



Department  
for Transport



# Communicating with travellers during travel disruption

A communication toolkit developed by Verian in partnership  
with the Department for Transport

# This toolkit is informed by behavioural science and aims to support the design of communications during travel disruption

The toolkit can be used to support strategic planning, especially around planned changes, such as the introduction of the EU Exit and Entry System (EES) and European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)



A user journey that breaks down traveller decision-making

Map out the context and understand your audience



A needs framework to support the identification of traveller needs directing behaviour



The Krebs principles to craft how and what to communicate to travellers

Build communications

The final part focuses on what to do when travel disruption strikes



A checklist of considerations

Act swiftly

The toolkit is based on primary research with travellers and a review of existing evidence to understand what travellers want and need from operator communication during travel disruption

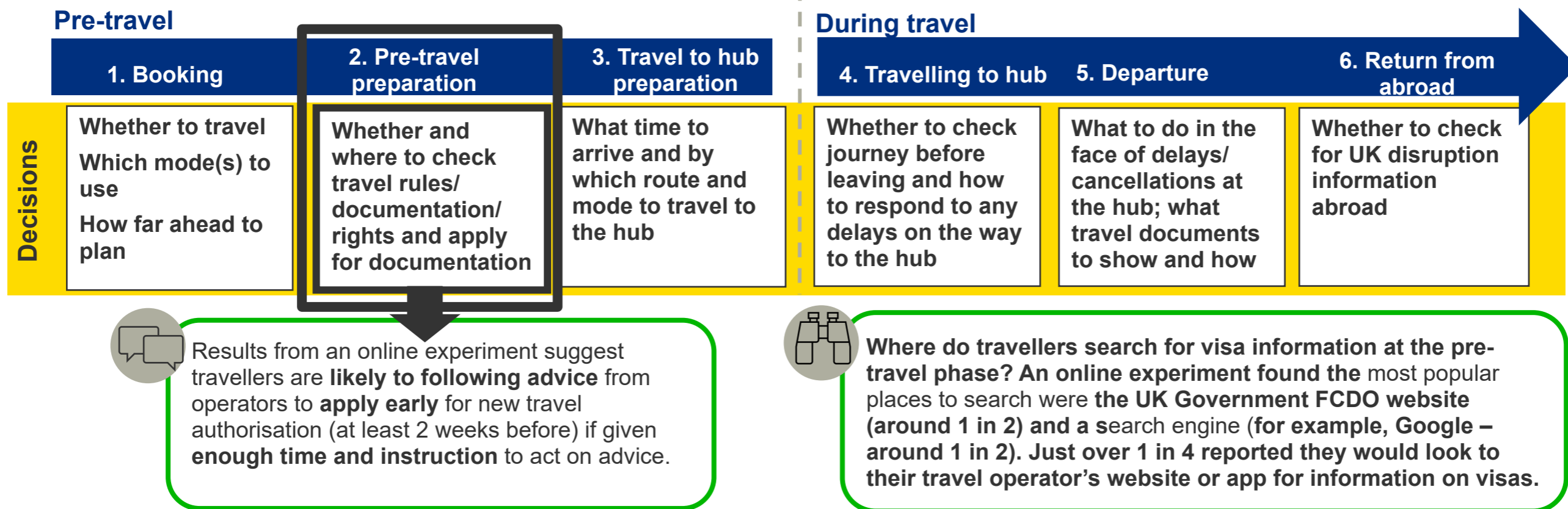
# Traveller user journey



The research identified six stages of the traveller journey based on decision-making and information needs: Stage 2 will be important when communicating about EES/ETIAS

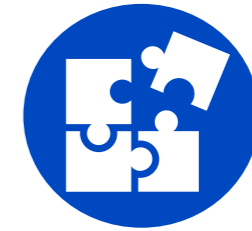


It will be important to remind travellers in good time about EES/ETIAS requirements, via as many touchpoints as possible, to maximise the reach and salience of the message. It may also be possible to highlight this at the booking stage

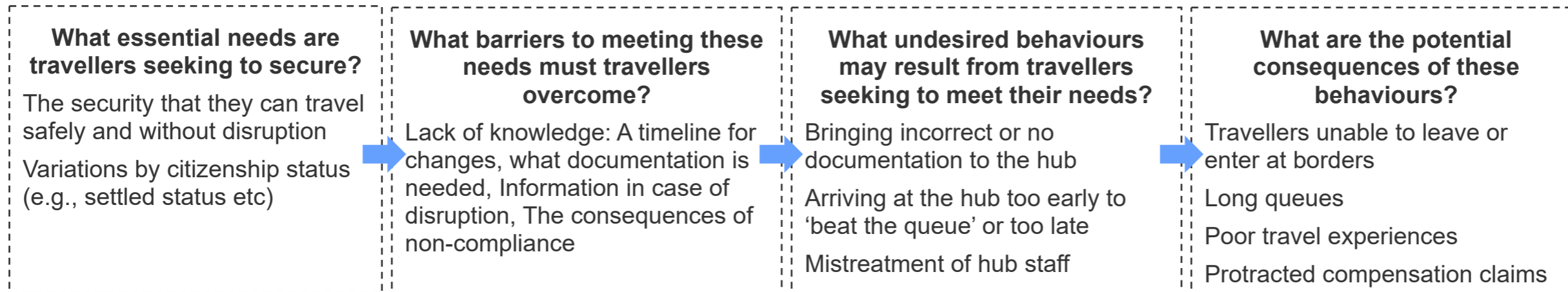


## Traveller needs framework

The needs framework helps map out communications strategies to mitigate “undesired” traveller behaviour and avoid further disruption



In the context of EES/ETIAS it may be relevant to consider:





## How to communicate

Focus groups and interviews validated the Krebs principles and showed how the three key rules can best be applied to communicating about EES and ETIAS

1

### Communicate consistently and frequently

Communicate directly with traveller if EES/ETIAS is affecting a booked journey

Update if there are changes to the situation

Aim for consistency with local partners' messaging

Join up messaging with government, e.g.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aviation-passenger-charter>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maritime-passenger-rights-your-journey>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-rail-passengers-rights-and-obligations-regulation-no-13712007>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/air-travel-checklist-for-travel-from-the-uk>

2

### Use trusted sources and messengers

Operators are likely to have traveller contact details and, according to travellers, are responsible for ensuring travellers are informed.

Face-to-face communication may be needed if queueing exceeds 2 hours in airports and 1 hour in other hubs.

Hubs had a lower profile among travellers as information providers; there is an opportunity for operators to link travellers to hub communication.

Government information may also be relevant and trusted that operators could link travellers towards

3

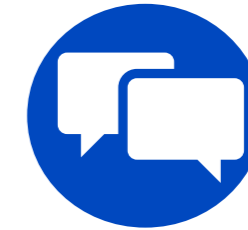
### Set expectations that information may change quickly

Time stamp information

Explicitly state that information may change and will be updated if there is a change in status

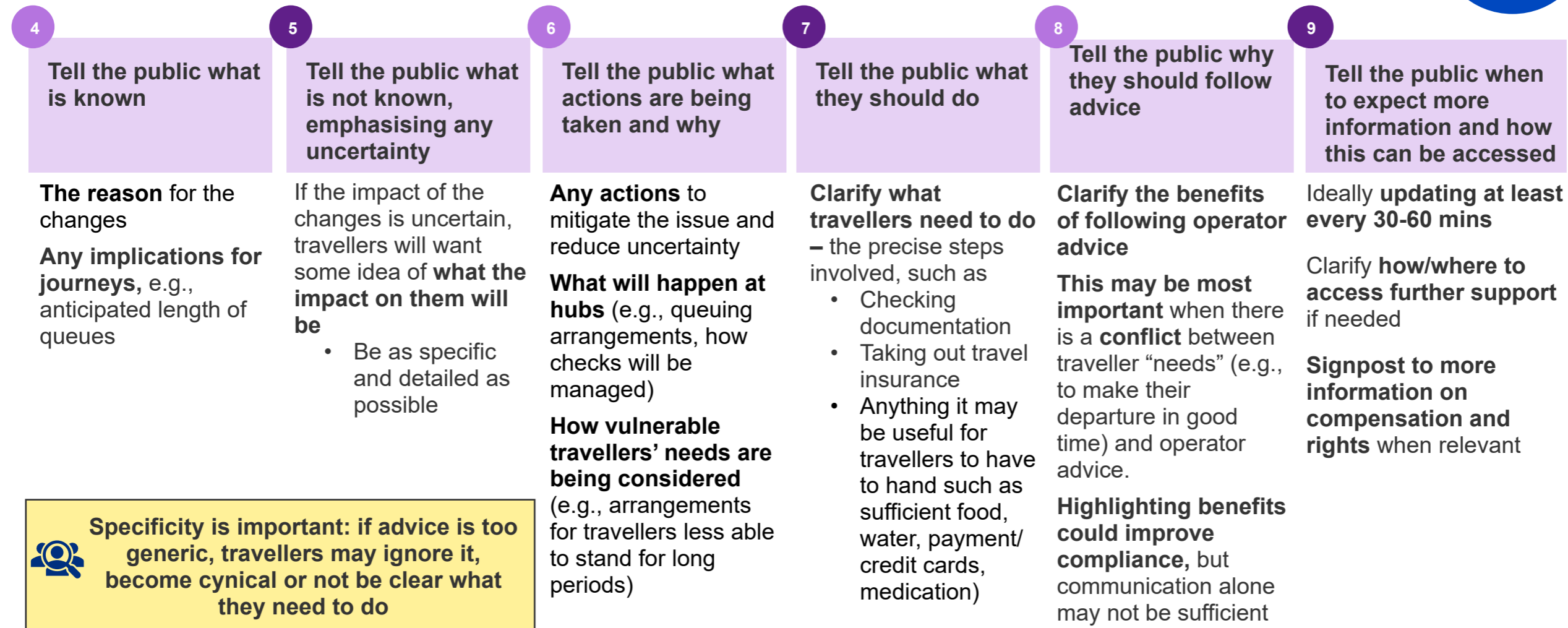
Tone: factual, professional and helpful but empathetic and apologetic when impacts are more severe






## What to communicate

Research also helped to clarify what is ideally communicated in the context of disruption



 **Specificity is important: if advice is too generic, travellers may ignore it, become cynical or not be clear what they need to do**



### Getting to the port



Getting there by car? Please stay on the main roads and follow road signs to the port even if the main roads are busy. Using minor routes can create additional delays to your journey. If traffic control measures are in place you may be unable to rejoin the main road.

7

Tell the public what they should do

8

Tell the public why they should follow advice

### Plan your arrival



Your ferry departs at 2pm, and check-in closes 30 minutes before scheduled departure. Please aim to arrive 1 to 1 and a half hours before your departure.

Evidence from an online experiment with 1,001 travellers found **highlighting “what” travellers should do and “why”** increased compliance with advice to stay on main roads when driving to the port by 13 percentage points.





## When travel disruption strikes use this list to check your communication with travellers

### Are you telling travellers...

- What you know about the situation, and what don't you know?
- What they need to do and why?
- When to expect more information?

### When communicating with travellers, are you...

- Using multiple relevant communication channels (e.g., email, app, website banner, Twitter, SMS)?
- Reaching people who may be on their way to a hub (e.g., via the live travel network)?
- Reaching people who are already at the hub?
- Updating messaging on an ongoing basis when the situation is changing, in line with the expectations you have set?

### When communicating with travellers, are you...

- Reaching out to relevant partners, where possible, to clarify the situation
- Ensuring your messaging is consistent with other stakeholders
- Referring travellers to other relevant stakeholder information if appropriate