

Government announces refunds for rail and coach journeys booked for previous Christmas travel window

News story

Refund guarantee for cancelled Christmas rail and coach trips.



- government is ensuring all domestic rail and coach passengers who have cancelled their travel plans in England between 23 to 27 December (2020) are refunded
- passengers will not be left out of pocket for complying with the new Christmas rules
- people are reminded to stay at home in tier 4, stay local elsewhere and carefully consider if they need to travel

The government will provide cash refunds for domestic rail and coach tickets for the previous Christmas travel window between 23 to 27 December, bought before the change in regulations and guidance that were [announced by the Prime Minister on Saturday 19 December](#).

This will apply to [journeys in England booked on or after 24 November, when the Christmas travel window was announced](#).

The government recognises that many people will have booked their coach and rail tickets in advance based on previous government advice. This announcement ensures that people are not penalised for following the new rules, protecting themselves and others from the virus.

Operators will be able to issue refunds immediately and passengers should check the website of their operator for how to claim. We urge people to be patient as rail and coach operators will be processing high volumes of refunds over the coming weeks.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

It is imperative that we all follow the new measures and play our part in tackling this virus, protecting others and safeguarding our NHS.

If you booked a coach or rail journey between 23 and 27 December, you are entitled to a cash refund. This ensures no one is left out of pocket for doing the right thing – staying home in tier 4, and elsewhere staying local and only meeting your Christmas bubble on Christmas day.

Published 21 December 2020

[Guidance if you are visiting your local coastline this winter](#)



[National lockdown rules apply in England](#). Stay at home.

Please take care and follow the rules remembering that you must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary.

If you are exercising at the coast with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, it should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.

See specific guidance for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

We're in difficult times, but if you're in trouble at the coast, we're always here for you. In an emergency at sea or at the coast dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

Published 2 December 2020

Last updated 6 January 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 6 January 2021

Guidance updated following national lockdown announced in England

2. 21 December 2020

Updated tiers listed to include tier 4

3. 2 December 2020

First published.

Major step forward for RAF Lossiemouth upgrades as runway refurbishment finishes early

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) awarded a £75-million contract for the airfield operating surfaces project to VolkerFitzpatrick in August 2019. The project was expected to be completed in spring 2021 but fast work allowed the runway to be handed over to RAF Lossiemouth on 15 December 2020, following successful completion of pre-use checks.

Resurfacing works are one of many improvements being made at RAF Lossiemouth, future-proofing the Moray base for years to come. Other improvements include accommodation for personnel, a new Air Traffic Control Tower, upgrades to drainage and electrical supplies, and upgraded facilities for IX (Bomber) Squadron.

For most of the runway work, which started in earnest in January 2020, aircraft continued to operate from RAF Lossiemouth. This work required the RAF's new P-8A Maritime Patrol Aircraft being delivered to nearby Kinloss Barracks and operating from there during the majority of the runway works. A short period of relocation was also needed for Lossiemouth's Typhoon aircraft while the intersection between the Station's two runways was resurfaced; this started in August 2020 and saw the Typhoons also operating from Kinloss Barracks as well as Leuchars Station. The intersection resurfacing finished in October 2020, allowing the P-8As and Typhoons to return and operate from their home station.

The P-8A Poseidon is a submarine hunter which locates and tracks potentially hostile submarines. Home to four fast-jet squadrons flying the Typhoon, it has been some time since RAF Lossiemouth has regularly operated a larger aircraft such as the P-8A Poseidon. The P-8As represent a new era in operations from this station and a significant investment in Scotland which introduces a new UK Defence capability.

Russ Liddington, DIO's Project Manager for the resurfacing works, said:

The completion of the runway works months ahead of schedule is a testament to the hard work and collaborative attitude of everyone involved in the project, whether from DIO, VolkerFitzpatrick, RAF Lossiemouth or one of the subcontractors. The runway resurfacing and associated works, such as installing new drainage and airfield lighting, will see the runway life extended by up to 25 years. I'd also like to thank the local community for their support which is much appreciated by us all.

It is fantastic to see the works completed so quickly and a pleasure to see the RAF using much improved airfield facilities in support of defence.

Wing Commander Pete Beckett, Director of the Lossiemouth Development Programme, said:

The completion of the runway work here at RAF Lossiemouth represents the first major upgrade to be delivered by the Development Programme and to have such a complex project delivered some three months early in the challenging context of 2020 cannot be under-estimated. My congratulations must go to both DIO and VolkerFitzpatrick in achieving this milestone.

For the wider Programme though, this is just the start. We already have one major project in delivery and expect to start another five projects in the first half of 2021. While we have secured the Station's operational output through the new operating surfaces, we now turn more towards the people-focussed improvements where we are going to upgrade both working and living accommodation across the unit. The exciting times continue!

Representatives from DIO, VolkerFitzpatrick and RAF Lossiemouth mark the handover of the completed runway. DIO Crown Copyright, 2020.

Station Commander RAF Lossiemouth, Group Captain Chris Layden, said:

It's been a privilege to see our newly resurfaced runway so busy since its early completion.

We've already conducted joint training with F-35B Lightning aircraft from 207 Squadron and been joined by a large US Navy detachment. That is of course in addition to our usual 24/7 Typhoon and Poseidon operations. Lossiemouth now really is a next-generation maritime patrol and fighter station!

My thanks go to my team, and contractors VolkerFitzpatrick for their hard work in successfully delivering the main runway ahead of

schedule.

Keith Maplethorpe, VolkerFitzpatrick development director, said:

Completing the works ahead of schedule has been a collaborative effort and is testament to the ongoing commitment of our teams to ensure that key projects can continue throughout this pandemic. We are looking forward to the next project at RAF Lossiemouth.

As a defence critical project, upgrade work at RAF Lossiemouth has continued despite the difficulties presented by coronavirus, with various safety measures taken to make the site COVID secure.

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[Chair of the ring-fencing and proprietary trading independent review panel announced](#)

News story

Keith Skeoch has been appointed by HM Treasury as chair of the independent review panel with responsibility to oversee and deliver two statutory reviews on the operation of ring-fencing legislation and proprietary trading.



The ring-fencing regime is a key domestic regulatory reform, introduced in

the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, following recommendations from the Independent Commission on Banking in 2011, to strengthen the resilience of the UK banking sector. The regime, which came into force in January 2019, separates core retail banking services from investment banking activities, particularly to protect depositors from risks arising elsewhere in the banks and in the financial system.

The Financial Services (Banking Reform) Act (FSBRA) 2013 requires the Treasury to appoint an independent panel to review the operation of the legislation relating to ring-fencing.

FSBRA also requires the Treasury to appoint an independent panel to review banks' proprietary trading activities. Proprietary trading involves activity where a bank trades in financial instruments or commodities as principal, requiring the use of the bank's own capital and/ or liquidity resources.

The independent review panel is required to submit its reports to the Treasury, including any recommendations.

The Treasury will announce the appointments of the remaining members of the panel and publish the terms of reference for the reviews in due course.

Published 21 December 2020