

# Two weeks of quarantine will wreck travel, airlines warn

By **Oliver Gill and Alan Tovey**

THE airline industry and wider economy will suffer immeasurable damage if ministers press ahead with plans to quarantine travellers for 14 days after they arrive at British airports, bosses have warned.

It is feared that harsh new measures to confine passengers at home or a hotel for a fortnight will wreck international travel and hammer consumer confidence at a time when many carriers are already close to collapse.

Lobby groups attacked the plans, which would apply to both British citizens and foreigners, and are designed to stop future coronavirus outbreaks, saying they are part of a wave of uncoordinated measures being taken by countries across the world and nations should act together instead.

Trade body Airlines UK said: "This proposal would effectively kill international travel to and from the UK and cause immeasurable damage to the aviation industry and wider UK economy. Nobody is going to go on holiday if they're not able to resume normal life for 14 days, and business travel would be severely restricted.

"It will also make it all but impossible for aviation to resume any time soon, thereby setting back the UK's economic recovery still further."

Passengers who fail to remain at an address given to authorities will face large fines under the proposals, which are being overseen by Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, and Grant Shapps, the Transport Secretary.

Ministers are yet to formally confirm the quarantine, which could be intro-

duced as early as next month. George Eustice, the Environment Secretary, told Sunday's Downing Street press conference that quarantining was "coming down the line".

The plans are thought to have blindsided airport and airline bosses, who have yet to be briefed by the Department for Transport about them.

An Airport Operators Association spokesman said: "The Government should lead internationally in agreeing a common baseline for health screening that facilitates travel while reducing the risk of Covid-19 spreading."

Separately yesterday, low-cost airline easyJet urged investors to reject a boardroom coup by its founder and biggest investor. **Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou** wants to remove John Barton, the chairman, Johan Lundgren, chief executive, and two other directors in a row over a £4.5bn Airbus contract. The motion will be put to a vote on May 22.

Meanwhile, Airbus warned that it could face collapse as it prepares to slash jobs in the face of a massive slump in orders. Guillaume Faury, the pan-European plane maker's boss, told his 133,000 employees in a letter that Airbus is "bleeding cash at an unprecedented rate which may threaten our existence" after losing a third of its business in just two weeks.

Those at risk could include some of its 13,500 British staff, many of whom work at its wing factory in Broughton, North Wales. Airbus said it had applied to furlough 3,200 of its Broughton staff for at least three weeks. The company is expected to set out the size of the hit from coronavirus cancellations when it reports first-quarter results tomorrow.



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The airline industry has criticised plans to make passengers quarantine for two weeks