

AIG Response to the Wass Report Recommendations

10 May 2016

Ascension Island	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
<p>1.1 Attention needs to be given to the 800 St Helenians living on Ascension Island who will be unable to travel directly to their families on St Helena after the RMS is decommissioned.</p>	<p>AIG is leading efforts to procure a replacement air and shipping service, underwritten by the major employers. <i>All regulatory approvals for an inter-island airlink are now agreed. Contracts will be signed shortly and the first flight will hopefully start the month after the RMS is de-commissioned. All dates are subject to the opening of St Helena’s airport.</i> <i>An inter-island shipping link to replace the RMS will start once the RMS is de-commissioned.</i></p>	<p>MH/ Jun 16</p>
<p>1.2 The anomaly in the jurisdiction between St Helena and Ascension Island relating to the sentencing of offenders to community orders needs to be dealt with by the passing of an Ordinance.</p> <p><i>‘The Ascension Magistrates’ Court therefore has no geographical jurisdiction to make pronouncements on any act or omission which is alleged to have taken place on St Helena. There is accordingly an urgent need for legislation in Ascension and for that matter St Helena to allow the transfer of any cases at whatever stage to another Magistrates’ Court in the territory and to extend the jurisdiction of each court to make community or other orders which are enforceable throughout the entire territory.’ [4.6]</i></p>	<p>Draft amending Ordinance scheduled for agreement at the May 2016 AI Council. Similar legislation is going through LegCo on St Helena.</p> <p><i>AIG is also considering how Community Service Orders will be supervised and how probation services provided</i></p>	<p>WS/ May 16</p>

Recommendations for St Helena from which Ascension could also benefit.

Governance	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
2.1 SHG & AIG is lacking is an institutional memory, analysis, codification, dissemination, training and practical application of received advice. Past reports need to be revisited and previous findings and recommendations need to be collated, applied and, thereafter, monitored.	<p>Check that responses to Hanmer & LFF reports are complete.</p> <p>Do any of the other 34 reports refer to Ascension?</p> <p><i>GF has fed back that previous reports do not identify additional action points for Ascension that are not being currently addressed or covered in this plan</i></p>	GF/ completed
2.2 The recommendations need to be analysed to ensure that the AIG has the resources and available skills necessary to apply them.	<p>Make case in AIG's 2016/17 budget process for budget line for social worker.</p> <p>Actions that are not part of BaU are costed.</p> <p><i>SW post has been accounted for in 2016/17 budget</i></p>	RP/ completed
2.3 All incoming staff responsible for oversight of the relevant departments, as well as trained staff employed in those departments, need to have access to the core manuals relevant to their department. For example, <i>Working Together 2015</i> should be available in hard copy in all relevant departments.	<p>Copies of Working Together provided to Police & Hospital & all members of AISCB</p> <p><i>Copies of Working Together 2015 are in place with the identified agencies and are available to members of the AISCB.</i></p>	RP/ completed
2.4 The specific analysis and	RP to discuss previous recommendations with St Helena	GF & RP/ completed

<p>recommendations unearthed in the earlier reports need to be available for training and education of all staff.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Directorate and measure against current recommendations to avoid duplication.</p> <p><i>GF has fed back that previous reports do not identify additional action points for Ascension that are not being currently addressed or covered in this plan. No additional training needs have been identified that are not already in place.</i></p>	
<p>2.5 Initiation and handover briefing should be prepared including a full briefing document detailing matters requiring specific attention, child safeguarding on St Helena/Ascension Island being an obvious priority.</p>	<p>Child safeguarding advice added to standard induction pack.</p> <p><i>RP is reviewing the 'AIG Safeguarding Children Induction Booklet' Signed off on 18/4 and will be published on AIG shared drive</i></p>	AN & RP / completed
<p>2.6 The anecdotal accounts of sexual relationships between older men and post-pubescent but underage girls need to be either grounded in fact or demythologised. Data needs to be collated and analysed</p>	<p>Social Worker to liaise with police on St Helena and Ascension to analyse police records alongside Safeguarding referrals for these incidences</p> <p><i>The Chief of Police reported that there no intelligence is held on 'anecdotal' accounts. The implementation of OTRCIS will transform the way intelligence is managed. The lack of an intelligence structure has been on ongoing problem on St Helena and Ascension Island.</i></p>	RP/completed
<p>2.7 Undertake a study to collate and analyse data to establish the position in relation to sexual relationships between older men and post-pubescent but underage girls and determine the nature of the relationships, their duration and their conclusion.</p>	<p>Social Worker to liaise with police on St Helena and Ascension to analyse police records alongside Safeguarding referrals for these incidences</p> <p><i>The Chief of Police concluded there was no data to support such a study on St Helena.</i></p>	CR/RP/completed
<p>2.8 AISC members should make a confidentiality declaration in regards to</p>	<p>Legal Advice to be sought</p>	RP & WS / completed

information disclosed at the Board	<i>Confidentiality declaration in place and signed by AISC members</i>	
Recruitment	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
3.1 AIG should implement a robust and professional recruitment policy	<p>AIG to develop its own recruitment policy, drawing on best practice for small islands. Should include whole process from succession planning through interviews to induction. Should include exceptions to interview process (e.g. internal promotions). Process of checking references to be implemented as a matter of course, including phone calls to referrer as necessary.</p> <p><i>'AIG Recruitment & Selection Policy & Procedure' signed off on 18/4</i></p> <p><i>HR has obtained details of reference checking firm Candidate Vetting) that SHG use. AIG to trial it where references for teachers were missing or inadequate.</i></p> <p><i>Recruitment policies are to be distributed to heads of departments and published on AIG website for transparency and ease of access.</i></p>	AN/ completed
3.2 Weaknesses in recruitment practices need to be addressed in relation to both unfilled positions and the appointment of unqualified and unsuitable staff.	<p>Part of HR's review of the HR department</p> <p><i>AIG recruitment procedure had not been widely disseminated and was not being monitored.</i> <i>Information will be placed on AIG website and on internal shared systems as appropriate.</i> <i>A review has ensured quality and suitability for current role.</i></p>	AN/ completed
3.3 Employment records of key staff need to be thoroughly investigated and such obvious concerns as references and reasons for leaving previous roles need to be scrutinised. Those involved in the interview process should remain objective and independent.	<p>HR dept to conduct audit of all HR records. HR to introduce enhanced identity and qualification verification checks [learn from SHG]</p> <p><i>Several references for teachers had not been obtained when initial requests were ignored. These are now being followed up.</i> <i>A file containing all school references obtained has been handed to</i></p>	AN/ completed

	<p><i>the Headteacher.</i></p> <p><i>More stringent checks being applied to new HT and HR Director interviews and processes are in place for future appointments.</i></p>	
<p>3.4 Those appointed as Heads of Directorates must be either qualified in the disciplines of their departments or of a sufficiently high calibre to enable them to understand the job requirements and to direct their staff in the satisfactory fulfilment of their roles.</p>	<p>Review recruitment guidance. Person specs require input from subject specialist. Experts sought on interview panel.</p> <p><i>Job specs are to reflect the professional qualifications required to fulfil these posts. This will be an ongoing process when roles are recruited to</i></p>	AN/ completed
<p>3.5 When a post is vacated the incumbent needs to have sufficient time to pass on the benefit of their experience to the newcomer. A sufficient and formal period of handover from one person to the next needs to be allowed for.</p>	<p>HR to draft departure checklist and put up on intranet – HR department to enforce production of handover notes. If no face-to-face handover possible, a handover by phone would be required.</p> <p><i>We can consider extending notice periods from 2 to 3 months but staff can still up sticks without notice. Recruiting for an isolated island takes time and candidates can pull out. A change to the Code of Management process will need legal and Governor advice.</i></p>	AN & KS/ completed
<p>3.6 A formal induction process needs to be worked through. When a new recruit arrives on the island, they should be able to shadow their predecessor <i>for a minimum period of a week</i> in order to have first-hand experience of the demands of the post and to begin to appreciate the small local and cultural differences which exist.</p>	<p>Part of review of HR. Do we need consider standard notice periods (it takes us longer to recruit than for someone to resign and leave island)?</p> <p><i>An induction check list and pre-posting pack has been signed off on 18/4. Again, notice period served is a Code of Management action that needs Legal and Governor advice.</i></p>	AN/ completed
<p>3.7 HR processes need to be tightened to avoid bad hires (e.g. those previously involved in employment disputes). 'At no stage during</p>	<p>HR to propose modifications to recruitment procedure (e.g. declaration not involved in employment dispute at time of recruitment/ in previous employment)</p>	AN/ completed

<p>the recruitment process was CG asked whether she had been involved in any dispute with her previous employer'. [6.6]</p>	<p><i>Reference request form and reference requests now include a question about whether the appointee is involved in an employment dispute.</i></p> <p>What can we learn from the improvements made by SHG (e.g. psychometric tests & investigations into candidates' employment backgrounds – see 6.20)? What is viable on AIG's budget?</p> <p><i>Advice from StH has been sought where they have these processes in place. AIG needs to consider the necessity of these in relation to the role recruited. Further consideration will need to be made due to the different resources available to AIG.</i></p>	
<p>Police</p>	<p>Action Proposed</p>	<p>By whom and by what date</p>
<p>4.1 A formal induction procedure with an introductory package of basic information should be provided to all new recruits. This should include an outline of cultural differences, and an explanation of Ordinances and other essential local issues such as safeguarding concerns.</p>	<p>Action for AI police detachment. AIG HR to provide similar information in its induction pack (<u>comment</u>: opportunity to pool information)</p> <p><i>The draft induction process will be finalised by 13 May and shared with partners on Ascension Island. Sign off will be by the end of May 2016.</i></p>	<p>CR/AN/ end May 16</p>
<p>4.2 There should be a personal introduction to the most senior officials and senior officers to ensure that new recruits are aware of their wider duties and responsibilities.</p>	<p>The Administrator currently provides an oral briefing to the most senior post holders in AIG. Chief of Police provides similar for Ascension Police Inspector.</p> <p><i>Recce visits prior to final appointment now in place for senior positions.</i></p>	<p>CR/ completed</p>
<p>4.3 In order to attract expatriates, police officers have to be paid rates commensurate with their existing salaries. [3.21]</p>	<p>AIG Director of Resources conducted salary review of Ascension detachment in March to ensure pay remains comparable with SHPF pay scales (although Ascension pays the salaries of officers on Ascension).</p>	<p>JM/ completed</p>

	<i>Pay deal signed off by CoP in April. PCs and the PS will receive a pay increase from 1st April 2016 so that their salaries are aligned with that of Fire-Fighters (inclusive of an on-call allowance).</i>	
4.4 Racial awareness training should be provided to all staff, both expatriates and St Helenians, so that each is sensitive to the other's idiosyncrasies.	<p>Social Worker to liaise with St Helena Safeguarding to look at relevance of training in this issue and if this can be incorporated within Safeguarding Training</p> <p><i>After discussion with STH & ASI Police it is felt more appropriate to cover this within the Safeguarding Training.</i></p>	RP/ completed
4.5 Training manuals outlining the proper procedures to be followed when safeguarding issues arise need to be provided to all relevant staff.	<p>Social Worker to liaise with St Helena Safeguarding to look at relevance of training in this issue and if this can be incorporated within Safeguarding Training.</p> <p>Referral forms to be made available to the public and all professionals who work with children.</p> <p><i>The referral process is currently covered within the Safeguarding Training sessions.</i></p> <p><i>Referral forms are in place in the partner agencies, but are also available on AIG website.</i></p> <p><i>Referral forms are available for police in the form of a J1 & DOM.</i></p> <p><i>Any incident where police are called and a child is present generates one of these referrals.</i></p>	CR/RP/ completed
4.6 Level 2 Safeguarding training should be provided to all new staff before their appointment and refresher courses should take place at regular intervals.	<p>Social Worker to liaise with St Helena Safeguarding Trainers to facilitate and enable this action</p> <p><i>Ongoing training and refreshers being delivered to Police. Frequency is hoped to be annual dependent upon trainer availability.</i></p>	RP/ completed
4.7 Intelligence gathering should be undertaken, targeting families who repeatedly come to the attention of the	As per St Helena. AI Police Detachment to participate in project OTRCIS	CR/ July

police in respect of child abuse. Pertinent information should be shared with Social Services. Statistics should be compiled outlining the findings of the intelligence gathering.	<i>The new intelligence system for Ascension Island and St Helena is due to 'go live' on 1st July. This will, for the first time allow a management of intelligence and crime recording which will allow this data to be collated and promulgated.</i>	
4.8 The programme of education provided by officers in schools addressing the age of consent and other safeguarding issues should continue and be enshrined in police practice. Liaison between the Police Service and the schools should be formalised so that each year group is aware of the issues and has contact with local officers.	CR to set out police engagement plan with school. Should also form part of school safeguarding plan. <i>Liaison between parties to formulate a rolling programme of safeguarding education for the school has been complete and police are in process of formulating the programme.</i>	CR/ KS completed
Social Services	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
5.1 Steps should be taken to ensure that AIG does not suffer from unfilled posts.	AIG should take similar steps e.g. a list of senior posts and contract expiry dates should be circulated to the senior management team. <i>Early advertisement of post of SW upon receipt of notice given to allow as smaller a gap as possible (preferably none) between appointments.</i>	AN / completed
5.2 Social Services should have a minimum of two qualified social workers on the island at all times.	Ascension should have one qualified social worker on island (RP). Cover arrangements to be put in place during holiday periods. <i>Working agreement to be agreed with StH to allow some cover while AIG SW is off island.</i>	RP/ end May
5.3 Training should be provided to St Helenians by expatriate social workers to enable them to obtain social work qualifications.	This will not be possible in the current context on Ascension. Social Workers need to be trained and receive a degree standard of education	RP/ completed
5.4 Nurseries need to be of an adequate standard (measured to UK standards?)	<u>There are no creches/nurseries on Ascension, but any childcare provision would need to be registered and monitored as per</u>	RP/ completed

	<u>Ascension ordnance</u>	
5.5 Ascension social worker to complete initial assessment of Social Work provision on Ascension	RP to complete assessment 6 months after appointment of f/t social worker i.e. by end March 16) <i>Report to be part of a rolling assessment of needs and information gathering process.</i>	RP/ completed
Safeguarding	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
6.1 Safeguarding training to the UK standard should be provided to all Ascension Island Government employees who are likely to come into contact with children in the course of their employment.	Social Worker to liaise with St Helena Safeguarding Trainers to facilitate and enable this action Budget needs to be identified (FCO programme funds?) <u>Training is provided to partner agencies and individuals to a UK standard with a local context. This is currently provided by trainers from SHG but there is a move to enable AIG workforce to be able to deliver this training</u>	RP/ completed
6.2 Written manuals should be provided at all workplaces and employees should record that they have read and understood the procedures.	<u>AIG Child protection procedures were agreed and published in June 2015 (based on Working Together)</u>	Jun 15/ completed
6.3 It should be the responsibility of the Head of the Governor's Office in his capacity as the chair of the Local Child Safeguarding Board that all procedures on safeguarding are applied and regular refresher courses are undertaken.	On Ascension, this responsibility is shared between the Administrator & Social Worker. Annual safeguarding refresher training has been organised in 2015 and 2016. <u>To be delivered as part of liaison with SHG training team.</u>	RP/ completed
6.4 It should be a disciplinary offence to fail to adhere to proper safeguarding procedures or failing to report child protection concerns.	<i>Disciplinary policy needs modifying to make this explicit. This has been adjusted in recruitment paperwork</i>	AN/completed

Whistleblowers	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
7.1 There should be a formal grievance procedure available to all those working for the St Helena Government, overseen by the Chief Secretary.	AIG already has a grievance procedure. AIG HR review to examine whether AIG could learn from St Helena. <i>Whistle-blowing policy signed off on 18/4</i>	AN/completed
General observations	Action Proposed	By whom and by what date
8.1 Both St Helena and Ascension, as currently constituted, require continuing aid and this should be provided to ensure that a minimum level of family and childcare, which would be expected by residents living in outlying parts of the British Isles, is available to the residents of these remote islands.	FCO looking at the adequacy of Ascension's resourcing as part of future of Ascension work	MM/ Jun 16

Key:

AN Alan Nicholls, HR Director
CR Clarence Roberts, Acting Inspector, St Helena Police, Ascension detachment
JM Jamie Manson, Director of Resources
KS Keith Sedgwick, Consultant Head teacher
MH Marc Holland, Administrator
RP Rob Parfrey, Social Worker
WS Walter Scott, Solicitor General
GF Ginny Ferson, FCO