



Parliamentary Question – Seasonal workers

Date: 11 December 2018

Ref: 201235

Asked by: Afzal Khan

(Manchester, Gorton)

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Seasonal Workers Pilot in the agricultural sector, how much time will be provided to the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority to develop a system for worker oversight and protection in the UK and overseas from the point at which Pilot Operators are chosen to the point at which the pilot starts to provide workers to growers and employers in the UK.

Response:

Defra officials are working closely with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) on the Government's seasonal workers pilot. The oversight and protection of workers was a central element of the selection process for Pilot Operators. The selected Pilot Operators were first publically announced in the Statement of changes to the Immigration Rules, which was laid on 11 December and is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-of-changes-to-the-immigration-rules-hc-1779-11-december-2018>.

Officials will continue working closely with the GLAA over the two year operation of the Pilot. A key objective of the pilot is to ensure that migrant workers are adequately protected against modern slavery and other labour abuses. The operators of the scheme will be licensed by the GLAA. They will ensure that all workers are placed with farms who adhere to all relevant legislation, including paying the National Minimum Wage. Farmers will also be vetted to ensure that living and working conditions are of a suitable quality.