



Home Office

# Authority to Carry Scheme: Guidance for General Aviation

Version 2.0

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## Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

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- published December 2024

## Changes from last version of this guidance

- [The Passenger Advice Line telephone contact number has been updated.](#)

# Introduction

The threat from terrorism is serious, diverse and constantly changing. Since February 2022 the UK national threat level has been SUBSTANTIAL meaning an attack is likely.

The safety of the travelling public and the security of the UK border are among the Government's top priorities. Authority to Carry Schemes have been an important element of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy: preventing or disrupting the entry to the UK of individuals who pose a terrorism-related threat and mitigating the threat of an attack on voyages to the UK.

Given the potential threat to the international transport sector, we need to be able to ensure that levels of security are applied to General Aviation (GA) flights that are appropriate to the threat and risk involved at any particular time. The Government continues to work closely with foreign governments and industry partners to make sure that necessary security measures are in place and are, so far as possible, applied consistently and implemented effectively.

Further information about the operation of the Authority to Carry Scheme is available from: [predeparturechecks@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:predeparturechecks@homeoffice.gov.uk)

Home Office  
December 2024

# Authority to Carry: An Overview

The Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 is operated by the National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC) analysing passenger and crew information submitted by air, maritime and rail carriers to the UK's border systems.

## Authority to Carry

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015<sup>1</sup> allows the Secretary of State to introduce an Authority to Carry (ATC) Scheme requiring a carrier to seek authority from the Secretary of State to carry persons on aircraft, ships or trains which are arriving (or expected to arrive) or leaving (or expected to leave) the UK.

The Authority to Carry Scheme 2023<sup>2</sup> ('the 2023 Scheme') came into force on 3 April 2023. It replaced the Authority to Carry Scheme 2021. The 2023 Scheme sets out the categories of individuals in respect of whom authority to carry can be refused.

The 2023 Scheme applies to:

- all carriers operating to and from the UK that have been required by the Secretary of State or an immigration officer under paragraphs 27 and 27B of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 or by a police officer under section 32 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, to submit information comprising passenger or crew information;
- carriers that have provided information in accordance with regulations made under paragraph 27BA of Schedule 2 to the 1971 Act, section 32A of the 2006 Act;
- carriers that have provided information pursuant to Commissioners Directions given under sections 35 and 64 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979, and
- carriers that have provided passenger and crew information voluntarily.

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<sup>1</sup> Sections 22-23

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/authority-to-carry-scheme-2023>

When a GA captain, operator or agent is required to submit Advance Passenger Information (API) to UK Border Force, this constitutes a request for authority to carry those persons who are within the scope of the 2023 Scheme.

Where a GA captain, operator or agent provides passenger and crew information to the Secretary of State other than as a consequence of being served a written requirement, the provision of this information will be treated as a request for authority to carry within the meaning of the 2023 Scheme. If no notification of refusal of authority to carry any individual has been received **prior to departure**, the GA captain, operator or agent may conclude that it has authority to carry all persons onboard. The UK considers departure to mean when the aircraft is prepared for take-off and no-one else can board.

When the actual time of departure is *after* estimated time of departure (STD), the GA captain, operator or agent will be expected to comply with a refusal of authority to carry in circumstances where compliance would be reasonable.

In any instance when actual time of departure is *earlier* than estimated time of departure, the GA captain, operator or agent risks carrying a person in respect of whom authority to carry is refused and being liable to a penalty. GA captain, operator or agent s can mitigate that risk by providing complete and accurate API in sufficient time for any refusal of authority to carry to be communicated to the GA captain, operator or agent before the flight departs.

If, due to technical failure, the required information cannot be provided, and all other options for providing the data have been exhausted, the GA captain, operator or agent must contact the National Co-ordination Unit by calling +44 300 123 2012 to report the problem and then decide if they wish to carry individuals who have not been subject to pre-departure checks.

# Operating the Authority to Carry Scheme

## Authority to Carry for General Aviation

1. **Submission of advance information:** the GA captain, operator or agent submits information about the persons on board to Border Force. The submission of this API constitutes a request for authority to carry in respect of persons to whom the 2023 Scheme applies.
2. **Matching Process:** Border Force systems will check the information against UK systems to identify any individuals in respect of whom authority to carry may be refused.
3. **Identity Assurance Process:** NBTC will hold additional information to help confirm the identity of the individual and will assess the identity from the information available. If required, NBTC will contact other agencies for clarification.
4. **Verbal Confirmation of a Positive Match:** If NBTC is content that a positive match has occurred, it will also provide a verbal refusal of authority to carry using the phone number provided by the GA captain, operator or agent .

***“I am calling from the UK Government’s National Border Targeting Centre. My name is .....{GA captain, operator or agent ’s name} is refused authority to carry {individual’s name \*\*spell name\*\*} checked-in for boarding onto {aircraft} {to/from} the UK under the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023.*”**

5. **Notification:** Alongside providing verbal confirmation of a positive match to the GA captain, operator or agent , NBTC will issue written notification (see Annex A or B) to the GA captain, operator or agent using the e-mail address that has been provided by the GA captain, operator or agent .
6. For GA captains, operators or agents who use the “Submit-a-GAR” (“sGAR”) Home Office system to submit information about persons on board, there may be an occasion where if passenger information is re-submitted, an “authority to carry refused – do not board” message is displayed on the dashboard on sGAR. In the event this occurs the passenger must not be carried. The captain, operator or agent will also receive the verbal and written notifications as set out in (4) and (5) above.

7. **GA captain, operator or agent must contact NBTC by phone (+44 161 209 2985) if they are unable to offload before departure the individual whom they have been refused authority to carry.**



# Handling of Individuals

It is important that all individuals in respect of whom authority to carry is refused are provided with an avenue of enquiry and a quick resolution should they have been mistakenly identified.

The notification of refusal of authority to carry (Annex A or B) includes a form of words that may be given to an individual which invites the individual to contact NBTC if they believe they have been incorrectly identified. **The form of words includes a telephone number for the Home Office Passenger Advice Line which ensures enquiries relating to refusals of authority to carry can be dealt with as a matter of urgency.**

The UK's network of Home Office International Operations (HOIO) officers undertake an advisory role for carriers and passengers seeking to travel to the UK. An alert will be sent to the HOIO Operations Centre when a GA captain, operator or agent is refused authority to carry an individual to the UK. Subject to availability, location and circumstances, HOIO officers may be able to provide assistance when dealing with an individual denied boarding. This assistance will most likely take the form of reiterating to the individual the reason for denial of boarding, and advice should the individual wish to make further representations.

Refusal of authority to carry *from* the UK is rare. When it happens the GA captain, operator or agent will be notified and should ensure the individual does not travel. NBTC will send an alert to the relevant Border Force region who will determine the operational response. It is expected that either Border Force or local police will attend the airfield to deal with the individual.

## Process

- GA captain, operator or agent receives notification of refusal of authority to carry an individual from NBTC, including a form of words to provide to the individual.
- Subject to route, availability and circumstances, HOIO may be able to facilitate liaison with the GA captain, operator or agent and/or the individual.
- Individual seeks clarification of decision from NBTC. If mistaken identity is confirmed, NBTC will contact the GA captain, operator or agent to grant authority to carry.
- When an individual has been incorrectly identified NBTC will update its record for the true subject of interest with *'not to be confused with ... [the individual's details]'*

- When an individual has been correctly identified but was unaware of the reason for which authority to carry was refused, the details will be provided to the individual only.

# Financial Penalties

Border Force works with GA captains, operators and agents to resolve any compliance issues and to ensure the safety of the aircraft and persons on board and the security of the UK border. However, there may be an occasion where a GA captain, operator or agent does not comply with a requirement of the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023.

In the event of non-compliance, The Authority to Carry Scheme (Civil Penalties) Regulations 2015<sup>3</sup> provide for a maximum penalty of £50,000 for carrying an individual when a GA captain, operator or agent was refused authority to do so, or failing to seek authority to carry an individual.

Detailed guidance on determining levels of financial penalty under the authority to carry is at Annex C.

Although not part of the Authority to Carry Scheme or regulations, over and above financial penalties, the ultimate sanction for non-compliance with the Authority to Carry Scheme is, where appropriate, suspension or withdrawal of permission to operate to the UK.

## Notification Process

The Home Office will notify GA captain, operator or agent of their liability to a financial penalty under the Authority to Carry Scheme (Civil Penalties) Regulations 2015 through the following process:

- Border Force will issue the GA captain, operator or agent with a notice of potential liability.
- The GA captain, operator or agent will have 28 days to make representations why the penalty charge should not be imposed.
- Border Force will further consider the case and may issue a civil penalty notice.
- Where it has been established that all reasonable steps have been taken to avoid liability the GA captain, operator or agent will be issued with a No Action Notice and no further action will be taken for that particular case.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/957](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/957)

## Objection Process

- If a financial penalty is imposed and the GA captain, operator or agent disputes the penalty, the GA captain, operator or agent will have 28 days to provide a written notice of objection to the Secretary of State setting out reasons why they consider they are not liable.
- The Secretary of State will consider the written notice and decide whether to cancel the penalty; reduce the penalty; increase the penalty or determine not to alter the penalty.
- Notices of objection received after 28 days will not be considered.
- The Secretary of State will make a decision on the objection and communicate this decision in writing to the GA captain, operator or agent .

## Appeal Process

- A GA captain, operator or agent may appeal against the penalty only if they have provided a written notice of objection and the Secretary of State has decided to reduce the penalty, increase the penalty or determined not to alter the penalty.
- An appeal to the Court must be made within 28 days of the notification to the GA captain, operator or agent of the Secretary of State's decision on the GA captain, operator or agent 's objection.

# Emergency Contact Details

**As part of the GAR submission, the captain, operator or agent is required to provide a contact phone number and email address. These will be used in the event NBTC need to contact the captain, operator or agent about individuals intending to travel to the UK.**

For Fixed Base Operators (FBO) and Business GA operators the nominated contacts must have authority to make security-related decisions, and must be able to communicate with Border Force, in English, and with GA captain, operator or agent staff.

The contact number given by the GA captain, operator or agent must be available for the NBTC to contact 24/7.

# Annex A: Notification of refusals of authority to carry under the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 (Inbound)



Border Force

## URGENT – AUTHORITY TO CARRY REFUSED

To:	[GA captain, operator or agent Name]
Date & Time of Departure:	
Departure Port:	
Flight registration number	
Individual's Name:	
Individual's DoB:	
Document:	
Nationality:	

The Home Office confirms that authority to carry the above-named individual to the United Kingdom has been refused in accordance with the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023.

The attached document provides a form of words that may be given to the individual.

**\*URGENT\*** - Please acknowledge receipt of this email

**\*URGENT\*** - Please notify us of what actions you have taken as a result

*[When appropriate]* **\*URGENT\*** - Please note this passenger is a minor. Please note any duty of care responsibilities. The responsible adult travelling with the child, or who accompanied the child to the port, should be notified that Authority to Carry the minor has been refused\*\*

Regards,  
{Initial and Surname}  
Carrier Support Desk  
Home Office

UK Tel: 0161 209 2985  
Non UK Tel: +44 161 209 2985  
E-mail: [CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The information contained in this email and attachments **contains personal and security related information** and should be handled with care. It must only be seen by individuals on a strictly need to know basis. Printed copies must be kept to a minimum. To comply with the UK data protection legislation, please ensure this email (and any copies) is securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose of complying with the refusal of authority to carry.

## **AUTHORITY TO CARRY REFUSED**

The UK Home Office has confirmed that we do not have authority to carry you to the UK. This means we must refuse to board you.

We must comply with this requirement or we will be liable under UK legislation upon your arrival in the UK.

If you believe you have been incorrectly identified or have any questions, you should contact the Home Office Passenger Advice Line by telephone on: **+44 300 123 2990** or in writing to: [CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk)

# Annex B: Notification of refusal of authority to carry under the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 (Outbound)



## URGENT – AUTHORITY TO CARRY REFUSED

<b>To:</b>	[GA captain, operator or agent name]
<b>Date &amp; Time of Departure:</b>	
<b>Departure Port:</b>	
<b>Flight registration number:</b>	
<b>Individual's Name:</b>	
<b>Individual's DoB:</b>	
<b>Document:</b>	
<b>Nationality:</b>	

The Home Office confirms that authority to carry the above-named individual from the United Kingdom has been refused in accordance with the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023.

The attached document provides a form of words that may be given to the individual.

**\*URGENT\*** - Please acknowledge receipt of this email

**\*URGENT\*** - Please notify us of what actions you have taken as a result

*[When appropriate]* **\*URGENT\*** - Please note this passenger is a minor. Please note any duty of care responsibilities. The responsible adult travelling with the child, or who accompanied the child to the port, should be notified that Authority to Carry the minor has been refused\*\*

Regards,  
**{Initial and Surname}**  
Carrier Support Desk  
Home Office

UK Tel: 0161 209 2985  
Non UK Tel: +44 161 209 2985



E-mail: [CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The information contained in this email and attachments **contains personal and security related information** and should be handled with care. It must only be seen by individuals on a strictly need to know basis. Printed copies must be kept to a minimum. To comply with the UK data protection legislation, please ensure this email (and any copies) is securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose of complying with the refusal of authority to carry.

## **AUTHORITY TO CARRY REFUSED**

The UK Home Office has confirmed that we do not have authority to carry you from the UK. This means we must refuse to board you.

We must comply with this requirement or we will be liable under UK legislation.

If you believe you have been incorrectly identified or have any questions, you should contact the Home Office Passenger Advice Line by telephone on: **0300 123 2990** or in writing to: [CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk)

# Annex C: General Aviation notification of a failure to comply with a requirement of the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023

GA ATC



**Border Force**

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[Name of responsible person]:

**Ref:**

**Date:**

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**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH A REQUIREMENT OF THE AUTHORITY TO CARRY SCHEME  
2023  
INITIAL NOTIFICATION**

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Name of individual:  
Sex:  
Nationality:  
Date of birth:  
Document number:  
Aircraft registration:  
Departing from:  
Date and expected time of departure  
(UTC):  
Arriving at:  
Date and expected time of arrival (UTC)

In relation to the above flight, you have failed to comply with a requirement of Authority to Carry Scheme 2023, specifically that you have:

failed to comply with a refusal of authority to carry as the individual was carried;

failed to seek authority to carry an individual to or from the UK prior to departure

Under the Authority to Carry Scheme (Civil Penalties) Regulations 2015 you may be liable to a civil penalty of up to £50,000.

For further information about the civil penalties process, please visit [Providing information about international general aviation flights - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providing-information-about-international-general-aviation-flights)

Any evidence taken by Border Force for this case is in compliance with the Home Office Privacy Information Notice which is published on GOV.UK.

[\(For and on behalf of the Secretary of State\)](#)

# Annex D: Guidance for determining the level of financial penalty for a breach of the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023

1. The Authority to Carry Scheme (Civil Penalties) Regulations 2015 (“the ATC regulations”) allow the Secretary of State to impose penalties for breaching the requirements of the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 (“the 2023 Scheme”).
2. The Government’s clear preference is that carriers<sup>4</sup> are able to comply with the 2023 Scheme. We will continue to work with carriers to ensure this. However, when there is a failure, particularly if it is wilful or negligent, it is important that appropriate sanctions exist to deter repeat behaviour. This guidance has been prepared to set out factors that may be considered in determining the level of penalty to be imposed.

## Authority to Carry

3. Section 22 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA”) enables the Secretary of State to establish an ATC Scheme which requires carriers to seek authority to carry specified classes of individuals to or from the UK and to refuse a carrier authority to carry certain individuals to or from the UK, in accordance with the terms of that Scheme. Section 24 of the CTSA enables the Secretary of State to make regulations imposing civil penalties if the carrier breaches the requirements of the Scheme.
4. The 2023 Scheme applies to carriers who are operating to and from the UK that have been required by the Secretary of State or an immigration officer under paragraphs 27 or 27B of Schedule 2 to the 1971 Act or by a constable under section 32 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, to submit information comprising passenger, crew or service information.
5. The 2023 Scheme also applies to carriers that have provided information in accordance with regulations made under paragraph 27BA of Schedule 2 to the 1971 Act or section 32A of the 2006 Act, or pursuant to Commissioners Directions given under sections 35 and 64 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979.
6. The 2023 Scheme also applies to carriers who provide information to the Secretary of State on a voluntary basis, although in these circumstances a penalty may be imposed only for carrying an individual to or from the UK when authority to carry had been refused.

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<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this document and application of the ATC Scheme, “carriers” should be interpreted to include General Aviation captains, operators or agents.

7. The ATC regulations allow for a financial penalty not exceeding £50,000 to be imposed on a carrier for:
  - a. Not seeking authority to carry a person in accordance with the Scheme or
  - b. Carrying a person in respect of whom authority to carry had been refused.
8. A carrier may not be required to pay a penalty under the ATC regulations if they have a reasonable excuse or have otherwise been penalised for the same breach.

### Authority to carry – determining the penalty amount

9. To determine the correct penalty amount, the civil penalty calculators below will be used. If the carrier has breached a requirement of the 2023 Scheme for the first time, the ‘First Breach’ civil penalty calculator should be applied unless it is deemed that the breach was deliberate. If there is evidence to suggest there has been a deliberate wrongdoing by the carrier, a £50,000 penalty will be considered appropriate.
10. Any subsequent breaches by the carrier, the ‘Subsequent Breaches’ civil penalty calculator should be applied. The starting maximum penalty amount for all subsequent breaches will increase in multiples of £10,000 until the maximum penalty amount of £50,000 is reached.

<b>First Breach</b>									
Starting Amount £10,000	Mitigating Factors								Ending Amount
	Has the carrier accepted liability?		Has the carrier explained why the breach occurred?		Has the carrier explained and implemented corrective measures?		Has the carrier submitted evidence of implementing preventative measures on future operations?		
	Yes	-£1,250	Yes	-£1,250	Yes	-£1,250	Yes	-£1,250	
No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount		

Subsequent Breaches									
Starting amount £20,000 (increasing in multiples of £10,000 for a subsequent breach up to a maximum of £50,000)	Mitigating Factors								Ending Amount
	Has the carrier accepted liability?		Has the carrier explained why the breach occurred?		Has the carrier explained and implemented corrective measures?		Has the carrier submitted evidence of implementing preventative measures on future operations?		
	Yes	-£2,500	Yes	-£2,500	Yes	-£2,500	Yes	-£2,500	
No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount	No	Maintain Amount		

### Carrying an individual for whom authority to carry was refused or failing to seek authority to carry an individual

In these cases, a penalty not exceeding £50,000 may apply for each individual within the scope of the 2023 Scheme.

### Mitigating Factors to be taken into consideration

The level of penalty imposed will be determined according to particular factors.

Those factors include:

#### Mitigating Factor 1: Has the carrier accepted liability?

The penalty amount will be reduced by £1250 (or £2500 for subsequent breaches) if the carrier accepts liability for the breach. If the carrier denies liability, no penalty reduction should be applied.

#### Mitigating Factor 2: Has the carrier explained why the breach occurred?

The carrier is to provide a detailed and accurate account of the circumstances which caused the breach of the 2023 Scheme. A reduction of £1250 (or £2500 for subsequent breaches) of the penalty amount should then be applied. If the carrier fails to provide a satisfactory account or no account, no penalty reduction should be applied.

#### Mitigating Factor 3: Has the carrier explained and implemented corrective measures?

The carrier is to provide detail about measures taken or being taken to put right what went wrong. The penalty amount will be reduced by £1250 (or £2500 for subsequent breaches) if the carrier details what corrective measures have immediately been put in place following the breach to prevent a reoccurrence. No penalty reduction should be applied if the carrier does not provide this information.

**Mitigating Factor 4: Has the carrier submitted evidence of preventative measures that have been implemented across all other routes?**

The carrier is to provide detail on what measures have been or are being taken to prevent the issue from reoccurring, either at the same port or across the carrier's network. Where relevant, the carrier is to submit an explanation and submit evidence of what preventative action they have taken to prevent this breach from occurring across all future operations. Examples may include (but are not limited to);

- evidence of communications to all other ports to inform a breach has occurred and how to prevent this from happening at a particular location
- evidence of retraining of all staff

The penalty amount will be reduced by £1250 (or £2500 for subsequent breaches). Where the carrier provides no evidence or unsatisfactory evidence of preventative measures taken, no penalty reduction should be applied.

# Annex E: Refusal of leave to enter the UK before departure for, or in the course of a journey to the UK

Where Border Force identify an individual intending to travel to the UK who may be refused leave to enter before they arrive in the UK, the following process will apply:

- NBTC will contact the GA captain, operator or agent by phone using the contact details provided with the API submission to explain that there may be a potential issue with the individual which may have implications for them. This will be followed up by an email (Annex E), the carrier will be notified to ask the individual to call the Home Office Passenger Advice Line (PAL).

## Individual contacts the PAL:

- NBTC will confirm the identity of the individual, conduct a telephone examination and, where necessary, refuse the individual leave to enter the UK under article 7 of the Immigration (Leave to Enter and Remain) Order 2000.
- The individual will be told why leave to enter has been refused and that the GA captain, operator or agent will be refused authority to carry them to the UK.
- NBTC will refuse the GA captain, operator or agent authority to carry the individual.

## Individual does not contact the PAL:

- If the individual does not contact the PAL, NBTC may contact the GA captain, operator or agent again to ask the individual to call the PAL.
- If no contact is made authority to carry will not be refused.
- If the individual is carried to the UK, they may be refused leave to enter upon arrival and the carrier will be liable to meet any consequential costs for detention and removal of the individual back to the port of departure.



# Annex F: Notification for an individual to contact the Home Office Passenger Advice Line



Border Force

## Carrier notification

<b>To:</b>	<b>[GA captain, operator or agent )</b>
<b>Date &amp; Time of Departure:</b>	
<b>Departure Port:</b>	
<b>Flight registration number:</b>	
<b>Individual's Name:</b>	
<b>Individual's DoB:</b>	
<b>Document:</b>	
<b>Nationality:</b>	

There is a potential issue concerning the individual detailed above who is intending to travel to the United Kingdom which may have implications for you as their carrier. It is essential that you ask the individual to contact the Home Office Passenger Advice Line on +44 300 123 2990 as soon as possible prior to boarding the above voyage.

You may supply the attached form of words to the individual which provides contact details for the Home Office.

Regards,

**{Initial and Surname}**

Carrier Support Desk

Home Office

Tel: +44 161 209 2985

**E-mail:** [CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:CarrierSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The information contained in this email and attachments **contains personal and security related information** and should be handled with care. It must only be seen by individuals on a strictly need to know basis. Printed copies must be kept to a minimum. To comply with UK data protection legislation, please ensure this email (and any copies) is securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose of enabling the named individual to contact the Home Office.

## **REQUEST TO CONTACT HOME OFFICE PASSENGER ADVICE LINE**

Please would you contact the Home Office Passenger Advice Line by telephone on +44 300 123 2990 as soon as possible about your voyage to the United Kingdom.