

Global Travel Taskforce meets to map out safe return to international travel

- group will focus on developing a framework to enable more international travel
- key industry players from the aviation, maritime, cruise, international rail and tourism sectors to play a critical role in developing recommendations
- plan will be underpinned by the latest scientific data, keeping the country safe from new COVID variants

The Secretary of State Grant Shapps has today (2 March 2021) chaired the first meeting of the new [Global Travel Taskforce](#) to set out a plan for restarting international travel in a safe and sustainable way.

Several government departments, industry bodies, transport operators and travel agencies met to discuss the work of the taskforce and how international travel can be re-opened safely.

This includes developing a new risk-based framework to facilitate international travel, using the suite of measures the government already has in place, such as testing and isolation, and the [recommendations from the first Global Travel Taskforce last year](#).

They will also look at how existing measures, such as the government's testing and isolation schemes, could be used to facilitate travel while managing the risk of imported cases and 'variants of concern'.

It will also take place in parallel and be closely integrated with the review into COVID-status certification led by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The taskforce will provide a report to the Prime Minister on 12 April, which will be used to help government determine when and how to resume safe international travel no earlier than 17 May 2021.

The decision on when international travel can resume will be dependent on:

- the global and domestic epidemiological picture
- the prevalence and location of any 'variants of concern'
- the progress of vaccine rollouts here and abroad
- what more the government has learned about the efficacy of vaccines on variants, and the impact on transmission, hospitalisation and deaths

All measures will be kept under review, and people should continue to follow national restrictions for England introduced on 6 January 2021, meaning everyone must stay at home unless travelling for a very limited set of

reasons.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps said:

The UK's leading vaccine rollout has created a wave of optimism and, as a result, the Global Travel Taskforce is charged with exploring safe and secure ways to restart international travel when the time is right.

By planning carefully considered steps, we will protect the excellent progress made through our vaccine and advanced testing programme, whilst ensuring we are ready to kick-start our travel sector when current travel restrictions can be lifted.

We will not only consider the progress of our world-beating domestic vaccine programme but also need to review where destination countries have got to with both vaccine and testing capabilities.

The government has already put in place a range of tough measures to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission at the border, including the:

All international arrivals must also take a [COVID-19 test on both day 2 and day 8 of their self-isolation period](#) – with genome sequencing included within the cost of the testing bundle.

Passengers arriving from 'non-red list' countries still have the option to pay for a private test and shorten their self-isolation period by up to half through [Test to Release](#), on receipt of a negative COVID-19 result.