

- Amanda Burns (“**AB**”) noted that some questions had been collated and circulated to Government in advance, and that Visit Jersey (“**VJ**”) would follow up on any questions that are not answered during the session.
- Alex Heaven (“**AH**”) provided some background context to the regional classification system noting that, as cases in some neighbouring countries have been increasing, the Safer Travel Policy has moved towards a regional assessment in some countries (France and the UK) and the intention is to continue to roll out the regional approach.
- AH noted that the rationale for the regional approach is due to in-country variations and the potential impact on travel that results from changing whole countries from green to amber/red and that this approach allows people to continue to travel to regions where there are low cases in some areas.
- AH noted that the aim is to keep the process as simple as possible although the regional classification initiative has made this more complicated due to more variables being introduced in order to try and keep travel moving and to keep the borders as open as possible and that Government are continuing to try and strike a balance between keeping low numbers on-island and living with the virus with as much freedom as possible, noting that we are not yet ‘post-COVID-19’ and inevitably there will be restrictions that continue.
- AB thanked AH for this background context noting the purpose of the meeting was to better understand the details of the process and to share information about the travel industry. AB referred to the detailed questions collated from industry [attached], and said she would run through the new questions added, the first question being: *‘What advice should we give to new bookers who book without checking whether they live in an Amber region?’*
- AH noted that the emphasis in Government communications is around trying to get people to pre-register before travelling to Jersey (within 48 hours of travel) to try to minimise the risk of people missing a change in classification. AH noted that the Modernisation and Digital team (who work on the registration form) are currently working on building in functionality so that a message will flash up to advise people if one of the regions they have listed is an amber local authority, and that this should reduce the number of people for whom any potential self-isolation or PCR testing would be a surprise.
- AB referred to the next question: *“Will visitors be contacted by Government prior to arrival if they have been identified as travelling from an Amber area?”*
- Alex Mallinson (“**AM**”) noted that the short answer is yes. He noted that during COVID-19, his role has been Head of Communications in relation to Borders and Testing and that there is also someone responsible for communications relating to policy changes in addition to someone who deals with monitoring and enforcement. AM noted that from a customer point of view, they are trying to ensure there is aligned and clear communications throughout this process. AM noted that the challenge is that they don’t know who is coming to Jersey until they complete the registration form, but once they are in the system, it is relatively straightforward to communicate with them. AM noted that currently there is a generic communication to go to Gov.je/jerseytravel which provides information on current status and procedures, with the core message that you have to complete the form before you come to Jersey. The main purpose of this form is to confirm they don’t have any symptoms (during the 48-hour window before they arrive) and to confirm where they have been in the last 14-day period. AM noted that once the individual has registered, they are sent a confirmation QR code which is used for testing but also includes information about the fact that the conditions they are expected to adhere to will depend on where they have been. AM noted they will also receive a subsequent e-mail the day before they arrive in Jersey to further remind them of this. AM said in addition, once an individual’s information is in the system after completing the registration form, the COVID-19 hotline team (01534-445566) are able to, and have been, contacting people. However, AM noted that as the number of people arriving in Jersey increases, the ability to ring people individually and let them know the situation has changed will become impossible and is therefore not something that is being continued at the moment. AM summarised that in terms of contact from Government, there are effectively 2 e-mails that people receive at the moment, although this is conditional on them having completed the registration form.
- Robert MacKenzie (“**RMac**”) queried whether a text message could be sent as well as an e-mail.
- AH noted that Government are trying to automate the process as much as possible and that adding the previously mentioned functionality to the form will help enormously but will only help those who complete the form before travelling and there is a big drive to try and ensure people complete this form in advance. AH noted that inevitably there will be people who only complete the form once they arrive, which is the greatest risk in creating a scenario where people didn’t realise they are impacted by an amber/red region.
- AM noted that the text idea may be feasible but was not sure if it is at the moment, noting that currently the priority is the process of texting people who have arrived about their test results and confirming whether they are still free of symptoms of COVID-19, but AM said he would follow up on this point. **ACTION - AM to look into possibility of an automated text to those who have completed the pre-registration form**

- AB referred to the next question: *“If a customer who has arrived from an Amber region has a pre-booked flight or crossing home before the 5-day isolation period is completed or the first test returned are they able to travel home? If they can’t leave/choose to stay in the hotel/are required to extend their trip, who is responsible for arranging and paying for additional accommodation and an alternative crossing or flight home?”*
- AH noted that the guidance is very clear about travelling for short visits from amber/red regions and it is strongly discouraged as this is risky. AH noted that if someone is coming for a short trip and they then want to leave, they would need to have a PCR negative test within 72 hours of their journey.
- AB noted that the average length of stay for visitors to Jersey is approximately 4.2 nights and Meryl Laisney (“ML”) noted that this is even shorter during the winter months, and noted that the speed of turnaround for test results may help industry.
- AH noted that they are constantly working on turnaround times and the on-island testing facility is currently being validated and hopefully this will be functioning during October. He noted that the Medical Officer for Health is very keen to try and reduce the turnaround to under 24 hours, focusing primarily on the clinical setting (i.e. hospital admissions), although any developments there would impact other settings too, and that this was an area of constant focus. AH noted that Government are aware of how beneficial turnaround times are and noted that this is very important, especially given the scenarios discussed.
- AB referred to the next question: *“If a customer arrives from an Amber region, does the accommodation have to host them?”*
- AH noted that this is a private contractual arrangement and that this is not something for Government to have an opinion on.
- AB noted the next question: *“If someone on group travel tests positive do the whole group have to go into quarantine?”*
- AH noted that this was highly likely but would depend on the contact tracing assessment, which focuses on the length of time spent with the infected individual and the proximity to them, which will dictate the number of people in that group who may be impacted, but reiterated that this would be highly likely.
- AB noted the next query: *“What happens if a region changes from Green to Amber whilst they are in Jersey?”*
- AH noted that the regional classification is counted as at the point when you leave there, so if you travel from an area that is green and it turns amber whilst you are in Jersey, this has no impact on the individual or the freedoms they can enjoy.
- AM added that the registration form is being updated to make sure this is clear, and for example, if you spend a night somewhere 13 nights before travelling to Jersey which was classified as green during the time you were there and subsequently turns amber, this would not have an impact on the individual as it was deemed green when they were there.
- AB asked if it was therefore the correct summation that as long as you are in a green zone 14 days before you travel to Jersey, you don’t need to worry about it turning amber or red at a later date and AH confirmed this was correct.
- RMac queried how people will know whether their region was green 13 days ago. AM noted that on gov.je there is a list of regions and their current status and when they changed to amber/red (if relevant). These details will remain on the website for at least 14 days. AM confirmed that the form simply asks where the individual has stayed and the date they stayed overnight in that region.
- Chris Peach (“CP”) queried what if someone has to go through an amber area airport to catch a flight (with an overnight stay in that airport hotel before their flight to Jersey). For example, if someone has to travel to Manchester and spend a night in an airport hotel there before flying to Jersey, and they don’t speak or interact with anyone, this is going to cause us a real problem.
- AH noted that this overnight stay in the amber region would count on the 14-day travel history and agreed that this is an issue.
- AB noted that there were 3 core areas remaining to cover relating to communication; preparing for the situation if the whole of the UK is classified as red; and the day of the week that decision-making about classifications is made. AB noted there were also some important points around accountabilities and cost liabilities which were asked to be noted but probably couldn’t be answered on this call and Alexia McClure from Jersey Business confirmed she was happy to pick up with VJ on those issues separately and then feed back to the group.
- Louise Ashworth (“LA”) noted the frustration around the timing of communications about decisions on classifications, as industry don’t generally know about this until the decision is announced publicly, which makes it difficult to align comms. LA noted that her and AM had discussed the possibility of VJ, on a confidential basis, being told the classifications on a Thursday (rather than a Friday) so that they can align communications with the wider Government team and enable VJ to send an early e-mail to key trade partners, industry and others to ensure everyone is getting the message at the same time.
- AM noted that any changes to classification of countries will be announced on Wednesdays to take effect on Fridays and any changes to regional classification will be announced on Fridays to take effect on Mondays (from 1 min past midnight in both cases). He noted that Government can communicate with people who have completed the registration form and with the general population, but will struggle to be able to communicate with people who have not yet completed the registration form. AM noted that the tourism industry has the expertise in being able to reach people who are considering booking a trip to

Jersey or who have booked a trip here but have not yet registered. AM added that the tourism industry is better placed to reach these people to encourage them to register and also to think about the regions they have been to, as reaching this group is a challenge for Government, but that this process should develop and improve over time.

- Jennie Smith provided some feedback from the hotel sector, noting that if a hotel receives a booking direct from a consumer, they will then have their contact details, but the challenge is when a booking comes through a third-party such as a tour operator or platform like booking.com, where the hotel may not hold contact details for that customer, then if the tour operator is not open over the weekend, there is a gap in how industry could contact that person.
- AM said he totally recognised this and the objective will be that as soon as a decision is taken, this will be communicated to VJ and any channels they can use to reach industry on Thursday evening / Friday morning, so that there is at least one working day to contact customers. AM said there is work to be done to ensure that intermediaries (such as online booking platforms) are aware of any changes and can at least put something on their website to say there may be conditions attached to travel to Jersey depending on where someone has come from.
- AH said he could take this point away and think about how this information can be disseminated more quickly, noting that perhaps it could be communicated more quickly but be subject to conditions or that the actual decision about weekly regional classifications could be made earlier. **ACTION – AH to look into this point.**
- AH noted that the reason for the current timeframes for the decision-making process is because testing activity tends to be more patchy at the start of the week and the data is therefore still settling from the weekend on Monday and Tuesday, so there is more accurate data towards middle of the week, so if the data is pulled too early, it may still have some gaps, but that they may be able to work on communicating the classifications as quickly as possible. AH noted that this may not solve 3rd party/agent booking query but that they can try and provide industry with more time to contact customers.
- RMac queried whether the regional changes could be made on the same days as countries, noting that Jersey receives more visitors from the UK than from any other country, it would be better to have regional classification decisions during the week and country classifications over the weekend as far fewer people will be impacted by country classification, especially from a visitor point of view.
- AH noted that this was helpful context and that he would take this point away, but noted that this week would remain unchanged but confirmed that it was clear that it was very important to create as much in-week time to contact guests accordingly. **ACTION – AH to follow up on this point.**
- AB asked what we can do to prepare for if the whole of the UK is classified as red.
- AH noted that now that Jersey has taken a regional approach to classification of the UK, it doesn't matter if the whole of the UK goes red, as we focus on the constituent parts. AH noted that within the next 2-3 weeks, Government will put out a revised COVID-19 strategy which covers the winter period and how we continue to contain the virus and live with it. He said we want to avoid another lockdown similar to March, noting that we are no longer in the March/April scenario and we now have much better test and trace capacity and we are much better prepared. AH said the revised strategy will be based on multiple scenario planning and would seek to avoid a lockdown strategy as we now have the ability to take more nuanced and tactical responses to rising cases and that Government would look to maintain the freedoms that everyone has collectively gained whilst responding tactically to any outbreaks. He noted that they are constantly monitoring the effectiveness of what they are doing and looking at examples of good practice in other jurisdictions, and that this is under constant review.
- Andrew Shrimpton queried whether there are any plans to charge arriving passengers for a PCR test.
- AH noted that in cases where people are travelling to a country where a negative PCR test is required before arriving, there are a number of providers stepping forward to charge for this service now, although Government are staying out of this space. AH said there is an ongoing discussion around the nature and merit of charging for PCR tests but that no decision has been made yet.
- AB thanked AH and AM for their time and said they would share the answers and asked if anyone had any further questions to please send these to VJ.

Attendees

Organisation/sector	
Government of Jersey	Andrew Heaven Alex Mallinson
Accommodation	Christopher Peach Ollie Appleyard Andrew Shrimpton
JAG (Activities)	Paul Talbot Kristina Le Feuvre
Jersey Business	Alexia McClure
Community Action Group / Environment Committee / Genuine Jersey / National Park	Jim Hopley
Retail & Restaurants	Dominic Jones
Tour Operator	Robert Mackenzie Debbie Goffin
Visit Jersey	Amanda Burns (Chair) Louise Ashworth Sarah Barton Meryl Laisney Jennie Smith Ruth Perchard