



Border Force

**Border Force Correspondence Team**

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Sir Peter Rogers  
c/o Nicola Gibson  
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Date 21 April 2021  
Our Ref - TO-291504

Dear Sir Rogers

A copy of your letter dated 11 March addressed to the Home Secretary regarding the delays at Heathrow Airport, has been passed to the Border Force Correspondence Team and I have been asked to respond. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

We appreciate your concerns regarding the resourcing at Heathrow Airport. Wait times in airports can be caused by a number of factors, not just related to resourcing. This includes all mandated border security activity, and additional support and checks in relation to Covid-19.

Like all public services operating throughout this unprecedented global pandemic, there have been additional pressures placed on Border Force and the safety of the public and our staff remains our priority. Whilst mindful of passenger wait times and experience, our primary objective is to ensure the security of the border. In particular, Border Force are completing thorough checks of every arriving passenger from red list countries to keep the UK public safe, and we make no apology for this. We will never compromise on border security and continue to fill our vital function of keeping the border secure.

Everyone allowed to enter England from outside the Common Travel Area (Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man) must take a pre-departure Covid-19 test 72 hours before arrival, complete their Passenger Locator Form, self-isolate for 10 days on arrival, have a Covid-19 test booked on day two and day eight and follow the national lockdown rules. Passengers who have travelled through or from a red list country in the ten days before travel must take a pre-departure test 72 hours before arrival, complete their Passenger Locator Form, and have a hotel booking for ten days after arrival.

Airlines are legally required to ensure that all passengers have met these requirements before travelling to the United Kingdom. On arrival, Border Force conducts further assurances to ensure arriving passengers have met these requirements, with specific

processes in place for those arriving from red list countries to ensure they enter into hotel quarantine. Full guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-quarantine-when-you-arrive-in-england>.

We would like to assure you that we review the resourcing of our staffing on a daily basis and endeavour to ensure that sufficient levels are always in place at both Heathrow Terminals to check every arrival as quickly as possible.

I hope my reply has been of help and clarified the situation for you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs B Bowen  
Correspondence Officer