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Deputy Rob Ward
Chair
Safer Travel Guidelines Review Panel
Morier House
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20 April 2021

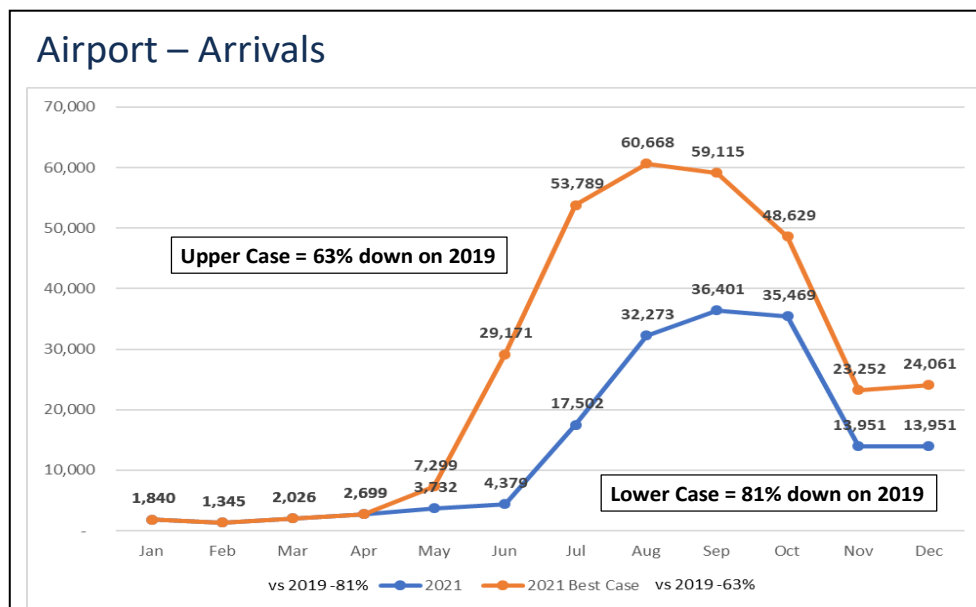
Dear Chair

Safer Travel Guidelines Review Panel

1. What are the projected increases in arrivals?

a. Please can you provide a breakdown by airport and harbour of current arrivals figures and how these are expected to increase on a monthly basis for the next six months.

Current travel volumes are detailed in the graph below:



- Any air connectivity in 2021 will be almost exclusively within the UK Common Travel Area.
- It is difficult to forecast with a high degree of certainty what future demand will be, which will depend on:
 - The epidemiological situation in the UK (which is inherently unpredictable)
 - The testing / self-isolation requirements of travellers from the UK into Jersey

- Customers understanding of the impact of the travel restrictions
- Current travel volumes and demand are significantly suppressed - information from Ports of Jersey:
 - Current bookings for May 2021 are reduced by around 98% from 2019
 - Approx 100 passengers currently booked to travel to Jersey each day in first 2 weeks of May
- Although uncertainty regarding travel restrictions is encouraging late booking, Airlines are making decisions to reduce capacity at least a month in advance (they become liable for compensation if flights are cancelled within 2 weeks of departure).
- In the last two weeks, airlines have reduced flights to Jersey:
 - Jet2 has deferred the start of flights to Jersey until 23rd June at the earliest
 - easyJet has removed flights to Liverpool and Glasgow in May until the end of May, and reduced flights to Gatwick and Belfast
 - Eastern Airways has cancelled flights to Southampton
 - Blue Islands has reduced flights to Birmingham, Exeter, Southampton and cancelled flights to Guernsey
- Feedback from airlines indicates that further capacity reductions will be made for June in the coming two weeks

b. Are there projections for the number of “day trippers” expected and what are they?

Given the standard arrival isolation requirement combined with the red classification/ongoing high infection rates in France, day trip travel to the island for non-essential purposes is anticipated to be extremely low for the foreseeable future.

2. What measures will be used to dictate isolation requirements and what will these be?

a. How will Red-Amber-Green ratings be allocated?

The pre-existing RAG thresholds will be used based on a 14-day case notification rate per 100k population. The green to amber threshold is 50, the amber to red threshold is 120.

b. What exemptions (if any) will be made for those arrivals who have received their full dose of vaccination?

Work is ongoing to consider the potential incorporation of vaccination status into the Safer Travel Policy. At present, there is no variation to testing or isolation requirements based on individual vaccination status.

3. What mechanism is in place to identify COVID variants in positive cases arriving on the Island and what mitigation is in place against these variants seeding from incoming travellers?

We have an agreed allocation from PHE to allow up to 50 samples per week to undergo genomic sequencing; turnaround time is 2-3 weeks on average. Given the current low number of positive cases, all positive cases are therefore sent for sequencing.

We are actively reviewing options to improve the turnaround time for results.

The 3 x test regime and isolation requirements provide a robust mitigation against variants of concern.

4. Has the epidemiology of cases been identified, for example have indexes been ascertained to be linked to travellers and if so: at what proportion of cases?

Since early 2021 the Contact Tracing Service have undertaken backwards contact tracing to try and identify the primary source of all positive cases though it is not always possible to identify with certainty where an individual was exposed to the virus. As such, it is not possible to provide an accurate proportion of cases linked to inbound travel.

a. What time period is needed to identify these seeding events?

This is dependent on the circumstances of the case and, as above, it is not always viable to identify the initial source of a positive case definitively.

5. How will the Test and Trace Programme be funded past June 2021?

Business cases are being finalised for Q3 and Q4 2021. These will then progress through the normal Treasury approvals processes. In the meantime, the Treasury Minister has provided a Letter of Comfort for £15m funding in Q3 / Q4 2021

a. Will individuals be charged to take part in the border testing programme?

The funding model to support the Safer Travel Policy is under continuous review though at present there is no intention to introduce charging for incoming passengers.

6. Is the JerseyCOVIDAlert app functioning as expected?

The system continues to function normally. There have been regular updates to the App to align with changes to the underlying technology from Google and Apple, fix small bugs, and keep the system operational. The App continues to identify direct contacts of COVID positive cases.

a. Is it compatible with the tracing apps used in the United Kingdom and Europe?

In December we jointly negotiated and signed a multi-lateral interoperability agreement covering all members of the Common Travel Area that currently have an App for Bluetooth based contact tracing, except for Republic of Ireland who chose not to participate.

The following territories (Apps) are part of this scheme:

England and Wales (NHS COVID-19)

- Northern Ireland (Stop COVID NI)
- Scotland (Protect Scotland)
- Gibraltar (Beat COVID Gibraltar)
- Jersey (Jersey COVID Alert)

This agreement enables us to connect the Apps together at the backend so that if a person from country A is using the app, they can still anonymously notify a person using an app from country B if they go on to contract COVID and have spent a significant amount of time at a close distance with person B. This CTA interoperability agreement is governed by a panel that meets bi-weekly. The technology required is jointly operated by the Government of Scotland and Government of England via NHS Digital. This system has been working since December and will continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Pan European interoperability remains an ambition, and it is technically straightforward to achieve, as the EU have already developed an interoperability platform covering the 27 member states. However, so far the EU Commission has not been receptive to overtures from the UK Government or any individual member of the CTA to join our two systems together. We continue to pursue this.

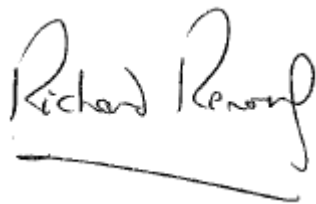
7. Are issues still being reported with the SMS text message system, such as non-receipt of “wellness checks”?

a. How many issues have been reported?

Between July 2020 and March 2021, over 673,000 SMS were sent. Of these <3% were not delivered, for a variety of reasons which include:

- Mobile not able to receive Jersey SMS messages
- Mobile number incorrect
- Mobile contract doesn't have 'international roaming'

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Renouf". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Deputy Richard Renouf
Minister for Health and Social Services