

Government Response: The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel, Operator Liability and Public Health Information to Travellers) (Wales) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

Merit Scrutiny point 1:

The rationale for providing a sectoral exemption for the category of seamen and inspectors and surveyors of ships, is to ensure that international shipping and the movement of critical freight can continue during the Covid pandemic. However, the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 defined “seamen” very broadly as a person employed or engaged in any capacity on board any ship (except masters and pilots). Following the re-start of domestic cruising in the UK and the Common Travel Area a number of cruise ship workers from India sought to use this exemption to fly into UK without quarantining on arrival as the definition of “seamen” covered those who provide hospitality services on board cruise ships. This was not the intention of the original exemption.

Since April 23 2021 India has been rated as ‘red’ for travel due to the emergence and rapid spread of the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant. This technical amendment to the exemption covering ‘Seafarers’ and in particular, the exempt categories for “seamen and masters” and “inspectors and surveyors of ships” was changed in relation to red list entrants, so as to remove cruise ship workers. Such individuals would therefore be prohibited from entering Wales if they had been in a red list country within the previous 10 days.