

CDL-FMs Weekly Call
Wednesday 28th April 2021

AGENDA

1. Step 3 - England Restriction Review (social contact)
2. International travel
3. Certification

1) England Restriction Review (social contact)- Step 3

Background/Steer (No Specific points to raise)

1. CDL will provide an update on UKG's plans to enact step 3 of England's roadmap from the 17 May. This will see the continued easing of social contact restrictions for both indoor and outdoor activities, the reopening of businesses in all but the highest risk sectors, expansion of event easements and a review of social distancing before step 4 begins.
2. Although NI has its own roadmap, **you may wish to support CDL in securing alignment with the DAs where appropriate.** We expect FM/dFM will note the Executive will continue to monitor the data and ease restrictions to their own timescales, with the Executive's next review on the 13th May.

2) International travel

Background/Steer (No Specific points to raise)

3. Cabinet Office colleagues have advised that UKG intends to make an announcement on international travel this week. The Secretary of State for Transport will engage with DA counterparts tomorrow on the principle of lifting the current prohibition on outbound travel and non-essential international travel.
4. We anticipate that FM/dFM will highlight the need for the NI Executive and UKG to work closely with the Irish Govt to ensure close alignment on managed quarantine arrangements across GB and the island of Ireland. We expect CDL will reaffirm his commitment to achieving close alignment and offer UKG support in coordinating- something which you may wish to support.

Point to Make (if required)

- I am keen to ensure we achieve alignment where possible and communications are clear and consistent across the UK.

Certification

Background/Steer

5. CDL met with DA ministers on 28 April, where they discussed working with the UK Government on Covid status certification. There are two distinct strands to this work:
 - international travel, where the electorate will perceive it to be the UK Government's responsibility to facilitate international travel for all parts of the UK; and
 - domestic certification, where you have made clear that you require a single cross UK scheme, which will enable persons who live in one part of the UK to access facilities dependent upon certification in another part.
6. Since this meeting, there has been ongoing discussions with DAs around finding a UK-wide solution. Our previous understanding was that NI ministers had indicated interest in aligning with UKG completely on finding a UK-wide digital solution to a certification app. However, NI officials have recently signaled their intention to not adopt a UK-wide digital solution and are now considering developing their own app. NI officials have expressed interest in exploring how an NI certification app would interact within the UK and the Common Travel Area, along with agreeing to a common set of UK-wide standards around interoperability.
7. This meeting will be largely useful to get a firm position on NIE's view on Covid status certification. CDL will lead today's discussion for which Cabinet Office colleagues have advised he may encourage UK-wide alignment on interoperability. **You may wish to support him if he encourages DAs to support a UK-wide approach on interoperability.**

Point to Make (if required)

- Securing a UK-wide approach will deliver coherent and consistent benefits for all citizens in the UK.
- We must remain ambitious in developing one consistent set of rules, agreeing common policy standards and developing apps that are compatible across the UK.
- It is vitally important that any UK-wide certification system is also compatible within the Common Travel Area.

