

Dear Mr Grant Shapps and Chancellor Rishi Sunak,

As we are sure you are aware, the last few months have been catastrophic for the UK travel industry.

Since March we have seen the collapse of household names such as Flybe, Shearings and Cruise and Maritime Voyages, while numerous smaller firms have also failed – all as a direct result of the coronavirus crisis.

A conservative estimate suggests at least 12,000 jobs have already been lost and at least a further 24,000 jobs are now at risk from travel companies that have already announced plans to axe roles.

The reality is far more stark. Hundreds of thousands of jobs in the travel sector will be lost, unless urgent financial support is provided.

This industry is unique – barely any money has entered the sector since the coronavirus crisis began, but a lot has been paid out due to the huge numbers of refund claims. Many travel professionals have been working with no salary coming in for months as businesses worked to sort out customers who had holidays booked. This situation is simply not sustainable.

The UK travel industry - including both the outbound leisure and business travel sectors, worth an estimated £37.1bn to the UK economy, and the inbound sector, worth an estimated £28bn to the UK economy - is calling on you to recognise the urgent plight of this sector. We urge you to recognise that while most other industries have been able to restart, overseas travel stalled in the wake of the decision to revoke Spain's travel corridor, which has once again shaken consumer confidence, while inbound tourism has been similarly shackled by quarantine requirements. Business for much of the sector now remains at a standstill.

The #SaveTravel campaign, led by TTG Media, is urging the government to:

- Provide direct sector specific support for the UK travel industry and companies operating within it (such as SMEs like travel agents and tour operators, not just airlines), which might include an extension to the furlough scheme. Without this, the country will see thousands of company failures and hundreds of thousands of job losses.
- Consider a holiday on Air Passenger Duty until the end of August 2021, to help with pricing and encourage consumers to start booking holidays again. The hospitality sector has been aided by the Eat Out to Help Out scheme. The travel industry is urgently requesting similar support from government too.
- Commit to providing more advance notice of changes to destinations' quarantine statuses. Giving the travel industry just six hours' notice on Saturday night before the new Spain rules came into force caused huge confusion and anxiety for passengers, which the travel industry was left to sort out. Businesses cannot be run with such little planning and notice. Advance warning of destinations that may be "in the red zone" or are about to be switched off – and transparency on how decisions are being taken - is a necessity for the travel industry if businesses are to survive.

The travel sector is all too aware of the pressures and complexities of the crisis facing this country, and wants to do all it can to help protect British citizens.

But right now an entire sector is facing a catastrophic future, unless urgent help is provided.

The travel industry is urging you to consider these three measures to help ensure its survival.

Yours sincerely,
TTG Media and the #SaveTravel Campaign



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