



Department
for Transport

From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: chris.grayling@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

2 October, 2017

Dear Colleague,

In the early hours of this morning, I was informed that administrators have been appointed to both Monarch Airlines Ltd and Monarch Travel Group Ltd. As a result, all Monarch flights and future holidays are cancelled with immediate effect. I am writing to set out the steps the government is taking to support those affected, and where your constituents can find further information if needed.

The group's engineering operation, Monarch Aircraft Engineering Ltd, is not in administration and continues to trade normally.

My department has been working closely with the Civil Aviation Authority, and we are working round the clock to ensure the swift and orderly return of customers who are currently abroad and who were due to fly back to the UK.

This is clearly a major and highly complex undertaking on an unprecedented scale, with approximately 110,000 passengers currently abroad on holidays booked through Monarch. The government has stepped in to provide capacity and replacement flights as it would not be possible for all these passengers to get home on existing flights on other airlines. This makes this operation the biggest peacetime repatriation ever undertaken.

Over 30 additional aircraft are being provided to fly passengers back to the UK as close as possible to their original return date. To put this in context, the CAA will, in the coming days, essentially be operating one of the UK's largest airlines.

Our advice to passengers at this stage is to be patient and follow the advice given by the CAA – checking their dedicated website in the first instance as the quickest and best way to get information. People should complete their holidays and not go to the airport. They should check the website 48h before they are due to fly for details of their new flight. They will not be required to pay anything, but will need to check in for their new replacement flight at the airport, even if they had already checked in with Monarch.

The CAA have set up a dedicated website and helpline to provide further information on replacement flights:

Website: [Monarch.caa.co.uk](https://monarch.caa.co.uk)

Helpline: 0300 303 2800 (UK) or +44 1753 330330 (overseas)

Given the complexity of this operation, we are also advising passengers to be prepared for some disruption and delays, and to find additional accommodation if needed. In addition, passengers may find they are returned to a different UK airport to where they departed, although onward bus and coach travel will be organised to help people get home.

I recognise that this is a distressing situation for all involved, and I would like to assure you that the government is committed to supporting those affected. Help will be given to those in genuine need who cannot afford to cover their costs, and Foreign Office consular staff will also be at airports to assist vulnerable British nationals with specific needs, for example if they have medical issues.

There may also be some people in the UK who have booked Monarch flights to return to their home in Europe. We expect there to be sufficient capacity with other operators for these passengers to find alternative flights. They can then pursue their credit card or travel insurance companies for reimbursement. Local councils will be alerted to the situation should any support be required in the most exceptional of circumstances.

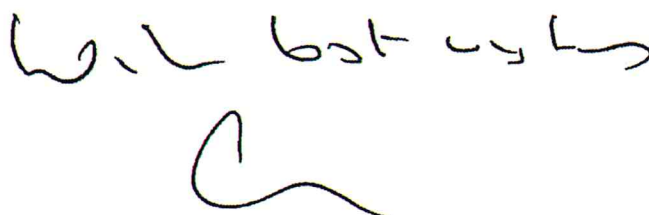
For some of Monarch's passengers, their trips will be covered by the ATOL holiday protection scheme, which means they will be brought home at no extra cost, and will be entitled to refunds for accommodation and subsistence if they are delayed beyond their planned return date. They may need to pay for whatever alternative arrangements are necessary while abroad, then recover these costs through ATOL once back in the UK.

However, early indications are that a high number of passengers bought trips which are not covered. Given the exceptional circumstances surrounding this failure, the government has agreed to cover the full cost of these new flights back to the UK. While this means there will be no extra cost to any passengers for their flights, we also have a duty to the taxpayer, and will be seeking to recover as much of the cost as possible via existing consumer protection offered by credit and debit card companies. To enable this, customers are likely to be asked to complete a short form once on board the plane with details of their original booking.

For those passengers who have yet to depart on a holiday booked through Monarch, we are advising people not to go to the airport – there will be no outbound Monarch flights or replacement services. In these cases, ATOL-protected trips will be refunded in line with the scheme. For those who do not have ATOL cover, they may be able to recover the cost of their holiday through their own credit or debit card company, or some travel insurance policies.

In addition to the ATOL Bill which has recently been introduced in Parliament, we are also seeking views on consumer protection as part of our new aviation strategy. This will present an opportunity to consider some of the issues raised by the failure of Monarch. However, our immediate focus must be on ensuring the government supports those people who are abroad and to get passengers back to the UK in an orderly and timely fashion.

Should your constituents have any further questions, please direct them towards the dedicated CAA website and helpline in the first instance. I am also enclosing a graphic with the details of the website and phone number for you to share through your own social media channels.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. L. best' followed by a stylized flourish.

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT

Monarch



Affected by the **Monarch** situation?

Visit or call the helpline



monarch.caa.co.uk



0300 303 2800 (UK)

+44 1753 330330 (overseas)



Department for Transport

