



**St Helena
Government**

COVID-19 ST HELENA PREPAREDNESS PRESS CONFERENCE – 24 MARCH 2020

TOP LINES

- There are no suspected cases of COVID-19 on St Helena
- We are still in the Prevent Stage i.e. Keep COVID-19 off-Island
- The three cases on Ascension Island tested negative for COVID-19. All passengers on St Helena who arrived on 14 March flight are now out of isolation.
- Following Saturday's flight (21 March), 37 passengers have been asked to self-isolate for 14 days as per the new directives of SHG which were agreed on 16 March by the Incident Executive Group (IEG).
- All those passengers have been informed what self-isolation entails which is:
 - Briefed by Proper Officer (designated by Law) at the Airport on Saturday on the requirements for self-isolation
 - Given a written document with guidance on what self-isolation entails, which has also been posted on the SHG website
 - Each individual who is in self-isolation is receiving a daily phone call from the Health Directorate, to check that they are okay and discuss any questions they might have
- The IEG have now agreed further measures to try and prevent the virus coming here and these are:
 - Airlink flights will now be fortnightly. However, we appreciate that this decision is possibly now obsolete as we wait to get more clarity on the South Africa three-week lockdown
 - All new arrivals to St Helena will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. This will be at a location approved by a proper officer and will take effect from the next flight to St Helena
 - No yachts from hereon will be accepted to allow crew members to land on the Island unless they have an automatic right of entry. Yachts will still be allowed to enter St Helena waters where we are obliged to assist by International obligations e.g. SOLAS. The harbourmaster is making this information known on yachting websites and to overseas yacht clubs. Restrictions to people arriving by sea are the same as those arriving by air

by demonstrating they have been isolated from the risk of COVID-19 for at least 14 days and self-isolation is permitted on their vessels.

- In light of the announcements last night by the UK Prime Minister and South African President, we are working on a number of contingencies to ensure that essential supplies can still continue to reach the Island. Our priorities are getting the MV Helena into berth in Capetown and sourcing essential supplies via alternative routes
- The British High commission in Pretoria has been in contact with A W Ship Management to help prioritise the MV Helena to get a berth this evening. It is planned cargo operations will commence between 8am and 9am tomorrow (Wednesday) with a view to departing on Thursday afternoon. Her estimated time of arrival is 2 April
- We are in very uncertain times at the moment and we cannot guarantee future commercial flights to and from St Helena. If anybody (Saints/tourists/contractors) is concerned about getting back to their home country or people wish to return to St Helena please contact: Jane Roberts on tel: 22158 or email: jane.roberts@tourism.co.sh.

We are all in this together. We have to take sensible precautionary measures to protect ourselves and those around us – we all have a collective responsibility to each other.

This means that we should not shake hands or hug each other. Wave instead. Avoid close physical contact and try to avoid crowds. Wash your hands, look out for the posters and listen to the radio announcements.

We will continue to hold regular briefings to keep the public informed.

SHG
24 March 2020