



Department for Transport

Monique Hawkins
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the3million

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State
Keir Mather MP

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Dear Monique,

Thank you for your letters to the Minister for Rail and me about amending the Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill to address incidences of denied boarding on the grounds of incorrect documentation.

I understand you are concerned that some passengers may be denied boarding, and consequently denied compensation, where airlines have not correctly applied Home Office guidance on the documentation required to travel to the UK.

The Department recognises the importance of ensuring that passengers who hold valid permission to travel are treated fairly.

Under UK air passenger rights law, airlines may refuse boarding without paying compensation only where there are reasonable grounds to do so, such as inadequate travel documentation. Where these regulations apply, a passenger who believes they have been incorrectly denied boarding should first complain to the airline. If the complaint is not resolved within eight weeks, or the passenger is dissatisfied with the response, they can escalate it to the Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme the airline belongs to, or, where the airline is not a member of a scheme, to the Civil Aviation Authority's Passenger Advice and Complaints Team. Passengers also retain the option of pursuing a claim through the courts.

Anyone affected may also wish to contact the Citizens Advice consumer service on 0808 223 1133 or at www.citizensadvice.org.uk, which offers free advice on how best to take a complaint forward.

The Department continues to keep air passenger rights under review, including whether the current framework provides sufficient protection where passengers believe they have been wrongly denied boarding. The Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill includes a power enabling the Secretary of State to make secondary legislation to strengthen air passenger rights in future.

While the Government has no current plans to legislate specifically on this issue, the new power would enable us to consider it further in future should evidence emerge that changes are necessary and proportionate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Keir Mather'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

KEIR MATHER MP

MINISTER FOR AVIATION, MARITIME AND LOGISTICS