



Access to Public Information Request

Date of receipt: 25 February 2021

Date of response: 30 March 2021

Access to Public Information request regarding COVID-19 travel restrictions

Request:

The Media Release of 21st October 2020 confirms that those entering from Group B areas were required to Self Isolate until receiving a negative test result on Day 7. In this context, as Self Isolation is designed to prevent the introduction of Covid-19, the transmissibility of any variant is irrelevant. The greater part of Southern England now exhibits Group 'B' conditions or better (<100 cases per 100.000).

Question:

Since that October 2020 The Bailiwick's Test, Track and Trace facilities have been enhanced and, more significantly, a large percentage of the community has been Vaccinated and Group 'B' conditions prevail so why are travel restrictions not at least as lenient as they were on 21st October 2020?

Three occasions (2 of 14 days and 1 of 7 days) of rigorously complying with the appropriate Self Isolation rules convince me that facing 2 weeks isolation is much more than twice as demoralising as facing 1 week. It is therefore logical that anybody facing 2 weeks isolation is more than twice as likely to 'run the risk' and transgress within a day or so of arrival than if facing only 1 week when they would not transgress at all. Punitive measures are a double edged sword. Being aware of their existence may influence some people to comply with the rules but the knowledge of the penalties will result in any person who has broken the rules from admitting having done. This makes the job of those trying to track and trace infections significantly more difficult.

Question:

In order to facilitate travel while enhancing the efficacy of Test, Track and Trace of Covid-19 why does the CCA not safely reduce the Self Isolation period for arriving travelers to 7 days (with the appropriate testing) in order to encourage transparency?

Until recently Jersey suffered the effects of Covid-19 more than The Bailiwick. Recently Jersey has reported fewer daily cases of Covid-19 than The Bailiwick despite there being significantly less restrictions on the population and businesses.

Question:

If the measures existing in Jersey are effective in reducing the spread of Covid-19 while allowing significantly more freedom than that allowed in the Bailiwick, why do the CCA continue to impose significantly more harsh restrictions?

Response provided by the Civil Contingencies Authority:

Since that October 2020 The Bailiwick's Test, Track and Trace facilities have been enhanced and, more significantly, a large percentage of the community has been Vaccinated and Group 'B' conditions prevail so why are travel restrictions not at least as lenient as they were on 21st October 2020?

The Bailiwick's travel restrictions have been kept under active review by the CCA which announced its intention to ease them in stages commencing 22 March when non-essential travel was again permitted. Once everyone in vaccination priority groups 1 -9 who is considered to be at higher clinical risk has received at least one dose of the vaccine the Bailiwick plans to revert to its former system based where the length of time a person needs to self-isolate, if a requirement at all, is determined by the prevalence rate of the virus in the country or region they have travelled from.

At the end of 2020 prevalence rates were very high in neighbouring jurisdictions, the Bailiwick was operating without any on-island restrictions and the CCA had sought to maintain that position for as long as possible mindful of the wide range of benefits to the community that come with not having to impose non-pharmaceutical interventions such as limited gathering sizes and social distancing. Given the Bailiwick's COVID-free position at that time (unlike most other jurisdictions) the CCA agreed taking a strict stance on travel restrictions was right and proportionate, and therefore suspended its categorization of countries and regions for the purposes of travel, effectively treating all arrivals as 'category 4', and imposing a ban on non-essential travel.

The risk presented by incoming cases through travel is now self-evident as, even with very strict measures, we have seen an outbreak which thankfully has been brought under control quickly, but it did require the imposition of an immediate and full lockdown which has a very significant impact on the community. Alongside managing the exit from that lockdown, the CCA continues to monitor the situation locally, nationally and further afield to ensure it is making informed decisions which are in the best interests of the Bailiwick. Notably and regrettably the Isle of Man is currently experiencing its own second wave with very large numbers of people becoming infected very, very quickly once again demonstrating the danger of the virus and the new variants. Our near neighbors in France are also on the verge of considering further restrictions with the number of cases rising at a concerning rate.

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The evidence does not point to significant non-compliance with the 14 day self-isolation requirement as the question suggests. Furthermore, there is clear evidence that some cases can only be identified after 7 days, some as late as 13 days. That said, the CCA is conscious of how even one case of non-compliance could have major consequences and law enforcement are actively under taking checks to both assure individuals welfare whilst self-isolating and their adherence to the rules.

As set out in the answer to your first question the CCA has agreed to remove the requirement for essential travel only with effect from 22 March and intends to revert to its regional classification system at the end of April. The prevalence rate of the region determines how long, if at all, a person has to isolate for.

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On the 22 March the exit from lockdown moved to Stage 3 with virtually all on-island restrictions removed. The CCA has set out how it expects to remove the remaining restrictions on travel and borders in its Bailiwick Blueprint, which can be found here: [Bailiwick Blueprint | States of Guernsey - COVID-19 \(gov.gg\)](#)

The CCA has always sought to avoid comparisons with other jurisdictions, where they are dealing with different circumstances, particularly if that comparison is being made at a single point in time.

The CCA is very pleased to see that numbers of new cases are low in Jersey currently. Jersey's published plan for its exit from lockdown which can be accessed through the following link: [Jersey's COVID-19 reconnection roadmap \(gov.je\)](#).