

## **BRIEFING: CDL MEETING ON PUBLIC HEALTH BORDER MEASURES - 3-4PM**

### **OVERVIEW**

1. A 'small Ministerial Group' meeting to confirm the proposal for public health measures to be applied at the border. The cast list is at Annex A. An agenda and 3 papers have been circulated:
  - a. **Home Office paper:** which sets out the model being proposed. The paper asks Ministers to confirm that all intra-CTA travel should be exempt from restrictions, asks for a steer on handling the devolved administrations; a steer on the timing of introducing the policy, and for Ministers to note the work going forward on exemptions and enforcement;
  - b. **A list of draft exemptions:** which the group are only being asked to agree rather than confirm at this meeting;
  - c. **A HMT paper on the economic impact of this measure** - which broadly says that the impact will be low now as hauliers and those moving goods are exempt, and there is low travel at present, but the longer the measure is in place, the less competitive the UK will be, therefore measures should be relaxed ASAP.
2. The proposal which Ministers are being asked to agree is that non-exempt travellers arriving into the UK will be asked to self-isolate for a 14 day period and will be required to fill out an online form to provide an address of where they will self-isolate. So as to not create confusion, everyone will be asked to self isolate for 14 days, including those who are symptomatic who would usually only be asked to isolate for 7 days. There will be exemptions for individuals who it would be harmful to apply the policy to (for example, hauliers) **and a general CTA exemption is proposed;**

### **STEER**

3. Ministers are being asked to give the various steers, as well as agreeing the key elements of the proposal and recommendations in the HO paper. **We are happy with the proposal in principle.** Your view will most likely be sought on the CTA and DA engagement questions, listed here first:
4. **Agree that an exemption for all CTA travel should apply (Item 2A):** previously, a CTA exemption was assumed to be unnecessary under the rules of the CTA as the proposed measures are not immigration controls and would apply equally to British and Irish citizens. Ireland also did not seek a CTA exemption. However, overnight, HO's position has softened. The HO paper doesn't set out a strong view in favour of CTA exemptions, but does recommend including one. You might therefore want to make some arguments in favour, as it's expected that there will be a cursory discussion before it is agreed:

### **Lines to take**

- In terms of the number of people in Ireland and NI who will be travelling - the numbers are small, but if travel across the Islands is blocked for some individuals (e.g those using the Dublin-Holyhead route to enter GB from NI) it has the potential to be picked up negatively;
- Critically, it enables us to demonstrate that we are thinking about those in Ireland and NI who use these routes, and **counters the assertion that it is only Ireland**

**who cares about the practical reality on the island of Ireland**, it also demonstrates good faith to the Irish - which is important going forward.

- Furthermore, there might be political difficulties for the NI Executive in agreeing regulations that don't contain CTA exemptions, who won't like the idea of restricting travel in that way, even if regulations don't apply to those crossing the land border. **An exemption should make this much easier for the Executive** and ensure we take a clear four nation approach

5. **DA engagement (item 2F)**- the HO paper flags the fact that when DA's were originally engaged on this proposal they were all keen to see the scientific advice, and their concerns were broadly around social distancing application and ensuring movement of goods won't be negatively impacted. Ahead of a GPS MIG with the DAs on the 7th of May to discuss this in detail, they may ask for views of how to handle DAs.

**Lines to take:**

- If we include a CTA exemption, that should go a long way to easing any concerns in Northern Ireland - they will be concerned about hauliers and being able to still move necessary goods into NI - but I can see that they are captured on exemptions so we will just need to set that out clearly;
- I would be keen for us to be reaching out at political and official level before the GPS MIG - so we can line up the NI Executive to be supportive of the proposal.

*Further steers sought*

6. **Proposed Exemptions - Annex B:** the annex sets out the groups and sectors expected to be exempt, this will be further worked up. **We do not have comments beyond confirming that if there is a general CTA exemption all our concerns are covered;**
7. **Enforcement Measures** - Criminal offences (and an ability to refuse and bar entry to the country) will be introduced for non-compliance, those who cannot provide an address will be made to stay at UKG appointed accommodation - which they will have to self-fund. Border Force officials will conduct spot checks at the border to check compliance, Carriers cannot be mandated to enforce checks, but are expected to comply on a voluntary basis. **We again do not have substantive comments at official level and are supportive of the proposals in the paper;**
8. **International Engagement** - calls will be made to industry, as well as France, Gibraltar and Ireland in advance of an announcement. **David Quarrey will make an intervention to stress the importance of giving Ireland advanced notice (as they gave to us) - which we recommend you support.**
9. **'Go live' point and critical path** - there are broadly 3 options - introduce when there is evidence they are needed, introduce at the same time as social distancing measures are loosened, or introduce ASAP. **We do not have a strong view on this at official level - though clearly introducing ASAP will require serious and concerted engagement with Ireland and the NI Executive at pace.**

**Annex A - cast list**

CDL

Home Secretary

Health Secretary

Environment Secretary  
Transport Secretary  
CST  
Foreign Sec / FCO Minister  
Scotland Secretary  
Wales Secretary  
CMO  
Hannah Young, No10  
Tom Shinner, No10 official