UK Government

Universal Permission to Travel

GM Information Pack
Submit a Pleasure Craft Report (sPCR)

December 2024

Future Borders & Immigration System (FBIS)

Information Pack Purpose and Contents

The sPCR web user service is a voluntary, free to use service provided by the Government, for those in the sector who own or are responsible for pleasure crafts that sail to and from the UK, to report data in advance of travel. It enables users to submit digitised data about the vessel, the voyage and persons and goods on board.

The purpose of this pack is to provide information regarding the Home Office's new Universal Permission to Travel (UPT) scheme, UK Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) and Electronic Visas (eVisas), and further information and guidance regarding the introduction of UPT response messages to the sPCR web user service to help skippers, operators and agents conduct their checks.

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UK Government

Our Digital Vision & Universal Permission to Travel (UPT)

Our digital vision

Planning to come	Applying to come	Travelling to the UK	Crossing the Border	Living in the UK
Simpler guidance and transformed customer contact channels	Streamlined and seamless digital application processes Transformed sponsorship system	Permission to Travel including Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme and eVisas	Innovative technology increasing automation for everyone	Simple online services to demonstrate rights and entitlements Increased data sharing within government

Universal Permission to Travel (UPT)

The UK Government is committed to strengthening the UK's borders by ensuring that everyone travelling inbound to the UK **(except British and Irish citizens)** seek permission in advance of travel – this is our Universal Permission to Travel (UPT) requirement.

To support our digital vision and the introduction of the UPT scheme, the Home Office is:

1

Introducing Digital-only immigration products

- ✓ Moving from physical immigration documents to **digital-only immigration products (e.g. eVisas),** please refer to slide 8.
- ✓ This means physical vignettes and physical immigration cards such as Biometric Residence Permit will no longer be issued.

2

Introducing permission before you travel

- ✓ The UPT scheme will require everyone travelling to the UK to hold an immigration product **before they travel** (except British and Irish Citizens).
- ✓ This means **visa nationals** will still require a visa or other immigration status and non-visa nationals will require a permission to travel in the form of an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA).

3

Introducing Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)

- ✓ Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) is a new digital-only immigration product for **non-visa nationals**. For more information, please refer to slide 9.
- ✓ **Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA**)–is a key part of the UPT Scheme. This will provide advance knowledge of people travelling into the UK.

Permission to Travel

The type of permission will depend on the person's own circumstances

NO CHANGE

British & Irish citizens will not need an ETA to travel to the UK.

Their passport will be evidence of their permission, if travelling from outside the Common Travel Area.

TRANSITION TO DIGITAL ONLY PRODUCTS

Visa nationals and those already **granted permission to enter or remain** will not need an ETA to travel to the UK.

Their entry clearance, biometric residence document, other physical document or **eVisa** will be evidence of their permission.

NEW

Those who **do not need a visa,** entry clearance or other specified immigration status will need an ETA to travel to the UK.

The ETA will be their permission to travel.

The skipper, operator or agent will submit advance passenger information (API) to the Home Office via the sPCR web service. The Home Office will then confirm whether the individual has a permission to travel to the UK.

Visa and non-visa nationals

What does a ‘visa national’ mean?

A visa national means this person requires a visa to come to the UK, for any purpose.

What does a ‘non-visa national’ mean?

A non-visa national means this person does not require a visa to visit the UK, but will need an ETA once they are launched, if they don't already hold an entry clearance.

You can check if an individual requires a visa at: UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK

UK Government

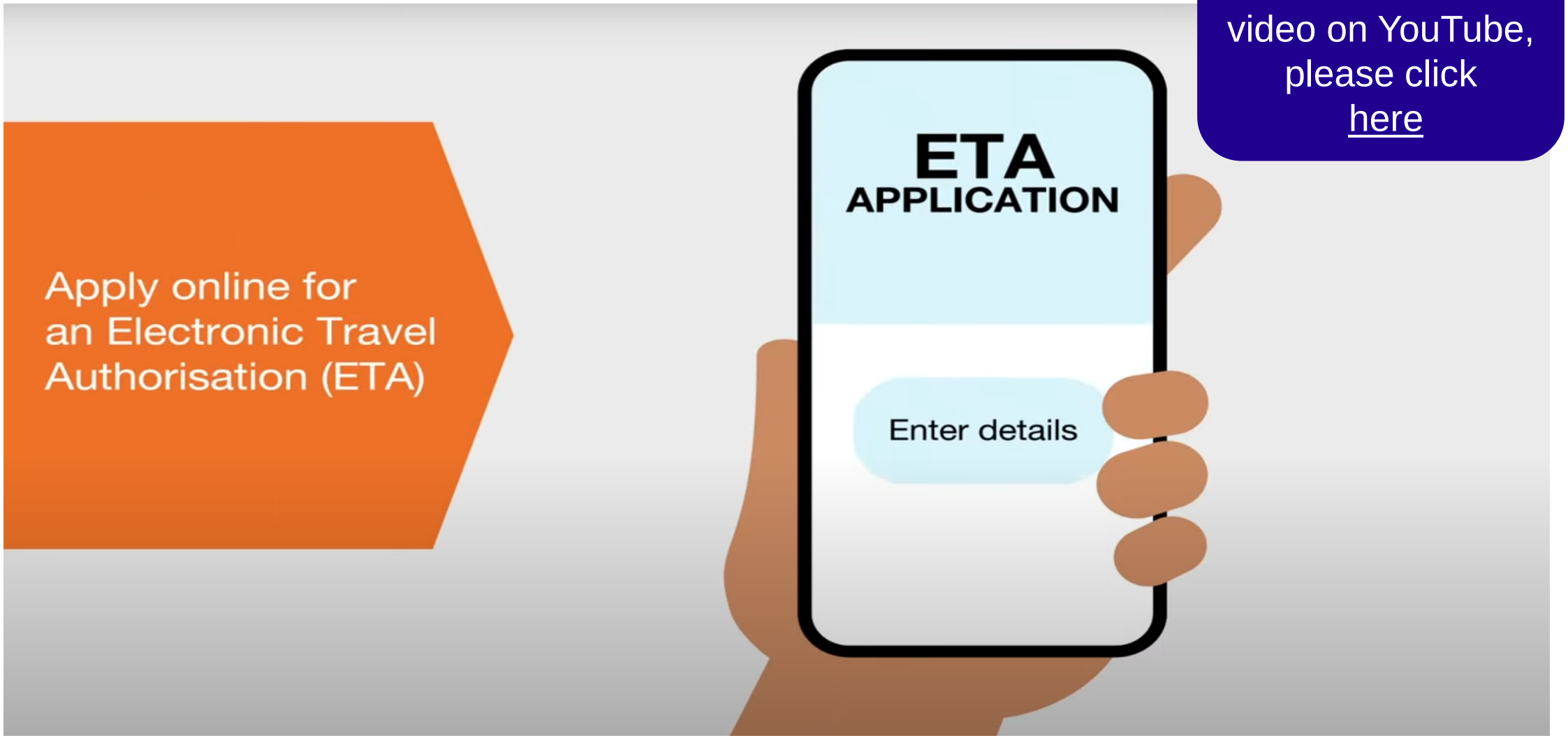
New Digital Immigration Products

UK Government

Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)

What is an ETA?

To watch our ‘What is an ETA’ video on YouTube, please click here



What is Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)?

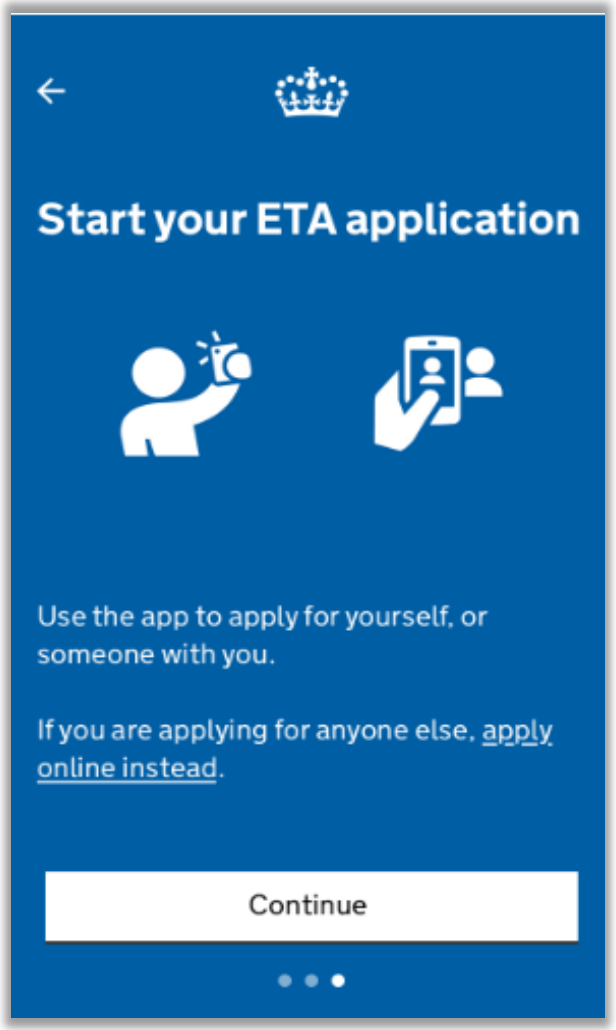
An ETA is advance permission to travel to, or transit through the UK, for those **who do not currently need to obtain a visa**, or **do not have a UK immigration status**.

An ETA will be valid for **2 years or until the passport expires, whichever is sooner** and for **multiple journeys** to the UK within that period.

The cost of an ETA will be £10 per application.

The application process will be quick and light-touch via your mobile phone. Most applicants will receive a response within three working days, with many receiving a result sooner.

If successful, an ETA - **digital permission to travel** - will be granted.



Who will need an ETA?

Who will need an ETA?

Eligible Non-Visa nationals

Infants and children

Tourism or visiting family and friends

Business trips or studying as a visitor (for up to 6 months)

Transiting through the UK

T5 Creatives

European Nationals will be eligible in 2025

Who will not need an ETA?

Visa nationals. They will continue to require a visa for travel and entry to the UK.

Those with permission to live, work or study in the UK

British or Irish Passport Holders (including dual nationals)

Non-visa national residents of Ireland will not require an ETA to travel to the UK on a journey being undertaken within the Common Travel Area (CTA). (They will need an ETA to travel to the UK from outside the CTA).

Exempt individuals such as Diplomats will still be exempt, this is not changing.

Rules around Contract Seafarers will remain the same.

UK ETA Scheme: Rollout to date

- The **UK Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme launched in October 2023**, when applications opened for Qatari nationals.
- In February 2024, visitors from the remaining GCC States (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) were the next nationalities onboarded onto the scheme.
- Eligible non-Europeans can apply in advance from 27 November 2024 and will need an ETA to travel from 8 January 2025.
- Eligible Europeans can apply from 5 March 2025 and will need an ETA to travel from 2 April 2025.

What does not change:

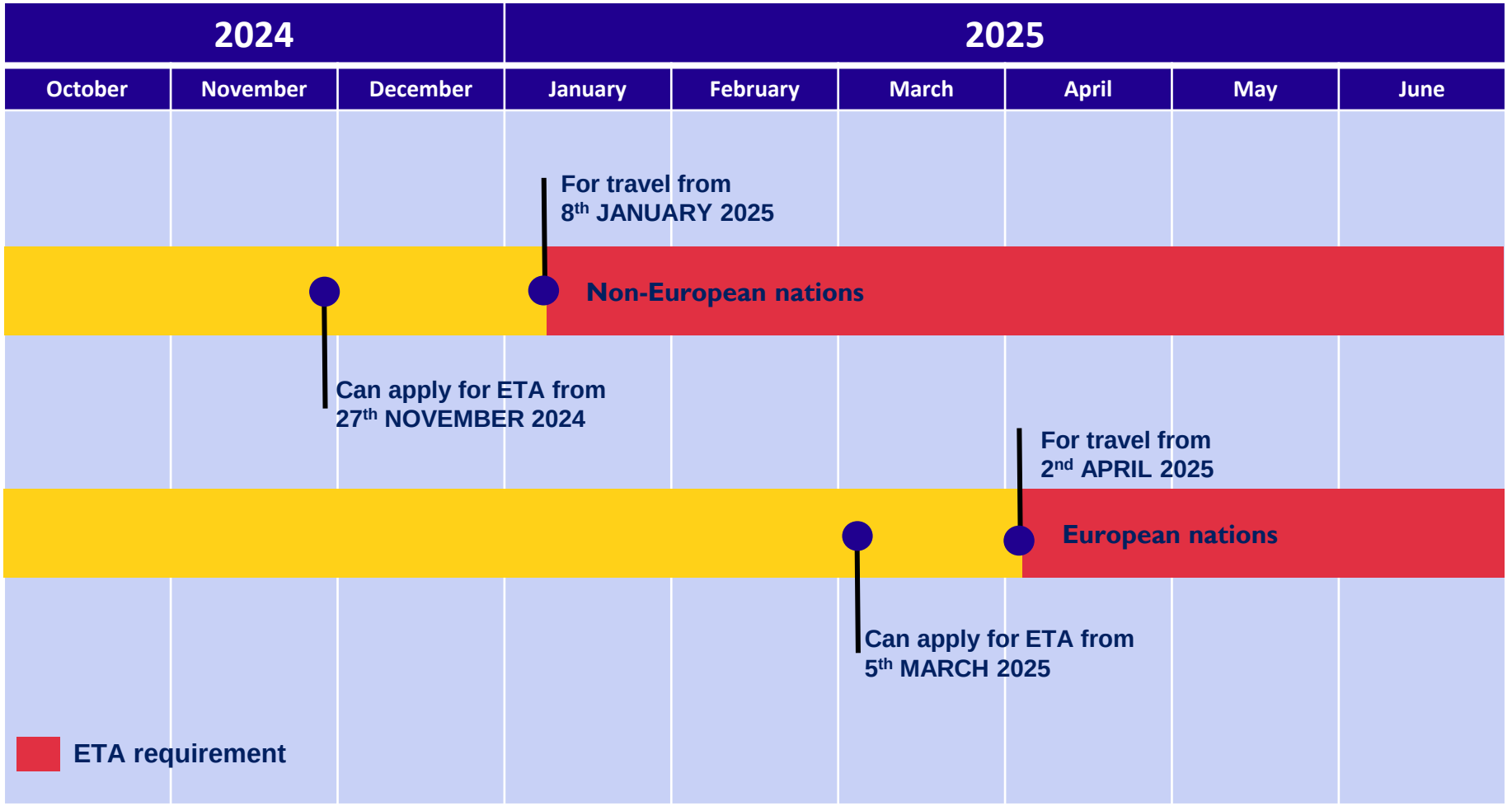
- Your **existing obligations under the Section 40 of the UK Immigration & Asylum Act 1999**.
- You will still need to make **face to document checks**, to ensure the person presenting the passport is the rightful holder and the document appears genuine and is valid. For more information on checking passports and travel documents click here **Guidance on examining identity documents (publishing.service.gov.uk)**
- All **visa nationals will still require visas**, and these will be checked for in the current way. The Home Office will continue the roll out of e-visas throughout 2024-2025. Follow this link to check **UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**
- Non-visa nationals who already hold a visit visa (i.e. a 10-year visit visa which is still valid) will not require an ETA as the visa is their permission.

Remaining ETA Rollout Application Window – Key dates & changes

Key Dates	What will change for passengers	What this means for skippers, operators and agents
From 27th November 2024 to 8th January 2025	ETA applications will open for eligible **non-European nations.**	If passengers does not hold an ETA during this period (27th November 2024 to 8th January 2025) they can still travel to the UK.
From 8th January 2025 until the end of implementation period before ETA is enforced (Date TBC)	Eligible **non-European nations** will require an ETA to travel to the UK. Passengers must apply for an ETA before travelling to the UK. If the outcome of their ETA application has not been decided before their departure date, they can still travel to the UK pending a decision.	As with all non-visa nationals, skippers, operators and agents will not be liable for a penalty charge related to permission to travel checks. However, they must continue to check and satisfy themselves that the passenger's travel document is genuine and that they are the rightful holder. During the phased roll-out of ETA, passengers will not be refused at the border, nor should they be refused boarding if they do not hold an ETA. However, if skippers, operators and agents encounter a passenger who is concerned they do not have an ETA before travel, they should encourage them to apply before their departure and can still carry them pending a decision.

Further ETA scheme rollout:

From Autumn 2024, we will expand the ETA scheme to the remaining non-visa nationals who do not currently need a visa to come to the UK for up to 6 months.



Non-European nations

Applications open:

27th November 2024

For travel from:

8th January 2025

European nations

Applications open:

5th March 2025

For travel from:

2nd April 2025

***List of nationalities and when they can apply:** https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-when-you-can-get-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta

Roll-out Phasing

Phase 1
Nov 23*
Feb 24

Qatar*
Saudi Arabia
Oman
Bahrain
Kuwait
UAE

Phase 2 Non-European nations
Apply from 27 November 2024
Use from 8 January 2025

Africa
Botswana
Mauritius
Seychelles

Americas
Antigua & Barbuda
Argentina
Barbados
Belize
Brazil
Canada
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
St Kitts & Nevis
St Lucia
St Vincent & Grenadines
The Bahamas
Trinidad & Tobago
Uruguay
USA

Asia
Brunei
Hong Kong (SAR)
Israel
Japan
Macao (SAR)
Malaysia
Maldives
Singapore
South Korea
Taiwan

Oceania
Australia
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Nauru
New Zealand
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tonga
Tuvalu

Phase 3 - European nations
Apply from 5th March 2025
Use from 2nd April 2025

EU/EEA & Swiss
Andorra
Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czechia
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Monaco
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
San Marino
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Vatican City

UK Government

eVisa

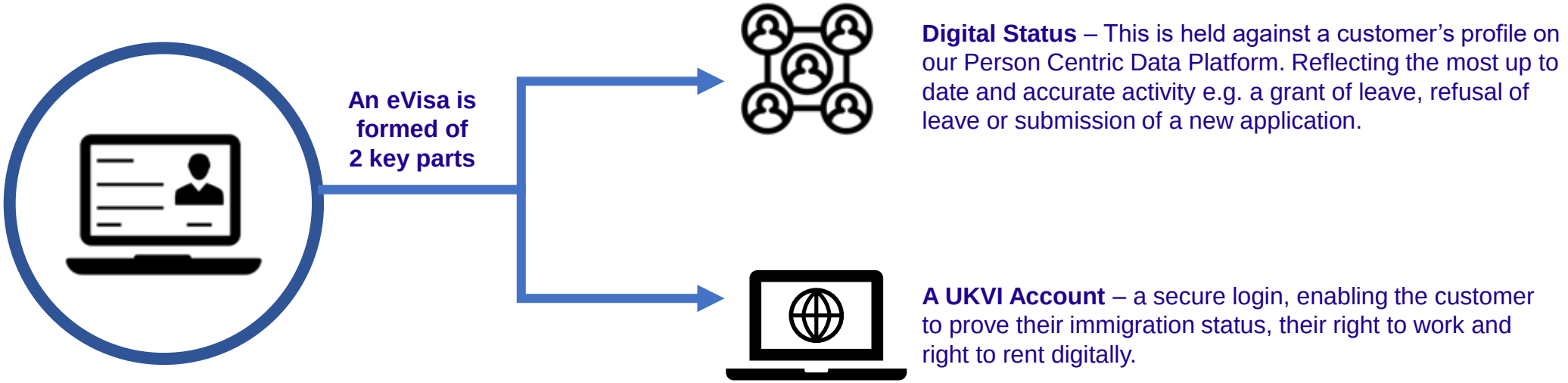
What is an eVisa?

eVisa Overview

- UK Government is developing a border and immigration system that is “digital by default”
- Physical immigration documents such as biometric residence permits (BRPs) and visa vignette stickers are being phased out and replaced with eVisas – an electronic record including a person’s immigration conditions.
- eVisas can be viewed, checked, and shared online or via interfaces that allow rapid, high-volume confirmation of people’s immigration status and associated permissions.
- Our aim is to move to a purely digital solution for BRP holders by the end of 2024 and for vignette only products later in 2025.

What is an eVisa?

An eVisa is an online record of a customer's immigration status and the conditions of their permission to enter or stay in the UK. Customers will need to create a UKVI account to be able to access their eVisa. This eVisa **removes the requirement for physical documents** such as visa vignettes (physical visa sticker in passport), or the Biometric Residence Permits (BRP).



Digital Status – This is held against a customer's profile on our Person Centric Data Platform. Reflecting the most up to date and accurate activity e.g. a grant of leave, refusal of leave or submission of a new application.

A UKVI Account – a secure login, enabling the customer to prove their immigration status, their right to work and right to rent digitally.

- eVisas will be rolled out to most immigration routes for existing BRP holders and new visa applicants throughout 2024. Visitor visas and some routes where customers do not receive a BRP, will continue to be issued proof of status in physical form into 2025.
- Visa nationals should continue to carry their physical documents when travelling internationally, until they expire, to show carriers they have a valid permission to travel to the UK.
- Customers with legacy stamps in their passports, such as 'no time limit' stamps, can continue to use these for travel as today but are being encouraged to transition to an eVisa.
- Customers travelling on a valid UK Home Office issued travel document on its own is currently acceptable. Home Office issued travel documents may be one of the following: UK Home Office issued Refugee Travel Document, UK Home Office issued Stateless Persons Travel Document, or UK Home Office issued Certificate of Travel.

Transition to eVisas

Check if you need a UK visa - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The transition towards a fully digital system is underway, with over 6 million customers already using an Electronic Visa (eVisa) to enter and live in the UK. An eVisa is an online record of a customer's immigration permission in the UK, including any conditions which apply. It is usually linked to a customer's passport to facilitate straightforward international travel. The introduction of eVisas will simplify the process for carriers and operators to check a passenger's UK immigration status. You can use the sPCR web service to check that a passenger has met the security and immigration requirements to travel to the UK.

Moving from Physical Documents to Digital-only Visa Products

- **Physical documents** (e.g. Vignettes or Biometric Residence Permits/Cards (BRP/Cs) are currently used to demonstrate an individual's right to travel to the UK.
- **Non-eVisa customers** currently confirm their status to other checking parties by presenting their physical immigration document.
- Customers with physical documents (such as BRPs), will be transitioning to eVisas from 2024. Other **physical documents will gradually be phased out**, and further communication will be provided with more details.
- An **eVisa** is made up of two parts; a **digital status** and a **UKVI account**.
- Customers with an eVisa can utilise the UKVI account's **View and Prove Service** to share their immigration status with any other parties they are required to provide evidence to. They can also access digitised Right to Work (RTW) and Right to Rent (RTR) checking services.
- From **Autumn 2024**, more customers with a UK immigration status will have a digital-only permission, their eVisa.

What does not change

- Your existing obligations under Section 40 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- You will still need to make **face to face** and **document checks**, to ensure the person presenting the passport is the **rightful holder** and the document appears genuine.
- All visa nationals will still require visas.
- Existing and valid/in date documentary evidence will continue to be accepted.

Check UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Checking immigration permissions

- Visa nationals should receive a Valid Permission to Travel response if they have an eVisa which is linked to the passport or travel document they are travelling on.
- When the Need document checks response is returned for a visa national the following steps should be followed to establish:
  - **If the passenger has a valid immigration permission or exemption**
  - **If the passenger is travelling on the travel document linked to their UK Visas & Immigration account**

Permission - Ask the passenger if they have an exemption or valid UK immigration permission	**No**	**No permission** – Direct passenger to GOV.UK
	No	**Exempt** - Check exemption documents
	Yes	**Ask About Passport/Travel Docs** – ask the passenger if they are travelling on the passport or travel doc linked to their permission. • **If no,** passenger can log into their UKVI account and update their details. • **If yes,** skippers, operators and agents can conduct a manual check: ○ Check for a valid physical document ○ Check the passenger's immigration status on Gov.UK using the Share Code function ○ Call Border Force Carrier Support Hub for advice

BRP/C which expire on or after 31*st* December 2024

As a transitional measure, biometric residence permits (BRPs) and EU Settlement Scheme biometric residence cards (EUSS BRCs) which expire on or after 31*st* December 2024 can also be accepted as evidence of permission to travel to the UK provisionally until 31*st* March 2025. This will be kept under review. Other expired immigration products are not acceptable proof of permission to travel.

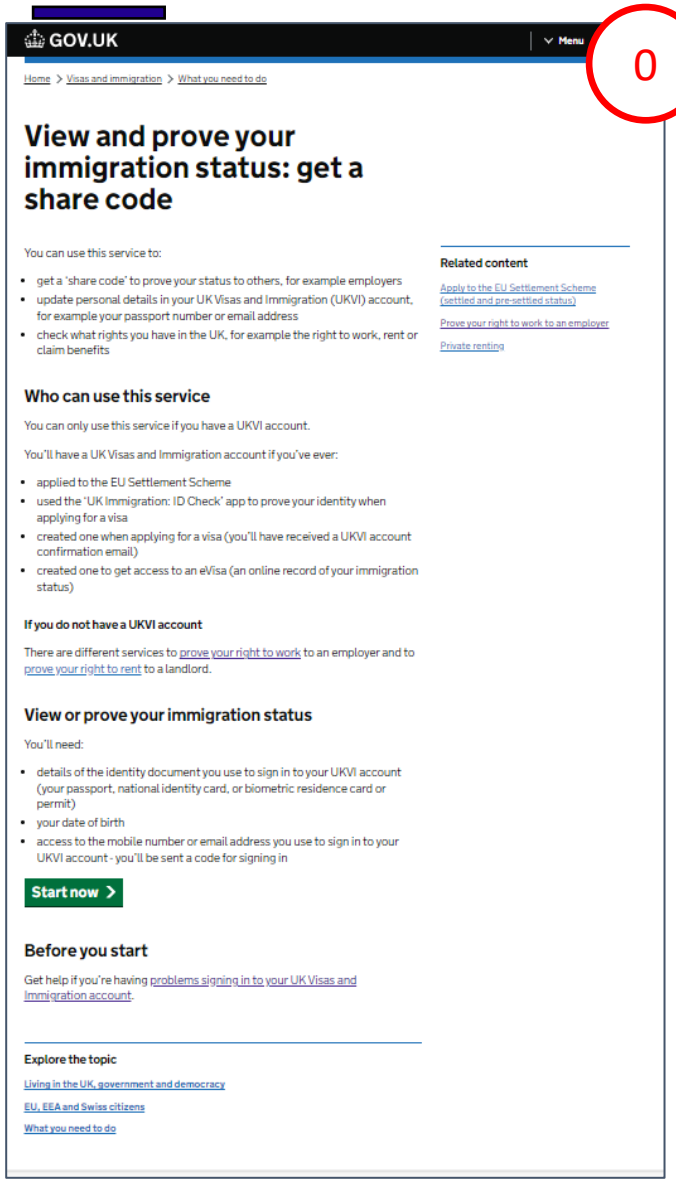
- For visa nationals with a digital eVisa a Valid Permission to Travel response will usually be returned if is linked to the passport or travel document they are travelling on. For more information, please see the 'checking immigration permissions' slide.
- For BRP/C holders if a Valid Permission to Travel response is not returned the following steps should be followed to establish:
  - **If the passenger has a valid immigration permission or exemption**
  - **If the passenger is travelling on the travel document linked to their UK Visas & Immigration account**
  - **If they have a physical BRP/C card which expires on or after 31st December 2024.**

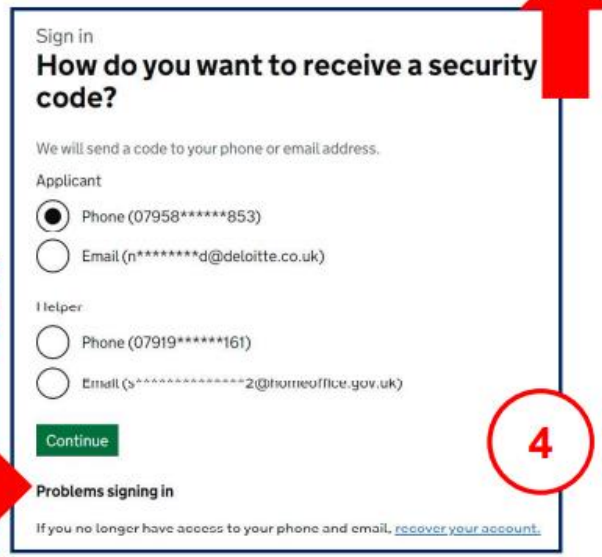
Does the passenger have a **biometric residence permit (BRP) or EU Settlement Scheme biometric residence card (EUSS BRC) which expires on or after 31*st* December 2024?**	**Yes**

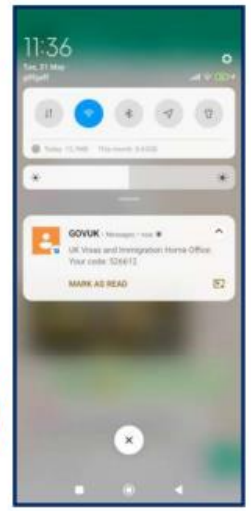
Ask About Passport/Travel Docs – ask the passenger to present their BRP/C card. View example BRP/C documents here.

- Check the BRP/C, if this expires on or after 31st December 2024 **this can be accepted as evidence of permission to travel to the UK provisionally until 31*st* March 2025**.
- The UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub is available 24/7 if further advice is required on +44 300 369 0610 or +44 204 619 6020.

View and Prove your Immigration Status







Get a share code here: https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status

Sharing Digital Status

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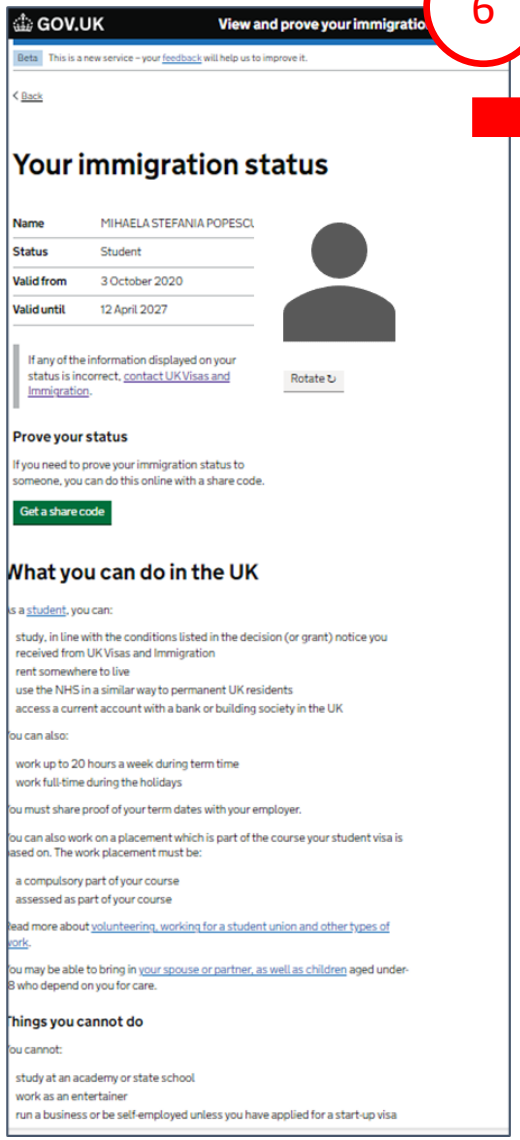

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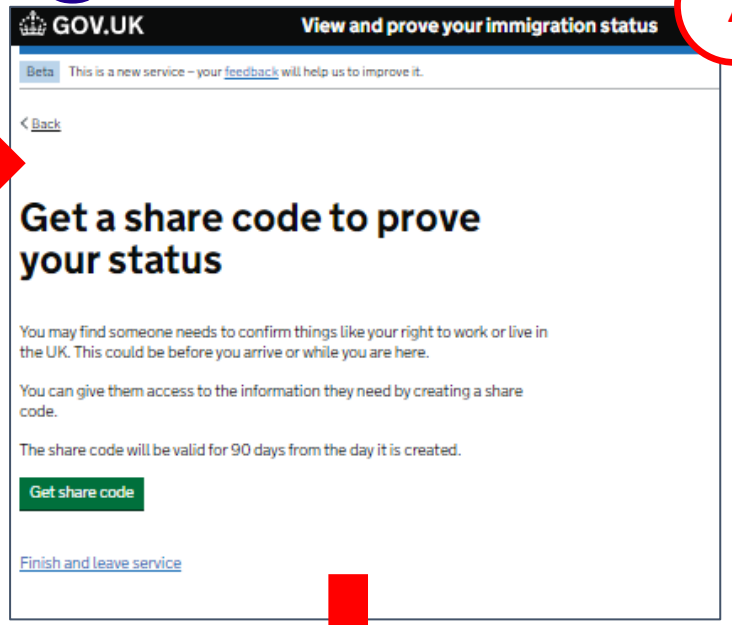

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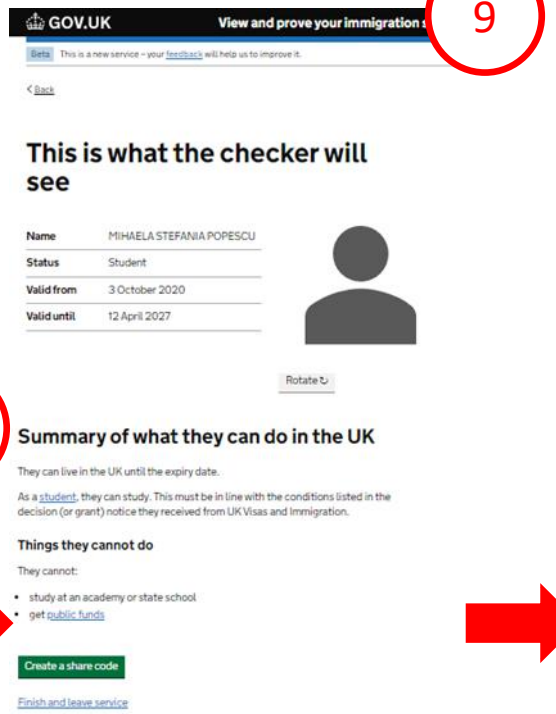

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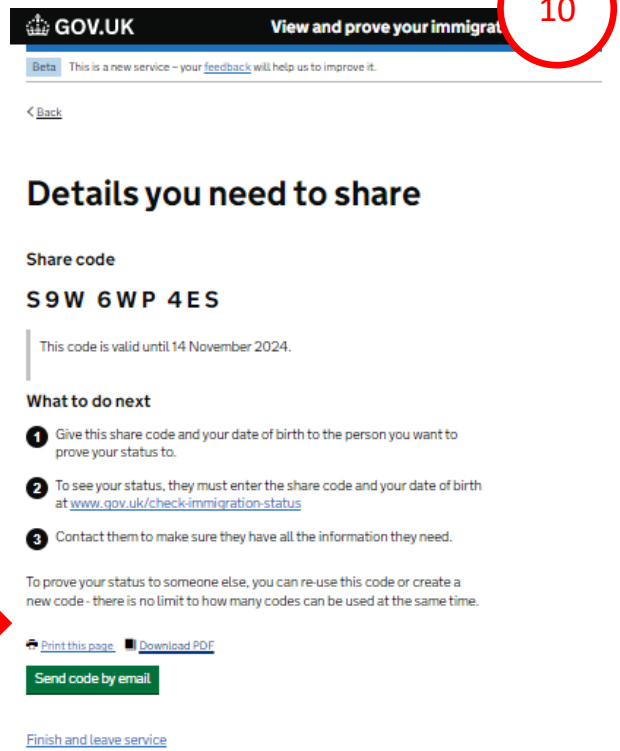

Checking Digital Status

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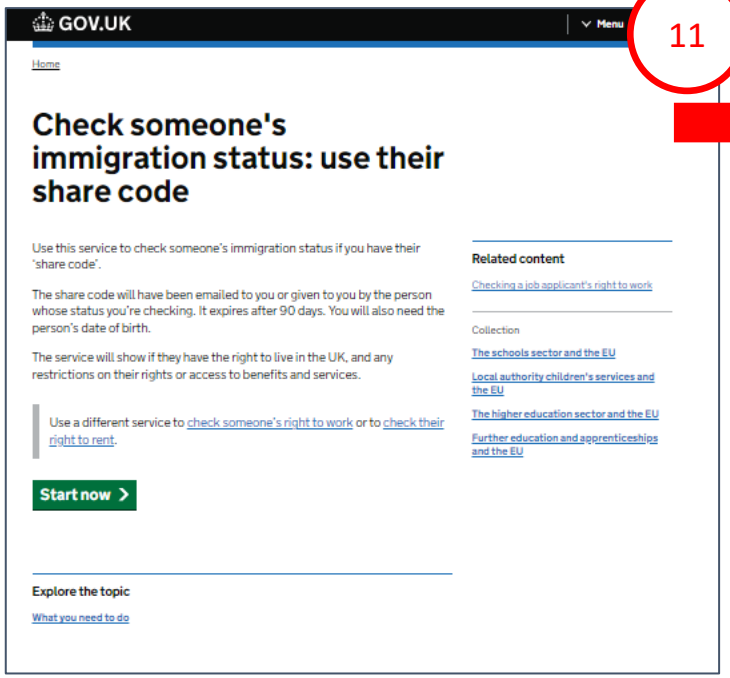

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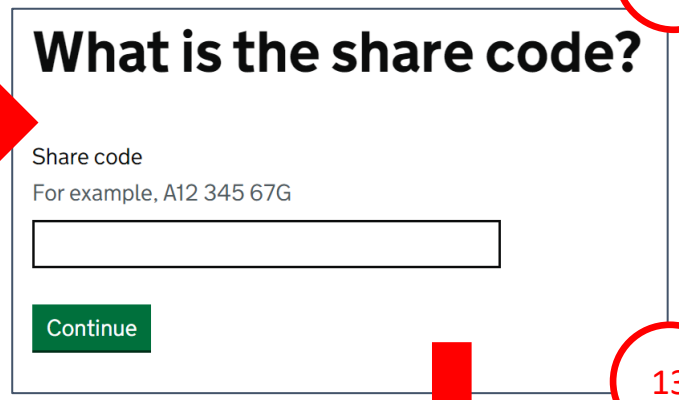

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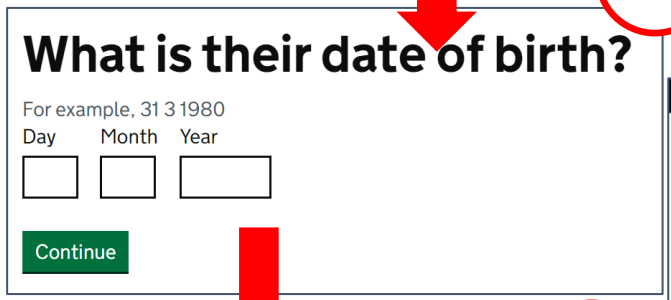

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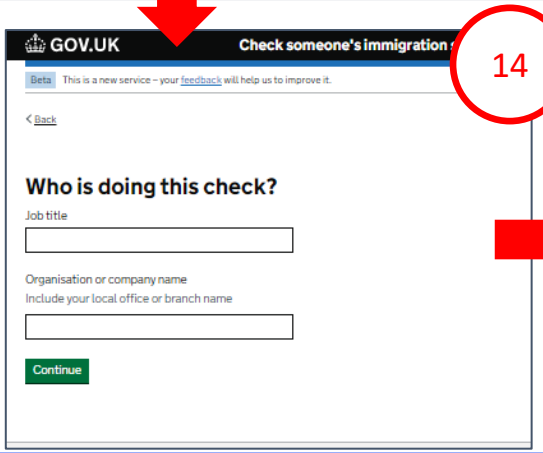

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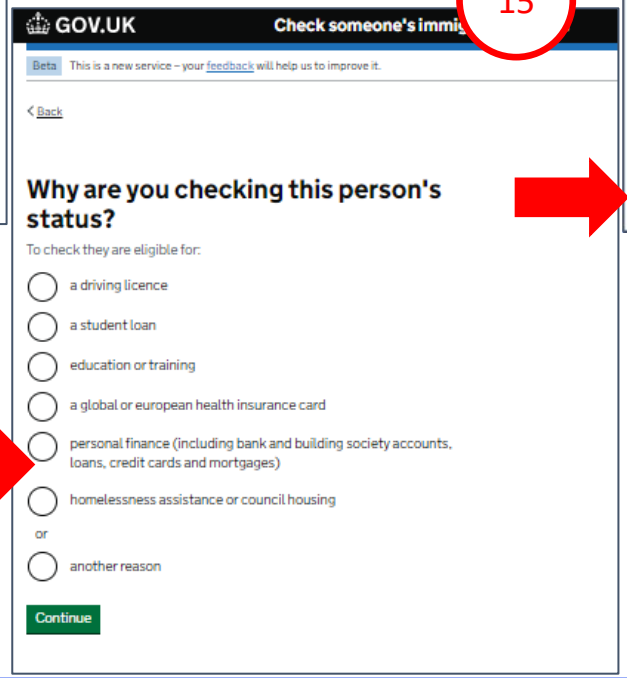

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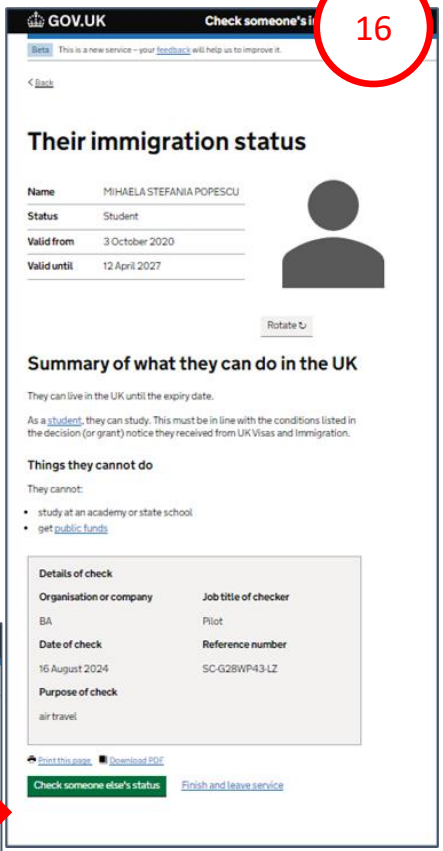


Check someone's immigration status, via their share code here: https://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status

UK Government

Submit a Pleasure Craft Report (sPCR): UPT Response Messages

Submit a Pleasure Craft Report (sPCR)

What is sPCR?

sPCR is a voluntary, free to use service provided by the Government, for those in the sector who own or are responsible for pleasure crafts that sail to and from the UK, to comply with reporting requirements in advance of travel. It enables users to submit digitised data (voyage plan) about the vessel, the voyage and persons and goods on board.

When do you need to submit a voyage plan?

Skippers, operators and agents need to submit a voyage plan on all inbound voyages to the UK. Voyage plans should be submitted at least 2 hours before you depart, but no earlier than 24 hours before you depart. Please note, you can prepare a draft voyage plan in advance of travel. All individuals sailing with you should be added to your voyage plan regardless of nationality.

Changes to sPCR from the 18th April 2024

Skippers, operators and agents using sPCR will receive Universal Permission to Travel (UPT) response messages to indicate each person's permission to travel, prior to travel and boarding on inbound voyages to the UK.

Skippers, operators and agents will receive UPT responses (permission to travel checks)…

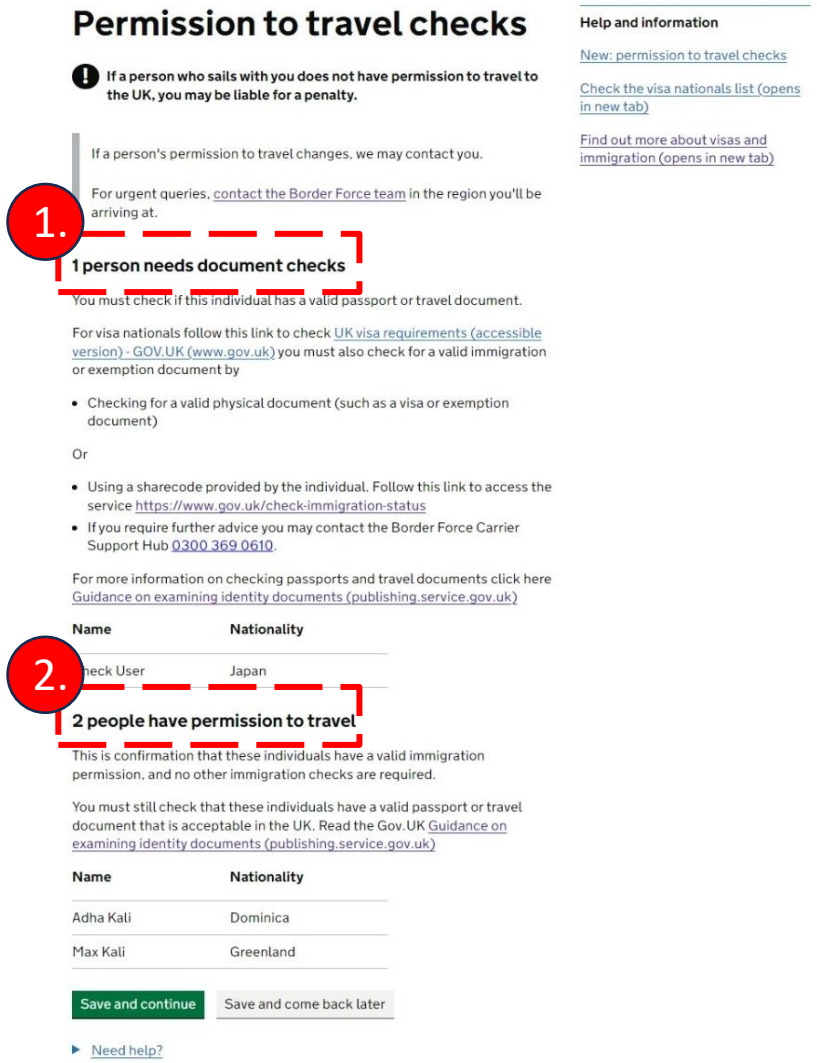
- ✓ On inbound voyages to the UK (even on journeys within the Common Travel Area).

UPT Responses (Permission to Travel Checks)

Currently there are two responses which skippers, operators, and agents will receive via sPCR to help conduct pre-departure checks.

UPT Response Status	
VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL	This confirms that the individual has a valid immigration permission and can board if they have a valid passport or travel document and that the passport or travel document presented is genuine and valid, and that the person is the rightful holder.
NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS	This means that you must check if this individual has a valid passport or travel document. For visa nationals you must also check for a valid immigration or exemption document. Follow this link to check UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) You should conduct a manual check for an immigration permission by: - Checking for a valid physical immigration document (such as a visa vignette or stamp etc.) Or - By using a sharecode which the individual can request from their UKVI account**.** Follow this link to access the service https://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status **If the individual has no exemption or proof of physical or digital permission, you may contact the Home Office for advice by calling the UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub 0300 369 0610 or +44 204 619 6020 from outside the UK**

Demo Passenger Response Page



This demo page shows the new responses that are shown to help skippers, operators and agents conduct their checks.

1. Skippers, operators and agents are required to check visas for Visa Nationals (or exemptions) and Passport and Travel Documents checks for all individuals.

2. The Home Office can find a valid permission to travel for the individual. However, Passport or Travel Document checks still apply.

IMPORTANT

- **British and Irish citizens**, their passport is their permission therefore, face to passport checks are required
- **Visa nationals** need a valid visa, eVisa or exemption certificate
- **All other nationalities** will eventually need an ETA and you will receive more information about the rollout plan in due course

Checking Documents

Passport & Travel Documents

Skippers, operators and agents responsible for carrying an individual to the UK are expected to make sure that:

- Every individual onboard has a valid passport or travel document which is acceptable in the UK.
- The person is the rightful holder of the passport or travel document.

For more information on checking passports and travel documents click here: Guidance on examining identity documents (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Visas

Skippers, operators and agents responsible for carrying an individual to the UK are expected to make sure that

- Those who need a visa to come to the UK have a valid visa or exemption certificate
- The date from which the visa is valid
- The date of expiry of the visa

Who needs a Visa?

To view the list of nationalities requiring entry clearance prior to travel to the UK.

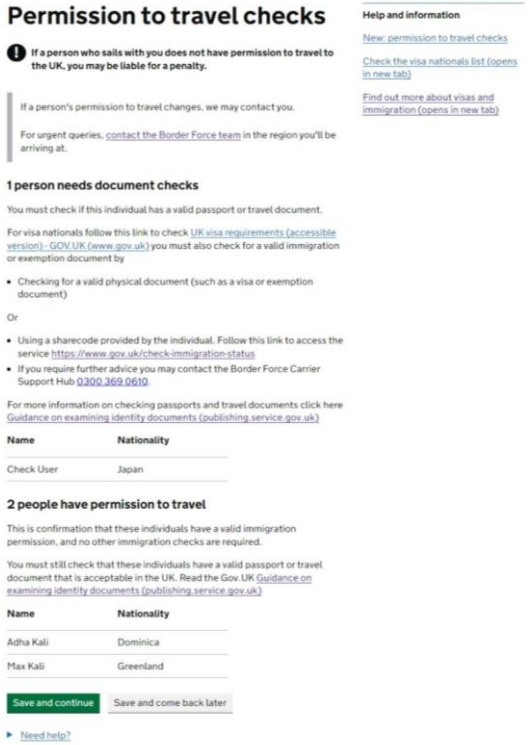
Please follow the link to check UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The responsibility for deciding whether to carry the person rests with you, this link provides more information on checking immigration documents: Charging Guide Procedures - A Guide for Carriers

DO NOT BOARD

There may be individuals whose travel to the UK must be prevented, these are individuals in scope of the Authority to Carry Scheme 2023. In order to prevent travel, the skipper, operator or agent will receive a **telephone call and an email** from the **National Border Targeting Centre** (NBTC) informing them that they do not have authority to carry a specific individual to the UK.

The on-screen response message will remain the same, however the skipper, operator or agent must act on the advice and instructions given by the NBTC and they must not carry the individual to the UK.



Permission to travel checks

If a person who sails with you does not have permission to travel to the UK, you may be liable for a penalty.

If a person's permission to travel changes, we may contact you.

For urgent queries, contact the Border Force team in the region you'll be arriving at.

1 person needs document checks

You must check if this individual has a valid passport or travel document.

For visa nationals follow this link to check UK visa requirements (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) you must also check for a valid immigration or exemption document by

- Checking for a valid physical document (such as a visa or exemption document)

Or

- Using a sharecode provided by the individual. Follow this link to access the service https://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status
- If you require further advice you may contact the Border Force Carrier Support Hub 0300 369 0610

For more information on checking passports and travel documents click here Guidance on examining identity documents (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Name	Nationality
Check User	Japan

2 people have permission to travel

This is confirmation that these individuals have a valid immigration permission, and no other immigration checks are required.

You must still check that these individuals have a valid passport or travel document that is acceptable in the UK. Read the Gov.UK Guidance on examining identity documents (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Name	Nationality
Adha Kali	Dominica
Max Kali	Greenland

Save and continue | Save and come back later

Need help?

Help and information

New: permission to travel checks

Check the visa nationals list (opens in new tab)

Find out more about visas and immigration (opens in new tab)

IMPORTANT:

Skippers, operators and agents are expected to follow the on-screen permission to travel instructions unless they receive a call from the National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC) advising them not to board the individual.

Follow this link for further information Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Please note that a 'DO NOT BOARD' instruction is a rare occurrence

UPT Response Messages

This table shows the existing UPT responses and the upcoming responses that will be added to the sPCR web user service in due course. Before those responses are added full details will be provided to support skippers, operators, and agents ahead of the change.

Sector	Existing/ Upcoming	FBIS CODE	UPT Response	Brief Description
Board	Existing	0A	VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL	The Home Office can find a valid permission to travel for the individual
Check	Upcoming	0B	NO RECORD OF VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL	A manual check is needed to determine whether the individual has an immigration permission
	Existing	0Z	NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS	A manual check is needed to determine whether the individual has an immigration permission if they require one
	Upcoming	0P	PERMISSION DECISION PENDING	A manual check is needed to determine whether the individual has an immigration permission
No Board	Manual Contact	1Z	AUTHORITY TO CARRY REFUSED. DO NOT BOARD.	Currently this message is communicated directly via a phone call and email from Border Force
Error	Upcoming	0T	SYSTEM TIME OUT	A system error has occurred, and further instruction will be provided to explain how to proceed
	Existing	4Z	INSUFFICIENT DATA	A system error has occurred, and further instruction will be provided to explain how to proceed

Special Character Guidance

Please do not use any special characters as the upload of your voyage plan will be rejected. See guidance below for more information.

When entering **names**, please use the format displayed in the machine-readable zone (MRZ) on the passport (images below for reference).

Or

Examples of unacceptable characters;

	&	"	¢	€	£	¥	©	®	™	‰	µ	·	•	…	′	″	§	¶	ß
‹	›	«	»	‘	’	“	”	‚	„	<	>	≤	≥	–	—	¯	¯	¤	¦
¨	¡	¿	ˆ	˜	°	−	±	÷	⁄	×	¹	²	³	¼	½	¾	ƒ	∫	∑
∞	√	≈	≠	≡	∏	¬	∩	∂	´	¸	ª	º	†	‡	À	Á	Â	Ã	Ä
Å	Æ	Ç	È	É	Ê	Ë	Ì	Í	Î	Ï	Ð	Ñ	Ò	Ó	Ô	Õ	Ö	Ø	Œ

Š	Ù	Ú	Û	Ü	Ý	Ÿ	Þ	à	á	â	ã	ä	å	æ	ç	è	é	ê	ë
ì	í	î	ï	ð	ñ	ò	ó	ô	õ	ö	ø	œ	š	ù	ú	û	ü	ý	þ
ÿ	Β	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ
Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω	α	β	γ	δ	ε	ζ	η	θ	ι	κ	λ	μ	ν	ξ	ο	π

UK Government

Authority to Carry (ATC)

Authority to Carry Scheme

The submission of advance passenger information (API) enables the operation of the UK's Authority to Carry Scheme 2023. This Scheme is a border security measure intended to prevent the travel of certain individuals where it is in the public interest.

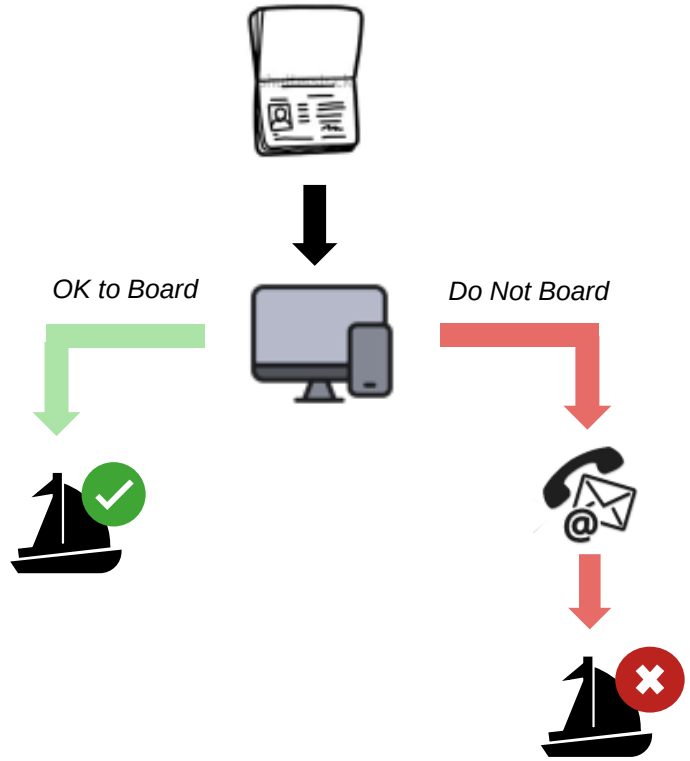
Individuals in scope of the Scheme include those who;

- Are the subject of a deportation order
- Have been excluded from the UK
- Are travelling on a document reported as lost or stolen
- Whose visa or ETA has been cancelled or revoked

In the event an individual in scope of the Scheme is identified as intending to travel the Home Office will contact the skipper, operator or agent to refuse them authority to carry that individual to the UK. The individual must be offloaded. Failure to comply with a refusal of authority to carry may result in a civil penalty.

Further information about the Scheme and it's scope can be found here: Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

A guide on the operation of the Scheme will be made available on gov.uk.



UK Government

Common Travel Area and Carriers' Liability Scheme

Common Travel Area

The Common Travel Area (CTA) is an administrative arrangement between the UK, Ireland and the Crown Dependencies (Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey) which is implemented in UK domestic law in statute. The CTA was developed to facilitate the principle of free movement for British and Irish citizens between the UK, Ireland and the islands and to ensure that British and Irish citizens continued to benefit from a mutual enjoyment of rights. Under the CTA, British and Irish citizens can move freely and reside in either jurisdiction.

There will continue to be no routine immigration controls on CTA journeys but, as now, all individuals who travel to the UK will need to do so in line with the UK's immigration framework. For non-British, non-Irish nationals this will include the requirement to have valid permission to travel, whether from a visa or an Electronic Travel Authorisation (once introduced).

Non-visa national residents of Ireland will not require an ETA to travel to the UK on a journey being undertaken within the Common Travel Area (CTA). They will need an ETA to travel to the UK from outside the CTA.

Carriers' Liability Scheme

Please note: The Carriers' Liability Scheme applies to skippers, operators and agents

The Carriers' Liability (CL) scheme will be changing to support the new UPT requirement (including the ETA scheme) and the transition to digital permissions.

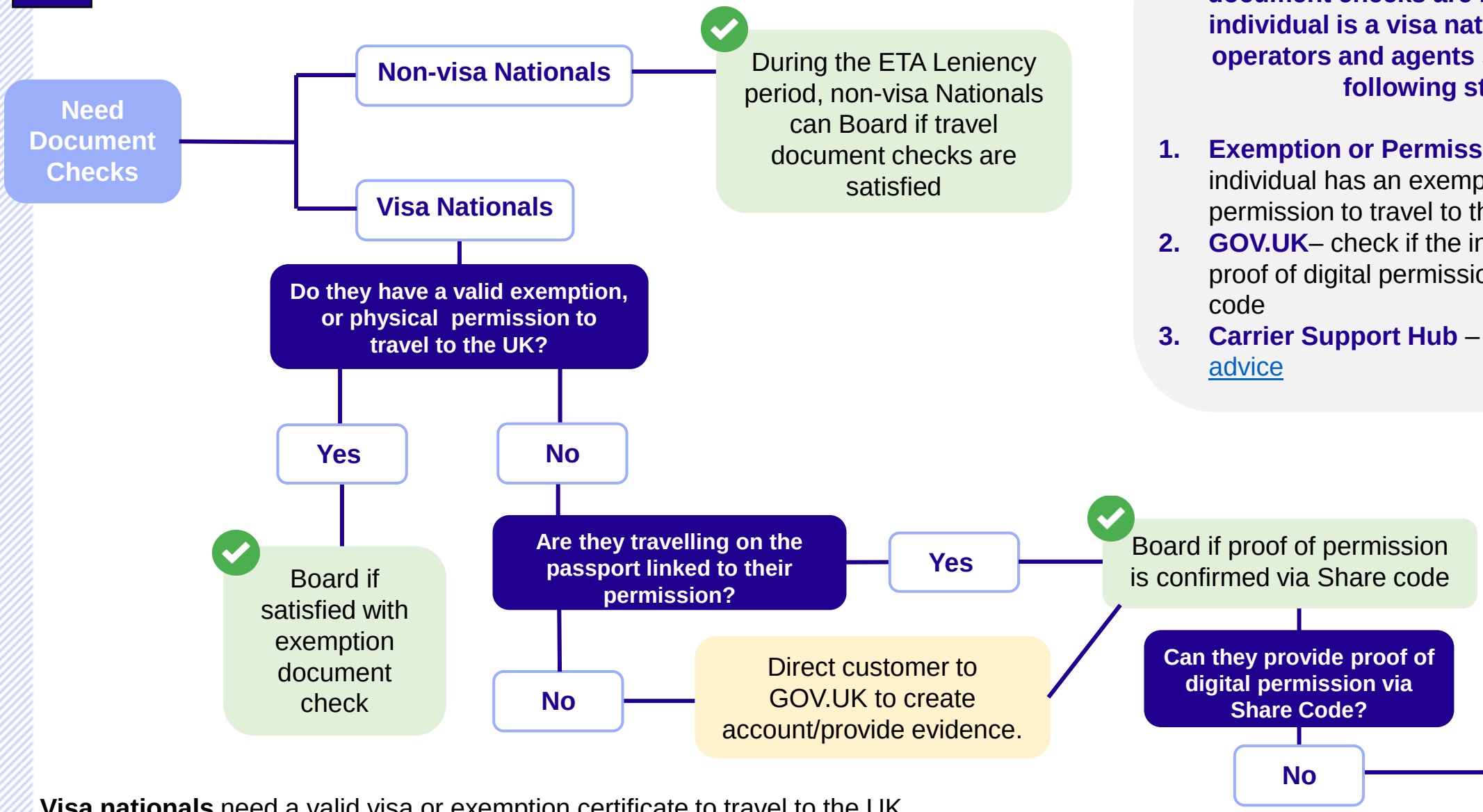
- Alongside the enforcement of ETA, it will extend the scope of permission checks to include non-visa nationals. Skippers, operators and agents should undertake identity and document checks on all passengers' travel documents to ensure that they are genuine and held by the rightful owner and checking that visa nationals hold a valid permission., in either digital or physical form.
- UPT messaging means that, in most cases, the Home Office will automatically confirm to a skipper, operator or agent when passengers hold a valid digital permission to travel.
- If the Home Office is unable to confirm a passenger's status, the skipper, operator or agent should carry out a manual check for evidence of a valid permission or exemption. Where skippers, operators or agents are responsible for carrying people to the UK who are inadequately documented or do not have valid permission they may be liable for a penalty under the Carriers Liability scheme if they do not have a reasonable excuse for not being able to check if a permission exists.
- Border Force will be responsible for notifying skippers, operators and agents of potential liability for CL penalties where they have carried passengers without a permission. Whilst the provisions of the scheme have always applied, skippers and operators have not routinely been issued with liability notices in the past, it is possible they will be once UPT messaging is in place so it will be important to be able to receive UPT messaging in future to help avoid that risk.

Further guidance for skippers, operators and agents on conducting CL checks can be found here: Charging Guide Procedures - A Guide for Carriers. This guide will be updated to include advice on checking digital-only immigration products.

UK Government

Passenger and Crew Handling Guidance & Scenarios

Document Check Process



When the UPT response indicates that document checks are needed, and the individual is a visa national. Skippers, operators and agents should take the following steps:

1. **Exemption or Permission** – check if the individual has an exemption or physical permission to travel to the UK
2. **GOV.UK**– check if the individual can provide proof of digital permission via Gov share code
3. **Carrier Support Hub** – call the CSH for advice

Visa nationals need a valid visa or exemption certificate to travel to the UK

Passenger Handling Scenarios: Non-Visa Nationals

Passenger Type	UPT Response (Permission to travel checks)	What this means for skippers, operators and agents	Permission Result
British and Irish Citizens	**NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS**	Their passport is their permission. They can board if they have a valid passport or travel document, if the passport or travel document presented is genuine and valid, and that the person is the rightful holder.	**Passenger has permission to travel following physical document checks.**
Non-Visa Nationals who has a valid ETA or other digital permission linked to the Passport/Travel document that they are travelling on.	**VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL**	This means that the Home Office can find a valid ETA for the individual which is linked to the passport/travel document that they are travelling on. Until ETA is enforced skippers, operators and agents should familiarise themselves with the new requirements during the ETA rollout period.	**Passenger has permission to travel following physical document checks.**
Non-Visa Nationals (Including European Nationals eligible from 2025) who do not hold an ETA or other digital permission during the rollout and leniency period.	**NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS**	During the phased roll-out of ETA, and the subsequent leniency period they will not be refused at the border, nor should they be refused boarding if they do not hold an ETA. Skippers, operators and agents should, however, should explain the ETA requirement and encourage the individual to apply for an ETA before their departure and allow them to board.	**Passenger has permission to travel following physical document checks**

Checks must be done on all passport/travel document that are presented to ensure they are genuine and valid, and that the person is the rightful holder.

Passenger Handling Scenarios: Visa Nationals

Passenger Type	UPT Response (Permission to travel checks)	What this means for skippers, operators and agents	Permission Result
Visa National with a digital permission linked to the Passport/Travel document that they are travelling on	**VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL**	This means that the Home Office can find a valid digital permission to travel for the individual which is linked to the passport/travel document that they are travelling on. Skippers, operators and agents are not required to check for physical visas, but Passport or Travel Document checks still apply.	**Passenger has permission to travel as confirmed by UPT response**
Visa National with a valid, genuine exemption or physical evidence such as the examples below: • biometric residence permits (BRPs) • biometric residence cards (BRCs) • ink stamps in passports, or other documents e.g. letters with stamps on • vignette stickers in passports	**NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS**	This means that the Home Office has not found a digital permission to travel. Skippers, operators and agents must check the individual's physical exemption certificate or physical permission as well as Passport or Travel document checks..	**Passenger has permission to travel following physical document checks**

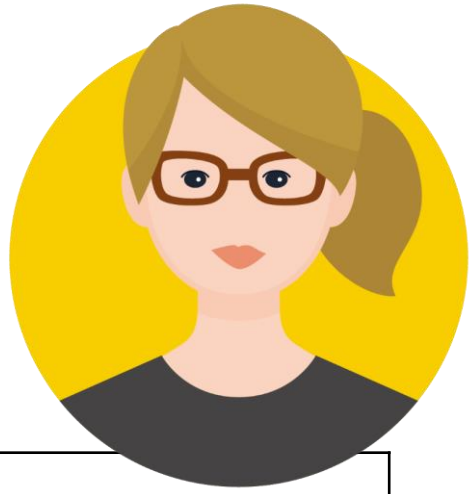
Checks must be done on all passport/travel document that are presented to ensure they are genuine and valid, and that the person is the rightful holder.

Passenger Handling Scenarios: Visa Nationals

Passenger Type	UPT Response (Permission to travel checks)	What this means for skippers, operators and agents	Permission
Visa National whose digital permission is not linked to the Passport/Travel document that they are travelling on and has no exemption or physical evidence.	**NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS**	This means that the Home Office has not found a digital permission for the individual. If the individual does not have an exemption or physical proof of their permission, they should create a UKVI digital account (if they have not done so already) to access their eVisa, and this can be used to prove their rights to live or work in the UK. The individual should then be able to use the Share Code checking service via GOV.UK to provide evidence of their immigration status. If they are unable to provide evidence, skippers, operators and agents may call the Carrier Support Hub for advice.	**Valid Permission to Travel Confirmed via share code or Carrier Support Hub**
Visa National has no exemption certificate or physical evidence of permission and is unable to provide evidence of a digital permission and the Carrier Support Hub advise that the Home Office has no record of their immigration status.		This means that the Home Office has not found a digital permission for the individual. If the individual does not have an exemption or physical proof of their permission. The individual should be able to use the Share Code checking service via GOV.UK to provide evidence of their immigration status. If they are unable to provide evidence, skippers, operators and agents should call the Carrier Support Hub for advice. Advice should be taken if no valid permission can be found.	**If Permission to Travel has not been confirmed, skippers, operators and agents may be liable for Carriers Liability charge if they carry the individual**

Checks must be done on all passport/travel document that are presented to ensure they are genuine and valid, and that the person is the rightful holder.

Requirements



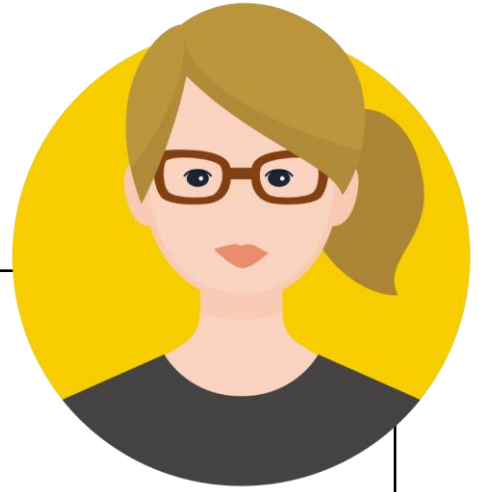
Once ETA is enforced, all passengers, except British and Irish nationals, will require an immigration permission to travel to the UK.

This means:

Visa nationals travelling to the UK will require a visa/valid immigration permission, or exemption as they do now.

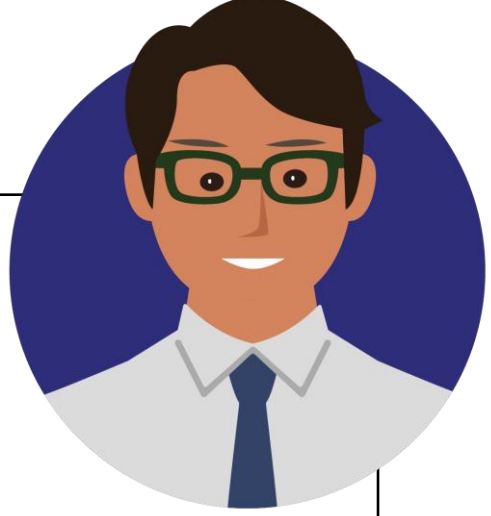
Non visa nationals who do not already hold a visa, other valid immigration permission, or exemption, will be required to have a valid ETA if they are travelling to the UK regardless of whether they intend to leave the vessel.

Dual nationals



- Dual nationals must travel on the passport which they used to apply for their ETA, as their ETA will be linked to their passport.
- British and Irish citizens who are also dual nationals do not require an ETA.
- British Citizens who are also dual nationals should prove their permission to travel by holding a British passport or other passport containing a Certificate of Entitlement to the Right of Abode. If a passenger holds a valid genuine British passport or another passport containing a genuine Certificate of Entitlement to the Right of Abode, this may be accepted as permission to travel.
- Irish citizens who are also dual nationals should prove their permission to travel by holding an Irish passport or passport card. If a passenger holds a valid genuine Irish passport or passport card, this may be accepted permission to travel.
- In all cases, carriers should continue to ensure that any British or Irish documents held by passengers are genuine and held by the rightful holder.

Crew



Crew will continue to be covered by different sets of legislation depending on their nationality, circumstances/purpose of travel and documentation:

Crew travelling in and outbound to and from the UK
Crew members working in and out bound to the UK on a vessel are usually covered by section 8(1) of the 1971 Immigration Act which means they do not need permission to travel.

This means:

Visa national crew members who qualify under Section 8(1) of the Immigration Act will be exempt from the visa requirement because they are part of the crew.

Non-visa national crew members who qualify under Section 8(1) of the Immigration Act will be exempt from the ETA requirement because they are part of the crew.

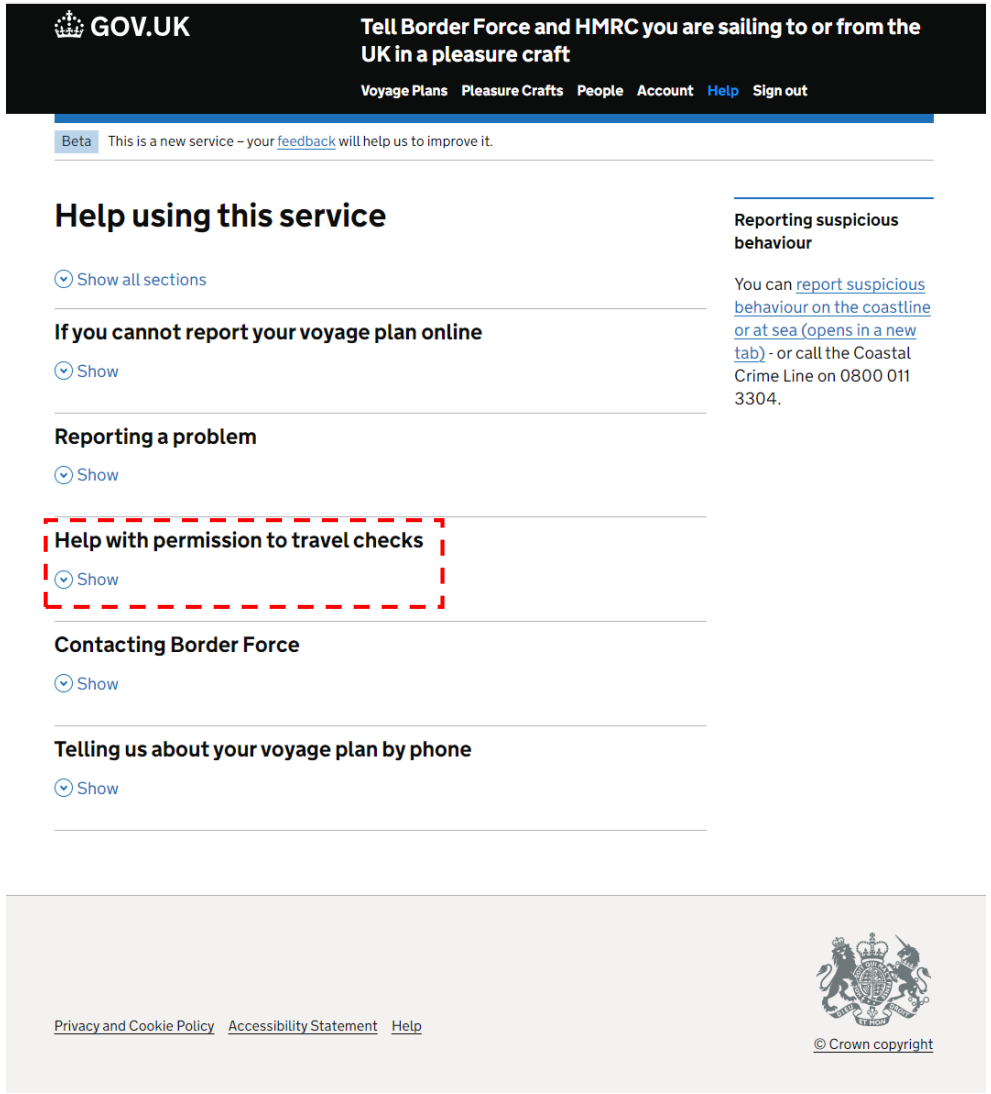
Crew API will be submitted in the same way as it is now, and skippers, operators, and agents remain liable for ensuring that individuals have the correct permissions in accordance with section 8(1) of IA 1971.

Sailing a pleasure craft that is arriving in the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

UK Government

Help and Support

Help & Support on sPCR



The help page on the sPCR user service includes a host of useful information, including a section for UPT related support. If a skipper, operator or agent requires general help or guidance regarding document/passport checks or response messages they may find the answer by reading the guidance here.

User Support Scenarios

Technical Support

For technical support including feedback, skippers, operators and agents should **contact the sPCR support team** via email:

SPCR@homeoffice.gov.uk

Urgent Queries

If you have an urgent query about passengers who are about to board or travel, **contact frontline Border teams**.

The contact information for the regional Border Force teams can be found on the sPCR help page under 'Contacting Border Force'.

Permission to travel checks

If you have a non-technical UPT query, **contact the UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub** via telephone:

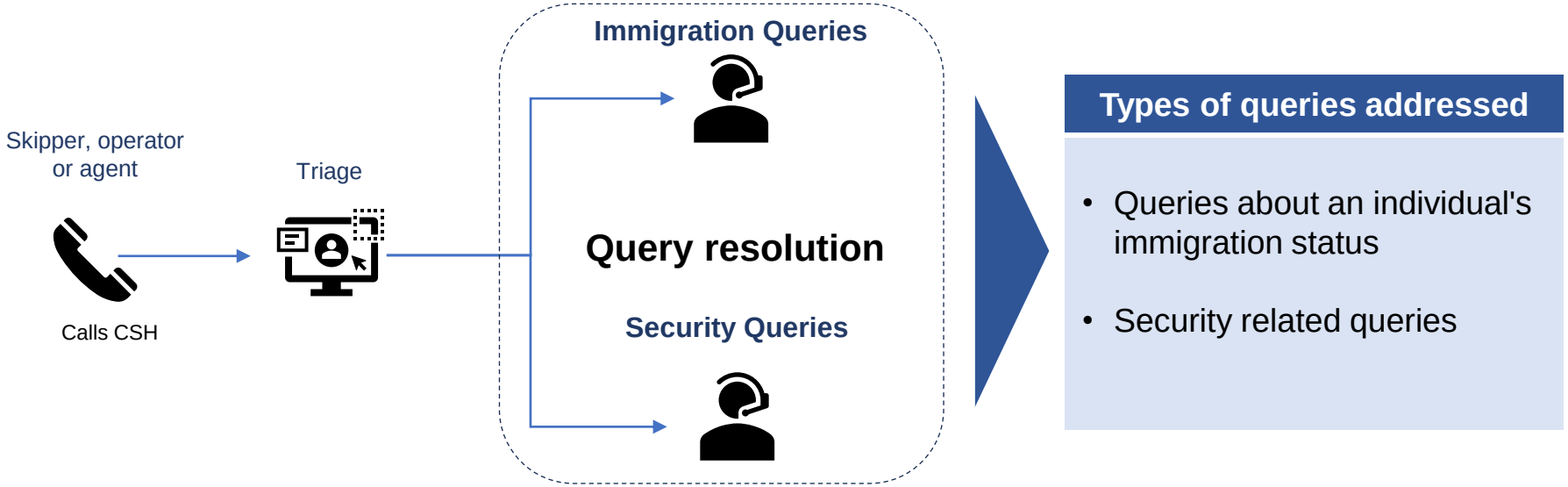
0300 369 0610 or +44 204 619 6020 from outside the UK

The Carrier Support Hub is available 24/7.

Scenario	Advice
A skipper, operator or agent has an urgent concern about a passenger and the voyage is due to depart immediately	**Contact Border Force**
A skipper, operator or agent has a technical query regarding a voyage plan submission and the answer is not shown on the help page on sPCR.	**Email SPCR@homeoffice.gov.uk**
A skipper, operator or agent has a non-technical related query, and the answer is not shown on the help page on sPCR.	**Contact the UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub**

UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub

The UK Border Force Carrier Support Hub is a **24/7 support function** within the Home Office, it is available to all carriers including General Maritime, for skippers, operators and agents who submit data using the sPCR service to answer all carrier queries related to a passenger's permission to travel to the UK.



Types of queries addressed

- Queries about an individual's immigration status
- Security related queries

If you require advice about a passenger's permission to travel, please call:

0300 369 0610 or +44 204 619 6020 (from outside the UK)

These telephone numbers are for carriers only (which includes skippers, operators and agents).

UK Government

Future Engagement

Future Engagement

Future engagement on ETA & UPT codes

Updated sPCR Information Pack

Additional changes, updates to sPCR and future engagement events will be communicated to you via the SPCR mailbox (SPCR@homeoffice.gov.uk)

UK Government

Glossary

Glossary

Abbreviation	Term
API	Advance Passenger Information
ATC	Authority to Carry
BRP/C	Biometric Residence Permit/ Cards
BN(O)	British National (Overseas)
CLS	Carriers Liability Scheme
CL	Carriers Liability
CTA	Common Travel Area
ETA	Electronic Travel Authorisation
EVW	Electronic Visa Waiver
eVisa	Electronic Visa
FBIS	Future Border & Immigration System
NBTC	National Border Targeting Centre
sPCR	Submit a Pleasure Craft Report
UPT	Universal Permission to Travel

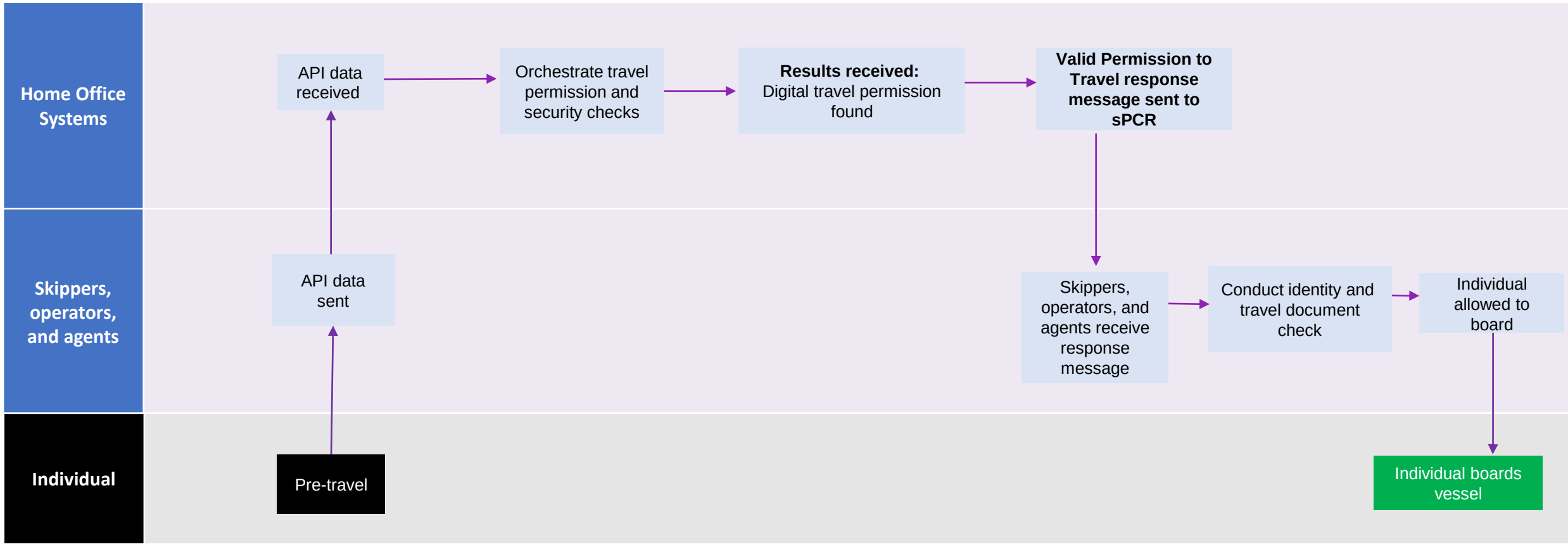
UK Government

Appendix

User Journeys

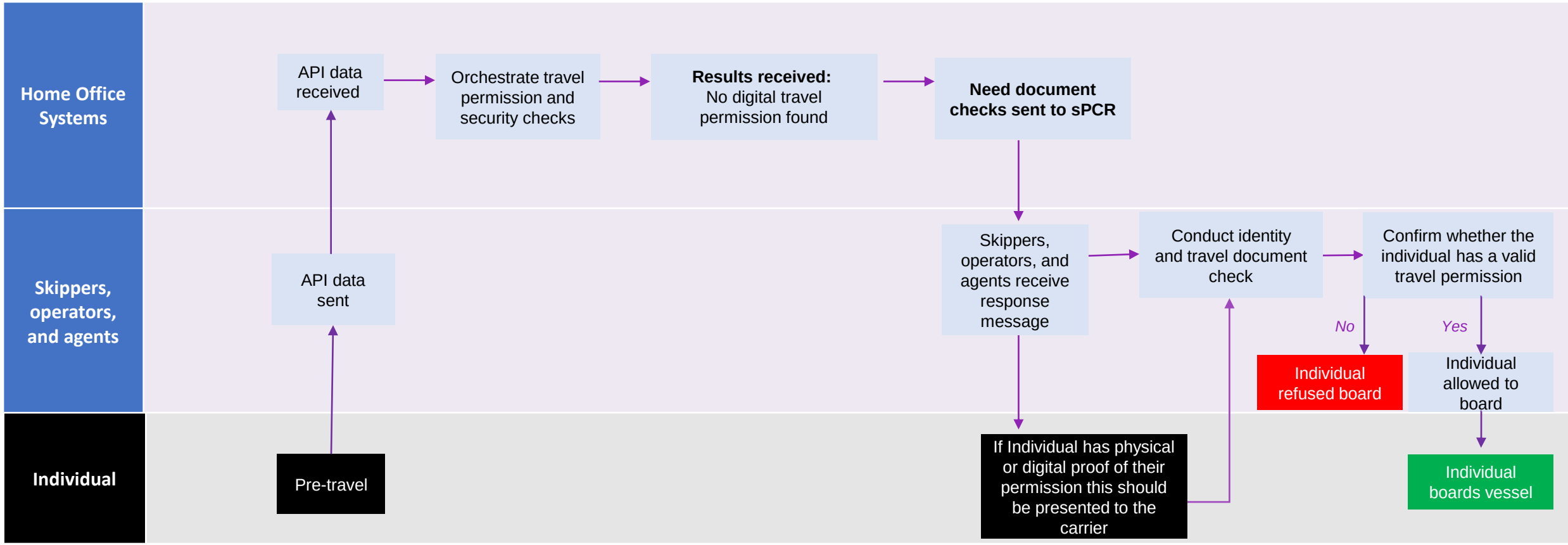
VALID PERMISSION TO TRAVEL User Journey

Board

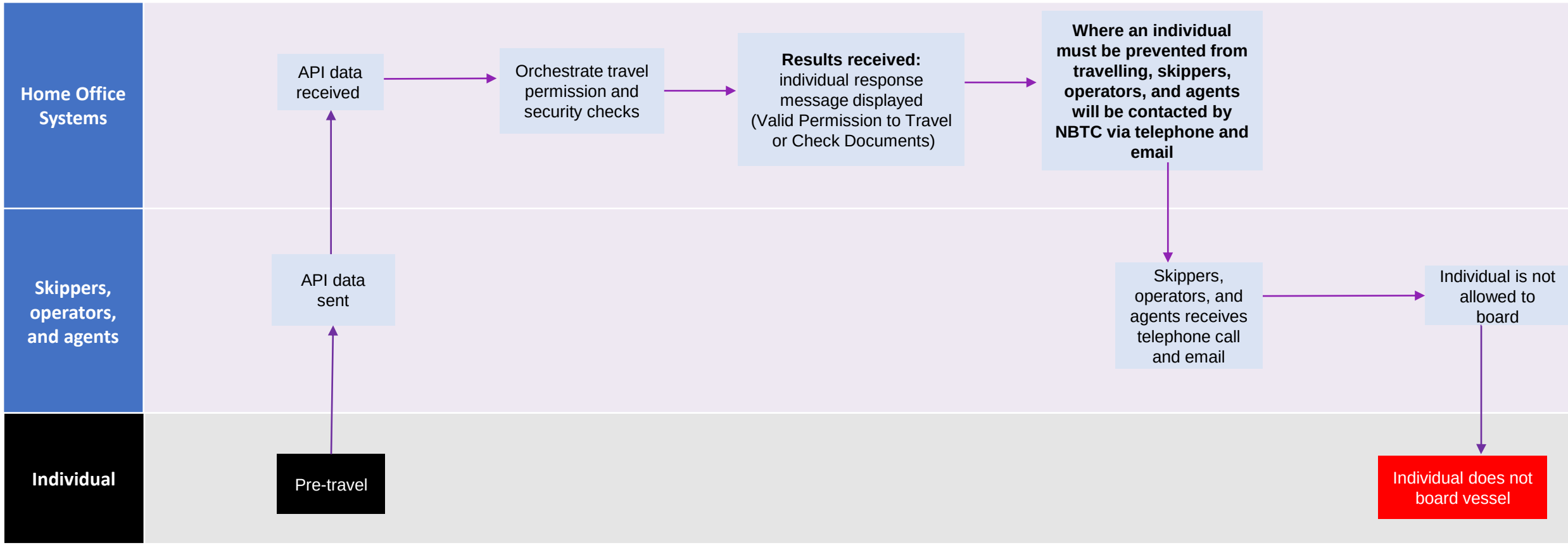


NEED DOCUMENT CHECKS User Journey

Check



DO NOT BOARD User Journey



UK Government

Appendix

Example BRP/C documents

Example BRP/C documents

1) Biometric residence permit

2) EU Settlement Scheme biometric residence card

UK Government

Useful Links

Useful links

Sailing a pleasure craft that is arriving in the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/seamen/seamen-arriving-in-the-uk-caseworker-guidance-accessible-version

Apply for an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Check when you can get an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Check if you need a UK visa - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Online immigration status (eVisa) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

View and prove your immigration status: get a share code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Check someone's immigration status: use their share code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Guidance on examining identity documents (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Charging Guide Procedures - A Guide for Carriers (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Authority to Carry Scheme 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Albums (brandworkz.com) (ETA partner pack)

Albums (brandworkz.com) (eVisa partner pack)