



Transport Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 3266 Email: transcom@parliament.uk

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

10 June 2021

Dear Home Secretary

I am writing to clarify several matters in relation to conditions for entry at the UK border and data on international arrivals. With passenger numbers likely to increase as international travel reopens, it is imperative that international arrivals to the UK enter the country via an efficient process that does not compromise safety.

The Global Travel Taskforce Report acknowledged that Border Force has faced significant pressures in conducting manual border checks to ensure compliance with public health measures. The Report also stated that lengthy checks at the border are creating excess queues, posing risks in relation to social distancing, passenger welfare and the overall border experience.

The Committee previously recommended that the Government introduce further measures to speed up border processing times by, for example, deploying more staff at the border and requiring paperwork for entry to be processed before arrival. With queues at airports continuing to pose a challenge to public health, I am seeking to clarify the following questions about border operations:

- What are the coronavirus public health requirements passengers must meet in order to disembark and be granted entry into the United Kingdom?
- How does the process for checking these requirements change when a country moves from the “green” list to the “amber” list, and from the “amber” list to the “red” list in the Government’s traffic light system?
- What plans do you have to make those requirements interoperable with e-gates at airports?
- What is the average time that it takes a Border Force officer to make manual checks of these requirements?
- How many full-time equivalent Border Force staff have been deployed to process entry requirements at the border? How does this compare with the number of full-time equivalent Border Force staff processing entry requirements before 15 January 2021?
- What percentage of recent international arrivals failed to fulfil the requirements for entry to the UK at the border?

I would be grateful if you could provide the answers to the questions above by Monday 28 June. It is imperative that the Government addresses these issues to maintain social distancing in airports and the efficient movement of passengers.



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Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Merriman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Huw Merriman

Chair of the Transport Committee