

Coronavirus – further restrictions on passengers arriving in Scotland

Ministers have agreed, on the basis of advice from the Joint Biosecurity Centre, to place additional restrictions on travellers arriving in Scotland from the Ethiopia, Oman, Qatar and Somalia.

All passengers travelling to Scotland will be required to enter managed quarantine if they have been in one of these countries in the 10 days before arrival, including people travelling on from elsewhere in the UK or in Ireland. Exemptions from isolation will be cut, and available only for a short list of essential workers.

Flights from Qatar will operate, but Border Force will refuse entry to the UK, using reserved immigration powers, for travellers from those countries who are not British, Irish, or have the right to reside in the UK. Aviation and maritime crew will not be required to enter managed isolation.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre also assess risk of travel from Portugal and Mauritius is reduced, and they are removed from the list of acute risk countries. Travellers arriving in Scotland will still enter managed isolation, but additional roles will be considered for exemption.

Transport Secretary Michael Matheson said: "The virus continues to pose real risks to health and to life here and around the world and we need to interrupt the rise in cases, meaning we need to limit the importation of variants of concern. We need to continue the comprehensive approach to managed isolation to reduce risk from new cases and strains entering the country, particularly associated with the variant first identified in South Africa in the case of these countries.

"These changes are essential preventative action and address the risk of new variants entering Scotland with the potential to increase the numbers of cases testing positive or reduce the effectiveness of vaccine.

"Our message remains clear that people should not currently be undertaking non-essential foreign travel. People need to stay at home to help suppress the virus, protect our NHS and save lives."