

Government ministers meet to address summer travel disruption

As the UK prepares for another busy weekend of travel, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Kit Malthouse today chaired a meeting of Ministers from across Government to update on how they are supporting industry and port and airport operators to ease potential disruption and ensure families can get away on their holidays, from working with the Port of Dover and French Government to working with Highways England on managing traffic.

The meeting included Ministers from the Department for Transport, Home Office, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Ministers were also joined by senior officials from UK Border Force, the National Police Coordination Centre and the Kent Resilience Forum, which managed the local impact of the weekend's issues at Dover and Folkestone.

Ministers also discussed how recent measures, such as changing regulations on airport slots rules to help airlines make sensible decisions about schedules, avoid last-minute cancellations and provide passengers with more certainty.

With Birmingham's Commonwealth Games beginning on Thursday, and RMT rail workers on strike on Wednesday, Ministers further discussed preparations being put in place to provide alternative transport and keep the country moving.

Measures include putting extra capacity on lines that are running and laying on coaches for sports fans and spectators.

The Home Office also updated on recent improvements in passport application processing ahead of the big summer getaway. Minister Foster has been meeting with Passport Office seniors on a fortnightly basis to drive forward work to step up processing times. Hundreds of extra staff are being brought in to help increase capacity, and the Passport Office are now processing around a million applications each month, with 97.7% of these being processed within 10 weeks.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Kit Malthouse said:

We want to make sure families get away on their holidays smoothly and hauliers aren't delayed unnecessarily.

Ahead of another busy weekend of travel, today I chaired a GRIP meeting with Ministers from across Government, joined by senior officials from UK Border Force, the National Police Coordination Centre and the Kent Resilience Forum.

This was to confirm that work is underway to prevent the scenes of

disruption that we saw last weekend, and that we are in daily contact with the Port of Dover and French Government to work together to remove any grit from the system.

I want to use these GRIP meetings – to coordinate and galvanise Government Resilience, Implementation and Preparedness for potential issues facing the country.