



## Under the microscope

### Your preparations for unannounced UKVI inspections

Unannounced UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) inspections of licensed sponsors are on the increase. The UKVI can revoke or suspend the licences of sponsors who are not meeting their obligations, causing significant disruption to the organisation.

Many organisations in the UK rely heavily on their ability to sponsor migrant workers who would not otherwise have the right to work in the UK. Often those workers are required to bring in knowledge from group companies located outside of the EU, or to gain skills to take back to their group employer overseas. In most cases the skills needed are not widely available within the settled workforce and so organisations need to look further afield.

The UKVI places stringent requirements on sponsor licence holders, not to mention the current political pressure to reduce net migration to the UK.

There are more and more occurrences of UKVI carrying out unannounced inspections of licenced sponsors. If a sponsor is found not to be meeting its obligations, the UKVI can suspend its licence (preventing the sponsor from employing more migrant workers), or revoke its licence (with the result that the company must stop employing sponsored migrants). Given the risks of losing key personnel, valuable skills and encountering reputational risk, the impact of UKVI sanctions on an organisation, and its migrant workers, can be very significant.

Eversheds Sutherland's Immigration team helps sponsors deal with the implications of sanctions and provides rigorous testing of processes and procedures to address any area of weakness. Our three-step audit process, can help you stay compliant.

#### Step 1 – Scoping

We will discuss with you your use of sponsored migrant workers and the extent of any problems you may have.

#### Step 2 – Audit

We will undertake a thorough audit of your current arrangements and the issues that the UKVI will focus on, via a face-to-face meeting.

#### Step 3 – Report and Recommendations

Following our audit, we will provide you with strategic advice to address your risks, in a written report. Our advice and the strategies we propose will balance the often conflicting immigration, discrimination and employment law issues. We will provide a practical action plan to address any areas of concern.

In the event that you are given prior warning of an impending inspection, our immigration law experts can accompany you on the day – ideally with an audit already having been carried out by us.

We have extensive experience when dealing with the UKVI. As a result, we have detailed insight into the issues that the UKVI will focus on during an inspection and can prepare your organisation to ensure you are, and remain, compliant.

#### For more information, please contact:



**Audrey Elliott**  
Partner

**Tel:** +44 121 232 1523  
audreyelliott@eversheds-  
sutherland.com

[eversheds-sutherland.com](http://eversheds-sutherland.com)