



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION:

CSSA welcomes new online visa check tool

The Cleaning and Support Services Association has welcomed the announcement of the implementation of a visa check system that will allow employers them to verify migrants' visa status online.

The scheme, which will be operational from early 2012, will help companies that hire migrant workers avoid the large fines imposed for employing workers who have forged or invalid work permits.

Commenting on the new tool, Immigration minister Damian Green said: "It is vital that we work with employers to give them the tools they need to meet their obligations.

Our new online checking service will also turn up the pressure on those who wish to live and work here illegally. The message is clear- the UK is no longer a soft touch for illegal workers."

Andrew Large, Chief Executive of the CSSA, said: "This is definitely a positive signal from the UK Border Agency and it shows that they are interested in offering better support for businesses. The CSSA has long argued that government policy towards migrant workers places too much responsibility on employers and not enough on the UK Borders Association, with the increasing complexity of forgeries making it very difficult for companies to ensure that they always obey the law.

In addition to this, the heavy fines in place for companies that employ illegal workers, even unknowingly, are a serious operational hazard for companies during difficult economic times.

An online tool to help cleaners contractors only employ workers who have the right to work in the UK will be warmly welcomed by the cleaning industry."

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Notes for Editors

The Cleaning and Support Services Association is the UK trade association for the contract cleaning sector. Founded in 1967, it represents businesses that account for 70% of the turnover in the UK contract cleaning sector and employ approximately 275,000 staff.

If you would like to know more about the CSSA or are interested in becoming a member of the CSSA, please contact Andrew Large on 020 7920 9632 or 07738 935 708 or email alarge@cleaningassoc.org. Alternatively, further information can be found on the website at www.cleaningindustry.org or at http://twitter.com/#!/CSSA_cleaning.