

Government and airlines working to get British passengers affected by Coronavirus back to the UK

- government is working with industry to ensure they can continue to get British nationals abroad back to the UK, in light of border restrictions in place across the world
- Transport Secretary today chaired a call with airlines and airports, following the additional financial support for businesses announced yesterday by the Chancellor
- DfT and Treasury working to agree series of measures in coming days which will help the aviation sector get through the coronavirus pandemic

The government and UK airlines are continuing to work closely together to ensure British passengers overseas are able to return home through commercial means in light of the impact on overseas travel.

Many countries have introduced border restrictions and closed hotels since the pandemic began and during a call today (18 March 2020), both the airline industry and Transport Secretary Grant Shapps underlined their commitment to helping those currently overseas to return to the UK.

The Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, chaired the calls with major airlines and airports earlier today, where he confirmed that the Department for Transport and the Treasury will work together to develop a range of measures to support the industry in the coming days to help the aviation sector manage the impacts of coronavirus. Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary, said:

Coronavirus is having a crippling impact on the aviation industry and we cannot allow it to force world-leading, well-run, profitable firms out of business.

We are extremely grateful to airport and airline teams who are continuing to help passengers get home safely. We stand firmly behind the sector and expect to announce a series of support measures shortly.

But we also need to send a message to any British passengers overseas who are planning to return to the UK soon – it's important to take account of the fast-moving situation and plan accordingly while flights remain available in many places.

Tim Alderslade, chief executive Airlines UK, said:

Coronavirus has had a devastating impact on the airline sector,

leading to an unprecedented fall in demand and a world-class UK industry facing a truly uncertain future. The promise from government to step in with a bespoke package of support for aviation to get us through the coming months is therefore very welcome, and we are currently working with ministers to go through the detail of what this might entail and hope an announcement will be made in the coming days.

In the meantime, we are working round the clock to bring home passengers stranded overseas, and will continue with these efforts, and we do urge passengers to check their airline's website and where there are options to come home take them as soon as they can.

The Transport Secretary and the Aviation Minister have been in constant communication with the aviation industry since the Coronavirus outbreak, to ensure the government is fully informed about the challenges facing the sector. British tourists abroad should check the website of their travel provider and [Foreign Office travel advice](#) for the latest information.