

*Sent by email*

Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP  
Minister of State for Borders and Security  
Home Office

01 June 2022

Dear Minister,

London – and the UK – is once again open to the world. As businesses who rely on customers and staff crossing borders, we are pleased with the progress that has been made in recent months and we are looking forward to an exciting summer welcoming the world to the UK for the first time in three years. This is due in no small part to the Government's unequivocal removal of all Covid restrictions on international travel.

We are, however, concerned that there is no repeat of the disruption experienced over the Easter getaway. With significant pent-up demand and forecasts showing the summer will be even busier, we want to work collaboratively, with all relevant departments, to ensure that Britain puts on the best show possible. From the Queen's Jubilee to the Commonwealth Games, it is critical for the reputation of Global Britain that our "front doors" are operating smoothly.

To that end, we hope that you will ensure that the image Britain projects around the world this summer is not one of queues at ports of entry and exit, by providing:

- Adequate resources so all referencing and security checks for new staff are processed as quickly as possible. We would also support creative solutions that do not compromise national security, such as the use of HMRC records for referencing rather than waiting for written confirmation from multiple past employers.
- Adequate resources at the border. As passenger numbers recover it is important that we avoid a return to the unacceptable processing times we used to often see at peak times. This means ensuring there are enough border agents available, all electronic gates are operational at peak times, engineers are on site at the busiest entry points to fix any technical issues with e-gates, and the extension of eligibility for the use of e-gates.
- Contingency plans for other security cleared personnel to step in if it becomes clear that either of these first two points have not been achieved in time for the summer peak.

Looking beyond the summer peak, we would also hope to see a clear action plan showing that the Government is taking all necessary action to ensure that the transition to the new Schengen Entry/Exit System does not cause unnecessary disruption, especially at exit points with juxtaposed controls.



The UK has a real opportunity to re-establish itself as one of the world's premier business and visitor destinations this summer. Before the pandemic, inbound tourism accounted for 7 per cent of the UK economy, and created jobs and opportunities in every region. We will not level up at home – with higher growth and better jobs across the country – if we can't welcome visitors from abroad.

Yours sincerely,

John Dickie, Chief Executive, London First  
Dyan Crowther, CEO, HS1 Ltd  
Jacques Damas, CEO, Eurostar Group  
Steve Griffiths, MD, Manchester Airports Group  
Alexander Jan, Chair, Central District Alliance and Hatton Garden BIDs  
Lee Lyons, COO, The Fitzrovia Partnership  
Simon Pitkeathley, Chief Executive, Camden Town Unlimited  
Chris Rumfitt, Chief Executive, Field Consulting  
Inderneel Singh, CEO, Edwardian  
Giles Semper, Head of Place, Cadogan

CC – Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, Paymaster General & Minister for the Cabinet Office

Rt Hon Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport.