

Heathrow airport urges roadmap for quarantine exit

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London's Heathrow airport on Monday urged the British government to issue a "roadmap" for its planned coronavirus quarantine for air travellers, after revealing traffic almost evaporated in April.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced plans to quarantine people arriving in Britain by air for 14 days to prevent new COVID-19 infections from abroad, under a phased lockdown easing that seeks to avoid a second spike.

The [deadly outbreak](#) has ravaged both the [global economy](#) and especially the [aviation sector](#), with airlines axing most flights in response to collapsing demand for air travel amid national lockdowns.

"Aviation is the lifeblood of this country's economy, and until we get Britain flying again, UK business will be stuck in third gear," Heathrow chief executive John Holland-Kaye said in a statement on Monday.

"The government needs to urgently lay out a roadmap for how they will reopen borders once the disease has been beaten, and to take an immediate lead in agreeing a common international standard for health in aviation that will allow passengers who don't have the infection to travel freely."

Heathrow airport, which is situated west of the British capital, added that the number of passengers nosedived 97 percent in April from the same month in 2019 to just 200,000.

That was the same amount of travellers that normally fly through the air hub in a normal day prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The airport only provided services in April for essential travel, particularly for repatriation flights during the health crisis.

Heathrow, which is owned by a consortium led by Spanish construction giant Ferrovial, stressed that the quarantine will effectively shut borders.

"The airport supports government's aim of avoiding a second wave of

infection, even though the 14-day quarantine plan will effectively close borders temporarily," the company said.

"It is likely that few passenger flights will operate and even less people will travel until the quarantine is lifted."

It added: "Demand is expected to remain weak until governments lift lockdowns."

However, British Airways' owner IAG last week warned that pre-crisis passenger demand would not return until 2023 at the earliest.

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