

GHD and Costain Transform UK Border Processes with PIF Success

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GHD, a global professional services company, and Costain, the infrastructure solutions company, have successfully delivered a transformative approach to border processes post-Brexit through the Cabinet Office's Port Infrastructure Fund (PIF) project. Their holistic assessment has played a pivotal role in reshaping the UK's border trade approach and enhancing international supply chain security.

Appointed by the Cabinet Office to address the challenges and ensure the PIF aligns with the Border 2025 strategy, GHD and Costain leveraged their joint expertise in supply chain, logistics, port operation, trade facilitation, and data analytics to deliver a comprehensive solution. By integrating data from government sources, third parties, and innovative new solutions, the project team provided invaluable evidence and intelligence to inform decision-making.

The partnership's efforts were instrumental in the successful delivery of the £200 million PIF on time and within budget, streamlining processes and delivering significant savings for the government and the supply chain industry. Additionally, the initiative reduced potential annual costs to the supply chain by £1 billion through refined policies to minimize border friction.

To ensure a lasting legacy of built knowledge, GHD and Costain devised a comprehensive Borders Curriculum to upskill Cabinet Office personnel, leading to a 60% increase in their understanding of border management topics.

Recognizing their contribution to the project, GHD was shortlisted for the Change and Transformation in the Public Sector category at the 2024 Management Consultancies Association (MCA) Awards.

Matt East, Sub Sector Lead, GHD, said:

“Working on this groundbreaking project required a high level of expertise from the GHD and Costain team and a close relationship with the Cabinet Office. Our team successfully addressed these challenges with a collaboration-oriented approach, leveraging our knowledge in infrastructure spending, policy development, and cross-departmental collaboration.

“This project not only fortified the Cabinet Office’s internal capabilities but also delivered the infrastructure within the context of policy updates, a feat seldom accomplished. We believe this project demonstrates our commitment to driving innovative initiatives and setting new standards for enhancing government operations. Looking ahead, we are eager to leverage the experience and learnings gained from this project to deliver meaningful advancements to similar initiatives.”

Alex Brooks, Executive Advisor, GHD said:

“It was a real privilege to work on this highly influential project. By bringing together the teams’ deep-domain knowledge and data modelling and analytics capability, we were able to provide previously unavailable data-driven intelligence to contextualise, shape and improve processes and policies that will result in a real benefit to the national economy, biosecurity and supply chain, but most critically to ensure continual benefit to people across UK communities on a day-to-day basis.”

Phil Wilson, Deputy Director, Cabinet Office said:

“The team have aided Cabinet Office to transform the UK border and develop our Borders Group team by providing critical insight, domain expertise and technical capability to support the delivery of major border policy across government. Knowledge transfer has been a key part of this, and our team continues to benefit.

“We have established a truly collaborative relationship, integrated our teams, and established an environment of healthy challenge and trust to facilitate delivery. Together we have established millions of pounds in savings of taxpayer money, de-risked high-profile areas to government and navigated huge data-availability challenges to deliver high value intelligence to support decision making up to ministerial level. I am proud of these achievements and the work we have done.”

Tim DeBarro, Strategic Director, Transportation at Costain, commented:

“This has been a transformative project that continues our excellent track-record of identifying the most effective and innovative ways to deliver infrastructure solutions for our customers. This has been achieved through excellent collaboration, a laser focus on value-for-money, and a deep knowledge of the GB-EU border infrastructure and trade routes. Our efforts have led to significant efficiency in the delivery of the UK’s critical national border infrastructure, achieved within the policy framework and, crucially substantial savings for the taxpayer.”