Cause Celebres

1. Dealing with immigration and nationality cases means that caseworkers will occasionally deal with cases which acquire a high public profile. Sometimes this is because of the fame of the individual and on other occasions because of their circumstances (e.g. alleged war criminals). This is not always readily apparent when the application is allocated so any member of staff could find themselves dealing with a case which might become headline news.

2. Irrespective of their eventual outcome, these cases have the potential:

- to embarrass Ministers; or
- damage the reputation of IND; or
- set unhelpful precedents; or
- otherwise cause harm

3. Therefore, if caseworkers become aware that a case has the potential to attract publicity, as a result either through casual reading, or listening to the media, or by other means, it should be drawn to the attention of a Team Leader or Senior Caseworker as soon as possible. It should not be assumed that someone else will already have spotted it and taken action.

4. Press enquiries
4.1 It is important to optimise the time available to brief Ministers and the Communication Directorate (formerly the Press Office). Therefore, if staff are consulted by the media, whether local or national:

- the enquirer should be referred to the Communication Directorate (see "Disclosure of information"); and
- a senior officer (i.e. Senior Caseworker or Team Leader) should immediately be notified of the enquiry

NB. The caseworker should speak to the senior officer face-to-face (an e-mail or written note may not be seen in time). If a particular senior officer is not available, the matter should be raised with another senior officer.