To: All Members of the Scottish Parliament

24 November 2010

As you may know, the UK Border Agency receives more correspondence from MPs than any other UK Government department; over 66,000 letters a year, which is almost three times that of its nearest rival, the Department for Work and Pensions.

Immigration is also a reserved matter and the lines of accountability for the Agency are through me and my ministerial colleagues to Parliament at Westminster.

For those reasons the UK Border Agency does not correspond with Members of the Devolved Legislatures in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on individual cases although the Agency does give full responses on policy and general queries. The Agency is also keen to maintain the improvements it has achieved at speeding up the handling of correspondence and concluding cases and to take further steps to streamline its processes.

I have reviewed this policy with ministerial colleagues from the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland Offices and concluded that it should be maintained.

It would therefore be helpful if you are approached about an individual immigration case if you could redirect the individual or their representative to the appropriate constituency MP to consider.

Whilst the UK Border Agency will not respond to you on the details of any individual cases it will take into account any relevant information that you provide in deciding how to handle that case going forward.
I am grateful for your help and support in making the UK Border Agency's processes more efficient and, ultimately, responding to your constituent's enquiries faster and more effectively.

DAMIAN GREEN MP