

Media Release

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Civil Contingencies Authority revises next steps in ongoing response to COVID-19 pandemic

The Civil Contingencies Authority has been reviewing its plans for moving through further phases of its Exit from Lockdown Framework, in light of rising numbers of cases of COVID-19 in all of the Bailiwick's neighbouring jurisdictions and around the world.

Where are we now?

Currently the Bailiwick is in what is known as 'phase 5b' where there are no restrictions to local life including no limits on the size of gatherings or requirements for facemasks. There are, however, significant restrictions at the borders which are currently the main defence against COVID-19. Principally these include a requirement for those arriving from countries and regions to self-isolate for 14 days if they come from somewhere with a higher prevalence of COVID-19 (Group A countries and regions) or until they return a negative result from a test on their seventh day, if they come from somewhere with a lower prevalence rate (Group B countries and regions).

The CCA previously set out a model for the next phase, 'phase 5c', which would have seen the introduction of testing on arrival. It would also have meant that arrivals from Group B countries would not be required to self-isolate after receiving a negative result from the test taken on arrival.

However, in recent weeks the prevalence of COVID-19 in all our neighbouring jurisdictions, and notably in the UK regions where the Bailiwick has its main travel links, has risen considerably, and it appears unlikely that this trend will be turned around in the very short term. It is important that we keep moving forward in a safe and measured way and so the CCA has had to consider the appropriateness of moving to the next phase in the way it previously set out.

So what happens next?

The CCA has reviewed further modelling and recommendations from Public Health and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell based on the current circumstance and trends and is making a number of changes to its model for phase 5c. With these changes the CCA believes the next phase can be introduced as safely as possible in the coming weeks, but the

revisions will reflect the rise in cases of COVID-19 overseas. The changes will also mean that when prevalence levels do begin to fall in neighbouring jurisdictions, the framework is in place to make travel into Guernsey with minimal self-isolation requirements possible.

So what does 'phase 5c' look like now?

Phase 5c will see the introduction of testing on arrival for the vast majority of travellers coming into the Bailiwick.

It will also see countries split into four categories. While Islanders are already used to the terms 'Group A' and 'Group B', as phase 5c will include four categories, as opposed to the current three, we are changing what we call them. In phase 5c, countries will be described in terms of 'Categories' (i.e Category 1, Category 2 etc). We are aware that introducing new terms can cause confusion, especially as other jurisdictions each have their own set of phrases relating to their COVID responses. However, as phase 5c will see four categories rather than the current three, we have decided to bring in the new terms rather than redefining our existing terms which in practice would have been more likely to cause confusion.

By introducing four categories, the first – Category 1 – will be for countries and regions where there is no requirement for any travel restrictions, as is the case currently for only the Isle of Man.

Category 2 will introduce a category where arrivals coming from countries with a low prevalence of COVID-19 cases (between 0 and 30 cases per 100,000 of population) can enter Guernsey and, provided they take a test on arrival, they would only be required to self-isolate until they receive an initial negative result. Once that negative result is confirmed, they will then come under rules for 'enhanced passive follow-up'.

'Enhanced passive follow-up' is described in more detail below, and will put significantly more restrictions on arrivals than the current 'passive follow-up' rules. Abiding by 'enhanced passive follow-up' requirements will be legally enforceable.

Arrivals from categories 3 and 4 will also be tested on arrival, but in most respect they will be similar to our current Group B and A countries, where there will be a requirement for arrivals to self-isolate for 7 or 14 days respectively.

The CCA intends to move into this amended phase 5c shortly. Final 'dry-run' testing is currently underway and the intention is to formally introduce the new phase 5c arrangements on Monday 26th October.

In practical terms, this will initially mean that testing on arrival is available for arrivals from Category 3 and 4 countries. Importantly, at this time **there are no jurisdictions with direct links to Guernsey that would meet the criteria for Category 2.**

Countries Classification

	Prevalence	Testing	Self-isolation
(Air Bridge) Category 1	Equivalent to the Bailiwick of Guernsey and no community seeding	No test required	None required
Category 2	Less than 30 per 100,000 for 7 consecutive days	Test on arrival (Day 1) and test on Day 7	Self-isolation until the results of the Day 1 test. If negative, enhanced passive follow-up until Day 7. If Day 7 test is negative, passive follow up.
Category 3	Between 30 to 100 per 100,000 for 7 consecutive days	Test on arrival (Day 1) and test on Day 7	Self-isolation until the results of the Day 7 test. If negative, enhanced passive follow-up until Day 14.
Category 4	More than 100 per 100,000 for 7 consecutive days	Test on arrival (Day 1)	Self-isolation for 14 days



States of Guernsey
Public Health Services

Community non-pharmaceutical interventions are not envisaged at any level, but may be implemented if community seeding is identified or anticipated

What is 'enhanced passive follow-up'?

In the revised phase 5c, arrivals from Category 2 countries who test negative in their day of arrival test, will then be subject to 'Enhanced passive follow-up' rules until their day 7 test. Category 3 arrivals will also be subject to these rules if they test negative on day 7, until day 14.

Enhanced passive follow-up means the person cannot go to indoor venues such as restaurants (including those offering al fresco dining), clubs, cafes, pubs, gyms, swimming pools, theatres or cinemas. They can only go to indoor shops for the purpose of buying essentials such as food or toiletries.

They must not attend any gathering of more than 10 people. If they attend any gatherings of fewer than 10 people, it should be in a room exclusively used by that group with controlled toilet facilities and a record should be kept of those attending for 14 days.

They may not use public transport, unless it is a taxi with the appropriate mitigation in place to protect the driver.

Those working in public facing roles (i.e. retail assistants, receptionists, teachers etc) cannot return to work while under enhanced passive follow-up. Other workers should inform their employer to ensure they carry out a risk assessment and put in place any necessary measures. Children in enhanced passive follow-up must not go to school.

Anyone in enhanced passive follow-up is strongly advised to wear a facemask and practice social distancing when they are outside their home, including at work. They should also always observe good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

Why move to the next phase now when arrivals will still need to self-isolate?

A key feature of the phase 5c is the introduction of testing on arrival. A major driver for this was reducing the self-isolation period for arrivals from low-risk jurisdictions. **With the risk level in all neighbouring jurisdictions rising, the reduction of self-isolation periods will not be seen immediately, but there are other significant benefits that come with testing on arrival, such as the ability to begin contact tracing those who were on board an aircraft or vessel more quickly.** As we see more positive cases amongst travellers, those who come in to contact with them are also being required to self-isolate for longer periods. This can, in some cases, be reduced when testing on arrival begins.

As the physical infrastructure is in place, and some final changes are being made to the online systems which will support testing on arrival as part of this revised phase 5c, there is no reason not to move quickly to begin making the most of these benefits.

However the CCA is stressing that those concerned about rising cases in the UK, France, Jersey and elsewhere should not see this move as any less safe than the current travel restrictions. Based on the current prevalence rates in the UK, all arrivals would still need to self-isolate for either 7 or 14 days. The addition of testing on arrival at this stage simply adds a further tool to our 'test, track and trace' programme which has been extremely effective to date. Importantly, at this time **there are no jurisdictions with direct links to Guernsey that would meet the criteria for Category 2.**

Deputy Gavin St Pier, Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority said

“With cases rising around us, there’s no doubt that the risk to our community increases. There is no way to be completely risk-free, but certainly now is **not** the time to lower our defences. The revisions to phase 5c maintain similar restrictions for arrivals as are in place now, and add testing on arrival as yet a further measure to our contact tracing capability, which is key to ensuring cases do not spread within our community.

We want this model to be one that is sustainable and will see us through the coming months, and so we have sought to build into it a sensible way for allowing less restrictive travel from low-risk destinations for *if and when* cases begin to come down to much lower levels, knowing that none of our neighbours fall into that category right now, but will do at some stage. Reducing those restrictions for travel very much remains our intention but only when it is safe to do so.”

Ends