase our country—but first impressions count, so tourists will not be encouraged to return and build tourism in the longer term.
- Pressure on the UKBA to mitigate those deleterious delays will inevitably lead to weakened border security at a time of heightened danger.

What to do? Well, we need enough properly trained staff at least for the 2012 peak. Only well-educated people currently unemployed could be recruited and trained up properly in the coming three months. So here are three ideas:

- Send a task force into Jobcentre Plus premises to select likely recruits.
- Approach banks like Lloyds TSB now laying off people to invite transfers.
- Advertise for temporarily unemployed executives to take short term contracts.

We can rely on natural wastage (Jobcentre candidates) and determination for career development (bank staff and redundant executives) to reduce UKBA staffing levels back to sustainable levels once the peak is over.

To amplify with a personal anecdote: a relative of mine in his forties has recently taken redundancy, having been board director for a significant international company. Maybe he might be enticed to work for UKBA on border control whilst pursuing his search for longer-term employment; good for his morale—and for his prospects of getting a new permanent job—to be at work in the meantime, doing something useful.

Yours ever

John Dexter