

Another 900 British travellers in New Zealand set to return to the UK

Press release

Around 900 more British travellers in New Zealand are set to return home on three additional UK Government-chartered flights.



The most vulnerable people will be prioritised for the flights, scheduled for the 11 and 15 May from Auckland, and 13 May from Christchurch.

Flight details are as follows:

- 11 May – Auckland – London Heathrow
- 13 May – Christchurch – London Heathrow
- 15 May – Auckland – London Heathrow

The Government has already organised five charter flights which will bring home from New Zealand around 1,555 travellers between 24 April and 2 May. In addition, a further 3,700 people have flown home on commercial flights – with the support of the British High Commission in Wellington.

Lord Goldsmith, Minister responsible for New Zealand, said:

These three additional UK-chartered flights from New Zealand will bring home around 900 British travellers, in addition to the 1,500 we flew back on our first five flights.

We recognise that this has been a challenging time for Britons in New Zealand and we are grateful for their patience as we have worked with the authorities to deal with a complex logistical operation to make these flights happen. Our High Commission staff

are working incredibly hard to support both those British travellers who wish to travel home, and those who remain in the country.

British High Commissioner to New Zealand Laura Clarke said:

We are doing all we can to help British people get back home to the UK, and these additional charter flights will help more people to do that.

My team and I will continue to do all we can to support those who are still in New Zealand, throughout this crisis and beyond.

The £75m partnership with airlines announced in March has enabled us to return thousands of Brits through special chartered flights. We will continue to work closely with the airlines to help as many British travellers as possible to get home to the UK, including through commercial means.

Notes to editors

1. Eligible British travellers in New Zealand will be contacted by the High Commission to book their flight.
2. Vulnerable people are classified as those over the age of 70, those under 70 with an underlying serious or complex health condition and those who are pregnant.
3. For those not currently eligible to book on these charter flights, support remains available from High Commission staff in New Zealand.
4. Tickets for the flights will cost £800. Those unable to afford travel costs and have exhausted all other options may be eligible to apply for an emergency loan from public funds.
5. Since the outbreak of coronavirus in Wuhan, we have helped more than a million British citizens return home on commercial flights – backed up by our work with the airlines and foreign governments to keep flights running. A £75m partnership with airlines announced by the Foreign Secretary on 30 March has enabled us to return thousands more on special charters.