



## Public Accounts Committee

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### Treasury Minute response- Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Permanent Secretary,

Thank you for the response to the Committee's report on *Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

We are grateful for some of the commitments made, in particular your planned work to provide guidance on setting out costs and risk management in cross-government portfolios of programmes.

In some cases however, and despite your apparent acceptance of the recommendations, we do not see how the actions you describe address properly the concerns we raised.

Our specific concerns are:

- **Recommendation 1 (accepted)**: on capturing and disseminating lessons for operational delivery in a format accessible to future generations, and publishing how departments would re-introduce health measures if needed. Your response states that you had learned lessons and that these were informing contingency planning but does not set out how these have been captured and disseminated for future generations. Nor does it set out general principles for how you would re-introduce health measures in the future if needed.
- **Recommendation 3 (accepted)**: on what government has learned about communicating with the public effectively and what it will do differently in the future. Your response sets out some lessons learned on communicating with the public. However, the recommendation suggested that this be set out as part of a wider report capturing lessons learned, to allow them to be stored more effectively for future use.



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- **Recommendation 4 (accepted):** on how Cabinet Office would support industry partners if health measures were reintroduced or required as part of other programmes in future. Your response identifies the importance of communicating with industry partners and regularly reviewing passenger and operator guidance. However, it does not set out in enough detail how you would support industry partners in the future if health measures damaging to their industry needed to be reintroduced.

I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with further information on how you will deal with these concerns **by the time the House returns from the Christmas recess.**

I am copying this letter to the Comptroller & Auditor General and the Treasury Officer of Accounts.

Yours sincerely

Dame Meg Hillier MP  
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts