

From: [REDACTED]
Covid Public Health Directorate
8 October 2020

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
Cabinet Secretary for Justice
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Test to Release update

1. Previous submissions have updated ministers on calls from the aviation industry to introduce testing as an alternative to 14 day quarantine for international arrivals into Scotland from non-exempt countries.
2. This routine note is intended to give a short update on work to develop potential pilot options for consideration by ministers.
3. Following agreement from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, officials have started work to assess whether a pilot of a test to release approach is viable. This work overlaps with a number of portfolios, in particular the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice. As a result officials from a range of relevant policy areas have initiated a project group.
4. As part of a wider pathways programme for test and protect, officials are also being supported in this work by KPMG who are helping to develop service and process maps. These will help to identify issues at key stages in the development of the pilot. They will further help to identify operational issues including passenger movement logistics and other testing considerations.
5. Officials have resumed engagement with representatives from Scotland's main commercial airports to discuss industry proposals and to draw on expert input from industry as options are evaluated.
6. During a recent meeting with industry on 30 September, participants agreed on a number of key issues:
 - Minimising the risk to public health is the paramount consideration
 - All parties are keen to work as quickly as possible but adequate time is required to ensure that full consideration has been given to implementation considerations to ensure confidence in any pilot conducted
 - Any pilot should not divert resources from NHS testing capacity
 - Clinical, economic and logistical considerations will be taken into account when developing proposals
 - Airport proposals are indicative but not the only options for consideration
7. Following this meeting Scottish Government analysts have developed a draft airport trials discussion document. This is intended as a tool to help officials

work through the broad pilot options with the airports. It will help us to identify the gaps in our knowledge, logistical questions and implementation considerations.

8. A further meeting took place on 7 October where airport representatives welcomed the draft paper and constructive cooperation taking place.
9. It is clear from early discussions that the volume of passengers to be tested could be significant. Industry accepts that they would be responsible for the testing regime and the associated costs would be part of their commercial operations. Practical operational issues and logistical details will be developed as the pilot discussions progress.
10. The agreed next steps were for airport representatives to provide detailed feedback on the paper and for a sub group of analysts from Government and industry to collaborate to develop a pilot outline.
11. This pilot outline will enable the next phase of the project to begin where key logistical questions can be identified alongside other practical considerations.
12. Related to this, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice attended a 4 nations call on 7 October regarding test to release. The UK Government is setting up a Global Travel Taskforce, which the devolved administrations will be invited to join, to look at how to reduce the 14 day quarantine period by introducing testing at airports. The Taskforce is expected to report to the Prime Minister by early November.

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