



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Ashley Dalton MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Public Health and Prevention*

*39 Victoria Street
London
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PO-1575544

Ms Fran McCloskey
Chief Executive Officer
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
By email to: c.donaghy@cieh.org

7 March 2025

Dear Ms McCloskey,

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 August to Wes Streeting, co-signed by Mr Jon Averbs, about the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR) at UK borders. I apologise for the delay in replying.

I appreciate your concerns and suggestions.

The Government recognises the importance of border health security in protecting the public from infectious diseases and other health threats. This is the core mission of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which is the designated national focal point for the IHR.

The UK Government and public health agencies will continue to work together through the Common Framework on Public Health Protection and Health Security to detect, assess and report public health events, including through the sharing of public health information, in a timely manner.

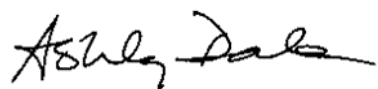
Each year the UK completes a World Health Organization States Party self-assessment reporting tool to measure performance against the IHR standards. The assessment of compliance with core capacity requirements at designated airports, ports and ground crossings received a score of 67 per cent for 2021-23. The UKHSA and the Department are continuously looking to improve our compliance with the IHR. This includes considering the role of local authorities in protecting health security and mitigating public health threats from infectious diseases and other hazards entering the country. The scope of the work that the UKHSA carries out to protect the health of the UK population includes intervening at the UK's physical borders as well as carrying out surveillance and horizon scanning for public health threats.

The Department is committed to learning lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and agrees the amendments to the IHR present an opportunity to shape its response to public health threats. The Department and the UKHSA are working with partners and key stakeholders to consider the next steps. The Government continues to work to ensure local authorities have the resources to protect public health at the borders.

The Government is grateful for the support of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Association of Port Health Authorities, and appreciates your important role in protecting the UK's biosecurity at the borders.

I hope this reply is helpful, and I am copying it to Mr Avern.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Dalton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

ASHLEY DALTON

cc: Mr John Avern