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Dear Zoe and Monique,

Thank you for your correspondence of 24 November and 2 December 2025 to Minister Tapp about the impact of 'permission to travel' enforcement on eVisa holders. Your correspondence has been passed to the Future Border and Immigration System (FBIS) Programme for a response so we can provide the most up to date position on the issues you have raised.

To answer your questions most effectively, in some instances, your questions have been grouped together into related subject areas. The EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) policy team will respond separately to question 20 of your letter dated 2 December on EUSS family permits.

Carrier integration with the iAPI system

Q1. Confirmation of Carrier iAPI Integration

Please reconfirm that all aviation carriers are integrated and actively using the iAPI service from locations from which they fly directly to the UK. If not, please provide a list of all carriers and their respective locations from which they fly directly to the UK where iAPI is not used.

Q16. Carrier Awareness and Indirect Flight Issues Relating to Digital Immigration Status

We have had reports from people who were travelling to the UK on an indirect flights, i.e. flying from country A to country B, then from country B to the UK, who were denied boarding on the initial leg of their journey because they could not present physical proof of their immigration status or due to other misunderstandings arising from a lack of awareness of the UK's transformation to digital-only status. What engagement has the Home Office carried out with carriers who do not fly directly to the UK, to raise their awareness of eVisas and ETAs?

All commercial aviation carriers flying directly to the UK are integrated into the iAPI (interactive advance passenger information) service and will be using the system to check permission to travel from 25 February 2026. As you are aware, carriers submit passenger data via the iAPI system, and for each submission, the Home Office returns a response confirming whether the passenger has valid permission to travel. Where carriers receive a 'valid permission to travel' response, no further proof is required. Manual checks can still be conducted using physical documents or share codes if necessary.

We have conducted extensive engagement with carriers on these requirements, speaking to nearly 50,000 front line operational airline staff across 550 organisations at over 600 ports around the world. To ensure carriers including those operating indirect flights are aware of the UK's transition to eVisa and the introduction of ETA, we have communicated with approximately 250 ports worldwide that do not have direct flight connections to the UK.

Some examples of our engagement activities include live webinars, providing information packs and updated passenger handling guidance. We have worked closely with major airlines and ferry operators and participated in international forums to ensure carriers are fully aware of the permission to travel requirements and use of technology for automated checks to minimise manual interventions. We have made it clear throughout our engagement that UK permissions will increasingly be checked digitally. We have also explained how status can alternatively be checked via the passenger providing a share code using the View and Prove service or carriers may also contact the UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub for further advice, 24/7. This service is for carriers only.

We are continuing this programme of engagement with carriers to raise awareness and inform as we approach enforcement of 'permission to travel'.

Carrier procedures and challenges in verifying digital immigration status during passenger travel

Q2. Permission to Travel Re-Checks at Boarding

If all aviation carriers are integrated and using the iAPI service for direct flights to the UK, what is the reason for passengers who have successfully passed the check-in stage (online or in person) being asked to prove their permission to travel before boarding?

Q3. Carrier Practice of Re-Checking Travel Permission

If your response to the above question is that the Home Office does not require this practice of re-checking, and that this is solely down to a carrier decision, will the Home Office accept that such practice puts unreasonable requirements on UK eVisa holders and will it commit to requesting carriers to stop such practice? This practice is likely in response to the UK's carrier liability rules and the obligation to return passengers who are refused entry to the UK, yet passengers cannot continue to bear the brunt of having the burden of proof to demonstrate an online-only proof of status in person under time pressure, when the airline has already received a 'Universal Permission to Travel' message via the iAPI.

Carriers are expected to ensure that every passenger has a valid passport or travel document which is acceptable in the UK; that the person is the rightful holder; and, if the

person needs a visa, it is of the required kind and is valid for the holder. This visa may be in either physical form, or an eVisa.

The Home Office does not mandate additional checks once a valid 'permission to travel response' has been received. However, the responsibility for deciding whether to carry a passenger rest with the carrier in every case, and in some cases, carriers may ask for further evidence such as a share code. Carriers may ask for more proof, if for example someone is using a travel document that is not linked to their UKVI account, or travelling on legacy physical evidence. Carriers may also contact the UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub for further advice.

We would appreciate your support in reinforcing the importance of keeping travel document details up to date and, where applicable, transitioning to an eVisa, to help minimise disruption and ensure smoother journeys.

Carrier liability and section 40 charges

Q13. Carrier Liability and Section 40 Charges Under the Universal Permission to Travel (UPT) Scheme from 25 February 2026

From 25 February 2026, if a carrier is given a 'Permission to Travel' message as part of the UK's Universal Permission to Travel (UPT) scheme, and has correctly checked the passenger's travel document satisfactorily establishes identity and nationality or citizenship:

A. Are there any circumstances in which the carrier can nevertheless receive a Section 40 charge, and if so, what are these circumstances?

B. Are there any circumstances in which the carrier will nevertheless be held responsible for returning the passenger from the UK, and if so, what are these circumstances?

While the Home Office conducts automated and manual checks to detect forged or counterfeit documents at the application stage, this does not eliminate the risk of fraud occurring before travel or an impostor presenting at the point of embarkation.

Therefore, carriers must continue to perform identity and security checks before boarding. The presence of a digital permission does not replace these obligations. Failure to conduct these checks may result in penalties under Section 40 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, including a £2,000 fine per passenger and liability for removal costs.

Carriers are responsible for ensuring that passengers:

- hold a valid passport or travel document accepted by the UK;
- are the rightful holder of the document;
- and possess a valid permission to travel.

Carriers must not assume that a digital permission alone confirms document authenticity. Robust ID verification remains essential. Carriers must continue to check that the passenger is the rightful holder of a valid, genuine ID document that would be acceptable on arrival in the UK.

In line with current legislation under Schedule 2 – section 8 (1) [of the Immigration Act 1971](#), as is the case now, carriers could still be liable for returning the passenger from the UK, even if a 'permission to travel' message is received.

Carrier Support Hub

Q14. Carrier Support Hub Capabilities When eVisa Is Not Functioning Correctly

In the same way that the Employer Checking Service can check someone's right to work even when their eVisa is not functioning correctly, will the Carrier Support Hub have the ability and resources to check someone's underlying immigration status (and therefore permission to travel to the UK) where their eVisa is currently not functioning correctly (for example because they receive the error "We cannot show proof of your status", or because some of their eVisa details are showing incorrectly)?

Q15. Carrier Support Hub Assistance When a Travel Document Is Not Linked to an eVisa

Similarly, will the Carrier Support Hub have the ability and resources to check someone's underlying immigration status (and therefore permission to travel to the UK) where their latest travel document is not currently linked to their eVisa (for example because the passenger did not know to do so, or because they tried but were prevented by a technical error)?

As mentioned above, the Carrier Support Hub can provide advice to carriers 24/7. They are able to check a person's underlying immigration status in the circumstances you have listed. However, they may not always be able to confirm someone's status if their travel document is not linked to their UKVI account and it contains *significant* changes to their personal details. This is why we recommend everyone keeps their UKVI account up to date with their latest travel document wherever possible.

As per our guidance to carriers, ultimately responsibility for deciding whether to carry the person rests with the carrying company in every case.

Passenger Helpline

Q6. Request for Reinstatement of Passenger Helpline

Will the Home Office reinstate its Passenger Helpline with immediate effect, to be operational 24/7 until at least a year after full enforcement of ETA? We are of course aware of the Carrier Support Hub available to carriers only, but passengers need to have agency at the point of facing a denial of boarding and be able speak to someone in the UK who is fully knowledgeable about eVisas and carriers.

The Passenger Support Helpline was a temporary measure during the transition to eVisas and closed in March 2025 following low usage and the introduction of robust self-service options. We have no current plans to reintroduce the helpline.

Passengers should use [GOV.UK/eVisa](https://www.gov.uk/evisa) services to check and update their status before travel. As mentioned above, carriers continue to have access to the 24/7 Carrier Support Hub for urgent travel issues.

As part of our ongoing eVisa improvement work, we have strengthened digital tools, including Account Recovery Online and the UKVI Resolution Centre, to ensure passengers

can resolve issues quickly without needing a dedicated helpline.

Impact assessment on introduction of permission to travel checks on non-visa national eVisa holders

Q4. Impact Assessment of ETA Enforcement on eVisa Holders

Has the Home Office conducted any impact assessment of ETA enforcement on the subset of approximately 10 million eVisa holders in the UK who are non-visa nationals?

a. If so please provide details of these impact assessments, and please publish or share these impact assessments in reply to this letter.

b. If not please set out why it was considered such an impact assessment was not required.

The Home Office has considered the impacts of ETAs on several occasions, including in equality impact assessments for the then-Nationality and Borders Bill and the initial impact assessment for ETAs: [Electronic Travel Authorisation: impact assessment \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#). It is not considered that eVisa holders have been less favourably treated as a result of the ETA scheme. Any discrimination associated with the universal permission to travel requirement is considered legal by virtue of exemptions in the Equality Act.

EUSS status holders, pre-settled status holders and those with a Certificate of Application (CoA)

Q5. EUSS Pre-Settled Status and iAPI Checks

EU citizens and their family members with pre-settled status under the EUSS have the right to travel while they have a pending application for settled status under the EUSS. They frequently wait for several months while their settled status application is decided, and during this time they are unable to link a new travel document to their UKVI account. From 25 February 2026, an iAPI check on their new passport will not return a positive result. What guidance and training is the Home Office issuing to carriers to ensure that such passengers are not denied boarding, and what guidance is the Home Office issuing to individuals in such a situation?

Q8. Boarding Procedures for EUSS Certificate of Application Holders

The Home Office response to our questions about how those with pending EUSS applications can board a carrier to the UK after ETA enforcement states: "We have noted your suggestions regarding the processing of CoA holders at the border, and the applicability of ETAs for this group. These arrangements remain under review, and we will consider whether further changes are necessary." What changes if any will be made to ensure that those with an EUSS Certificate of Application can board a carrier from 25 February?

Q17. Permission to Travel Message for Non-Visa Nationals with Pending EUSS Applications

We understand that the Home Office intends to respond with a "Permission to Travel" message where a non-visa national has a Certificate of Application relating to a pending EUSS application. Is this functionality confirmed to be in place by 25 February 2026?

Q18. Updating UKVI Account Details for Pending EUSS Applicants

Will the 'Update my Details' functionality be updated to allow someone with a pending EUSS application to link a new travel document to their UKVI account:

A. For those with a Certificate of Application relating to their pending application for status under the EUSS?

B. For those who have pre-settled status under the EUSS and have a pending application for settled status under the EUSS (who have a protected right under the Withdrawal Agreement to travel to and enter the UK freely based on their residence status, which is currently placed at risk because of their restricted UKVI account functionality)?

Where a passenger has pre-settled status and their UKVI account is linked to their current travel document, carriers will automatically receive a 'permission to travel' message. We also recently confirmed that non-visa nationals who have made a valid application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) but are waiting for a decision, also known as "Certificate of Application (CoA) holders" will also receive a 'permission to travel' response when carriers check permission to travel. These changes will be in place before ETAs are enforced from 25 February 2026.

As you are aware, while an application is in progress, people are currently unable to update their UKVI account details with a new identity document. This is to ensure the integrity of the application consideration process. We are currently assessing the guidelines for adding new identity documents to a UKVI account while an EUSS application is being processed and will update you if any changes are made.

The following arrangements are in place for those that cannot update their travel document details:

Pre-settled status holders applying for settled status who cannot update their UKVI account with new travel document details

For people with pre-settled status who are outside the UK and unable to update their details in their UKVI account, we have issued clear instructions to carriers that EU citizens and their family members with pre-settled status, and a pending application to convert it to settled status under the EUSS, must not be denied boarding solely because an iAPI check does not return a 'permission to travel' response.

We recommend that pre-settled status holders get a share code using the View and Prove service and provide this to the carrier if required. Passengers can get a code on GOV.UK in advance of travel and take it with them (it is valid for 90 days and can be used multiple times).

Where it is not possible to create a share code, or if the carrier is unable to check permission to travel using a share code, the carrier can also contact the 24/7 Carrier Support Hub for advice.

On 9 December 2025 we laid before Parliament changes to the Immigration Rules to expand the ability to apply for an EUSS travel permit to all EUSS status holders. This means that from 30 December 2025, EUSS status holders who are unable to update their UKVI account will also have the option to obtain an EUSS travel permit ahead of travelling.

Certificate of Application (CoA) holders who cannot update their UKVI account with new travel document details

Where a non-visa national CoA holder's UKVI account is not up to date with their current passport or identity card (the latter for EEA nationals only) the carrier will not receive confirmation of their immigration status via their automated digital checks with the Home Office.

In this scenario we recommend that non-visa national CoA holders get a share code using the View and Prove service and provide this to the carrier. Passengers can get a code in advance of travel on GOV.UK and take it with them (it is valid for 90 days and can be used multiple times).

Again, where it is not possible to create a share code, or if the carrier is unable to check permission to travel using a share code, the carrier can also contact the 24/7 Carrier Support Hub for advice.

As mentioned above, we are continuing our programme of engagement with carriers, and will continue to provide passenger handling guidance for scenarios such as these.

Communication to British Citizen dual nationals

Q7. Communication to Dual British Citizens on ETA Enforcement

The announcement of 'No permission, no travel: UK set to enforce ETA scheme' includes "The UK government strongly advises dual British citizens to make sure they have a valid British passport or certificate of entitlement, to avoid problems like being denied boarding when travelling to the UK from 25 February 2026." Will the Home Office write to all people who have naturalised as British citizens, both to their email and postal address where known, to advise them that without a British passport they will face problems like being denied boarding when travelling to the UK from 25 February 2026?

a. If so, when will the Home Office have written to all naturalised British citizens for whom they have contact details?

b. If not, why will the Home Office not undertake to contact naturalised British citizens for whom they have contact detail no?

The Home Office is continuing to implement targeted digital communication alongside broader public messaging to ensure key groups - such as dual national British citizens, are fully informed about the impact of the permission to travel requirement.

Similar to our eVisa direct contact campaigns, we will be emailing people who have been naturalised as British, where we hold usable contact details, to provide clear guidance on the impact of ETA enforcement. British and Irish nationals, including those who are dual nationals of another country, are not eligible to apply for an ETA, regardless of whether their other nationality would typically qualify.

Therefore, when travelling abroad we are advising British/Irish citizens with a dual nationality to carry either their valid British (or Irish) passport, or a foreign passport that contains a valid certificate of entitlement to the right of abode and be prepared to show it as without this, from 25 February 2026 they are likely to be denied boarding or face serious delays and complications when returning to the UK.

We welcome your support in amplifying this message through your channels.

We are also continuing to actively engage with FCDO and foreign embassies in the UK to address the impact of ETA enforcement on British dual nationals.

Travel for British Citizen dual nationals

Q9. Guidance on Travel for Dual British Nationals

Many dual British citizens experience problems when travelling, because they need to provide their non-British passport when travelling to the EU or to the US, and their British passport when travelling the UK, and many carriers will not provide for this. Please provide details of all engagement with and guidance to carriers specifically around travel processes for dual British nationals travelling to the UK.

People should use their British passport for travel to the UK and their other nationality passport for travel to respective countries.

The operation of ETIAS and passport requirements are a matter for the EU (and the same applies for passport requirements for other countries). In the case of the EU, their ETIAS website ([ETIAS - Home](#)) states that ETIAS is linked to a passport. It also states that if a traveller has a travel document issued by any of the European countries requiring ETIAS or Ireland, they do not need a travel authorisation to enter the territory of any of them. They should travel using that travel document during their trip.

The passport used for booking a flight does not determine which document must be used for check-in or at the border, but the individual should ensure they carry the document detailed in the booking and, if different, the document used at check-in.

For example, if someone inputs their UK passport details at the time of booking their tickets, and then at check-in and on arrival at their destination, they present their other nationality passport, the passport used at check-in will generally overwrite their UK passport details.

When returning to the UK, we would always recommend that British or Irish citizens with another nationality carry their British/Irish passport or their other passport containing a certificate of entitlement to the right of abode, and ensure it is valid to prevent encountering difficulties when checking-in and boarding in the future.

As mentioned above, we have and will continue to engage and inform carriers to ensure they are aware of arrangements for British citizen dual nationals – in the case of ETIAS this is not due to be implemented by the EU until the final quarter of 2026.

eVisa error resolution

Q10. eVisa Access and Error Resolution Process

We continue to receive many reports from people unable to either access their eVisa or link new travel documents to their eVisa, who have reported this to the Home Office but are finding that the Home Office is not fixing their problem in a timely manner. The Home Office auto-response to submitting an error form continues to include the wording “We are currently receiving a very high volume of enquiries and as a result, we are not able to respond within our published timeframes.”

- a. What are the published timeframes for providing an individual (rather than auto-reply) response to someone reporting an error on their eVisa?*
- b. When will the Home Office resume responding within published timeframes when someone reports an error on their eVisa?*

Q11. Publication of Data on eVisa Error Reporting

The Home Office continues to refuse to release data on the volume of errors reported via their error reporting form. Parliamentary questions have faced responses including “the relevant data could only be collated and verified for the purpose of answering this question at disproportionate cost” and “will be, in due course, publishing management information on the volumes of eVisa error corrections webforms received”. Freedom of Information Requests have been refused on the basis of “this information is exempt from disclosure, under Section 22 of the FOIA. This exemption provides that information can be withheld if it is intended for future publication”. Given the serious impact of denied boarding that eVisa holders with ongoing eVisa problems will face when ETA is fully enforced from 25 February 2026:

- a. How many errors have been reported via the Home Office “Report an error with your eVisa” form since it was created, broken down by month?*
- b. Will the Home Office urgently increase resources to properly fix people’s eVisa errors in a timely manner so that no-one is denied boarding?*

We intend to commence publishing data regarding customers who have used our eVisa error corrections webforms in Spring 2026 subject to final assurance of the quality of the management information contained on our systems.

We aim to correct eVisa errors as quickly as possible. We routinely monitor demand on all of our services including eVisa error resolution, and review resourcing accordingly.

The overwhelming majority of eVisa status contact queries are currently resolved within a few working days. Urgent cases, including those impacting imminent travel or involving vulnerable customers, are given priority and are typically resolved within three working days. For a very small number of more complex cases, resolution can take longer, but we expect to return to a 15 working day service level agreement (SLA) for these cases in early 2026.

Contingency measures for critical IT systems

Q12. Contingency measures in place to mitigate maintenance and outages

Please set out in detail the contingency measures to mitigate for periods of planned maintenance and unplanned outages of both the iAPI system and the eVisa View and Prove system.

View & Prove is a highly reliable service, where we make the vast majority of updates with zero-downtime of the live service. For major maintenance releases that do require the live service to be taken offline, we schedule such work outside of business hours and display maintenance pages during the process. To minimise unplanned outages, we monitor the View & Prove system 24/7 using various triggers and alerts to ensure timely intervention when needed. This level of real-time monitoring applies across connected services like iAPI and carrier checking.

Any outages related to status are treated with the highest priority. If services are down, customers can use alternative channels to confirm status, including the UKVI Resolution Centre and share codes generated before the outage. Employers and landlords can use the Employer Checking Service or Landlord Checking Service. Likewise, carriers have the Carriers Support Hub.

Updating a UKVI account from overseas

Q19. Linking New Identity Documents to UKVI Accounts from Overseas

Some eVisa holders need to link an identity document with a name or nationality change to their UKVI account. This can be through marriage, for example, or because they are a dual national and they want to link a passport for their 'other' nationality to their account. We are pleased that earlier in 2025, the Home Office added functionality to do this without the need to send a passport to the Home Office through the post, using an ID Checking app instead to verify the person's identity. This functionality is shown in the 'How to add and update your identity document with a name or nationality change on your UKVI account: video'?¹

Will such an eVisa holder who travels out of the UK and obtains a new passport while abroad be able to use this functionality (to link an identity document reflecting a name or nationality change using an ID checking app) while overseas? If not, why is this not possible, and is the Home Office working on making it possible in the future?

The vast majority of people are able to update their UKVI account with a new or different passport when overseas using the [Update your UK Visas and Immigration account details](#) service (where the new passport does not contain any changes in personal details (i.e. no change in name, nationality, date of birth). If name or nationality has changed, providing the new passport has a biometric chip, they should also be able to use this service while overseas.

Most recently we have enabled dual nationals who have already told us about both their nationalities to add a new passport via the [Update your UK Visas and Immigration account details](#) service from overseas, removing the need for them to post their passport to the Home Office. However, the name and date of birth contained in the new passport must match the existing UKVI account details and the nationality of the new passport must also match any nationality we have previously been told about and has been previously verified.

People who are unable to update their passport details via the online service when overseas will be advised of this as part of the process. In this circumstance, people will need to apply for a temporary visa which allows them to re-enter the UK once only. People can do so at <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/country-selection>. (As mentioned on

page 6 above, different arrangements are in place for EUSS and pre-settled status holders who are unable to update their UKVI account details).

Once in the UK, they will be able to use the [Update your UK Visas and Immigration account details: Update your UKVI account details - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/update-your-uk-visas-and-immigration-account-details) service to add their new passport to their UKVI account and update their personal details.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write to the Home Office. We are grateful for your ongoing support in communicating and amplifying the developments within our immigration system to the millions it affects.

We look forward to maintaining constructive and collaborative engagement with you and all our stakeholders, ensuring our systems remain robust and responsive, and driving the continuous improvement of the services we provide.

Yours sincerely,

Ed Mackie

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