
Director General for Regulation

Pete Benton
Director of Population and Public Policy Operations
Office for National Statistics

23 July 2020

Dear Pete

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF NATIONAL STATISTICS DESIGNATION: OVERSEAS TRAVEL AND TOURISM STATISTICS

Thank you for your letter of 22 July, regarding statistics on overseas travel and tourism. Given the suspension of the International Passenger Survey in mid-March which provides the underlying data for these statistics, I support your decision to temporarily remove the National Statistics designation.

I welcome your plans to publish data for the first quarter of 2020 later this week, which will be highly valued by users. I encourage you to ensure that the impact of the missing March data on the quality and interpretation of the statistics is communicated clearly. I am pleased to hear that you have been engaging with users about the impact of COVID-19 on these statistics and encourage you to continue this over the coming months as you plan for the safe return of the survey.

We will continue to engage with your statisticians, via our Travel, Transport and Tourism team, and look forward to considering the restoration of National Statistics status once data collection has resumed and you are assured the statistics can meet the standards expected by the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation