

CORONAVIRUS GLOBAL FIGURES

Area/Type	Today	Yesterday
Global Confirmed Cases	467,710	416,916
Global Deaths	20,947	18,565
UK Confirmed Cases	9,529	8,077
UK Deaths	422	422
*Scotland Confirmed Cases	894	719
Scotland Deaths	25	22

- 11,487 Scottish tests have concluded and 10,593 were confirmed negative

STA responds to Chancellor's announcement of support for the self employed

The Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA) welcomes the announcement of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme today; this will offer huge comfort to the many people in our industry who have been waiting for days to find out how they will be supported by the government in more equitable way.

We have been inundated with enquiries from tour guides, chefs, coach drivers, small bed and breakfast owners and others within the industry over the past week and have actively campaigned, raising this as a priority issue in our daily conversations with the Scottish and UK governments.

In our view, this is a fair measure to take, however we realise that for a good number of people working in the industry, for example those who split part time employed work with self-employment and those who have only recently entered self-employment, this may not offer the desired solution.

There will also be many who are in need of a source of income now, not all of whom will be eligible for the Coronavirus Business

Interruption Loan Scheme therefore we would urge the UK government to

bring forward the introduction of this welcomed Support Scheme as soon as is possible. The process importantly, must be easy for all and speed is of the essence.

Large Business Owner Operators Round Table with Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism

The STA co-ordinated the above meeting which was held over a near two-hour call this morning with 20 representatives from larger tourism and hospitality businesses around Scotland.

Introduction by the Cabinet Secretary

The Cabinet Secretary began by emphasising that the main objective of government is to minimise the loss of life; the whole approach that is being taken by the Scottish Government is to deliver that overriding objective. The subsidiary objective is to prevent what is happening in other European countries where their healthcare systems are swamped.

Mr Ewing acknowledged the swiftness of support from the UK Government and the Scottish Government for the tourism and hospitality sector, the first and second wave, but appreciates that more information is needed and much of this is a UK matter. The Cabinet Secretary met with Nigel Huddleston MP along with NI and Welsh counterparts before lockdown and had a productive discussion at the onset of the crisis. They had a follow up call yesterday and have agreed to speak fortnightly.

Mr Ewing stressed on his call with UK Government yesterday that the industry needs cashflow and it needs it now. The details of the wage protection scheme must be given as soon as possible and be as clear as possible. Calculations should be representative of the seasonal nature of tourism. Scottish Government have suggested that annualised methods of calculation are used. There have been a whole range of very sensible questions put forward by businesses within our

industry and these are being relayed verbatim to offer a clear understanding of the impact of policy decisions at ground level.

Mr Ewing made it clear that the Scottish Government has sought to put politics to one side and that remains the case in relation to UK Government and cross parties.

The purpose of the call from the Cabinet Secretary's perspective was to hear specific concerns which can be taken forward and dealt with in collaboration with the STA, on a daily basis.

Marc Crothall who chaired the meeting invited every participant to make their contributions which were varied and welcomed by the Cabinet Secretary.

All those who contributed offered typical stories which we are receiving on a daily basis from others within the industry and are by no means isolated, ranging from total collapse of business, concerns regarding future security of both physical assets and long term position with all wanting to do the very best by their staff.

He emphasised that it is very important that governments get the support package correct and acknowledged that the furlough scheme has to be flexible. Mr Ewing emphasised that recovery will be long and we will not return to where we were but hoped that in the coming weeks we would see greater precision in the modelling in relation to the virus stats which would offer a clearer outlook for the rebuild period.

Mr Ewing praised the work of the STA, commenting;
"The STA has been the foremost lobbying trade body in Scotland – I am not aware of any body that has more effectively marshalled these conversations to take place and enabled factual response to be communicated to and recorded by Scottish Government officials."

He offered assurance that a detailed note of the meeting would be conveyed to Cabinet colleagues so that discussions can be informed by the real-world conversation and that the points raised today would be discussed with Cabinet at an economic meeting tomorrow.

The Cabinet Secretary ended with the following statement for industry;

“Thank you to all of you for what you’re doing and the support you’re giving your staff. On the other side you will need them. We need to look beyond the battle. We will overcome this and the Scottish Government will support you.”

VisitScotland Covid-19 Tourism Industry Survey for Week Ending: 20/03/2020

VisitScotland is closely monitoring the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) situation as it evolves and alongside its activities to provide advice and support during this difficult time, the organisation is proactively tracking the effects of Coronavirus on the industry. This is a rapidly changing situation and it's important for VisitScotland, with your valued regular input, to be able to monitor developments.

This survey will be undertaken regularly to contribute to our understanding of the impact of this outbreak, should you receive further requests to participate in forthcoming weeks we would appreciate your ongoing support.

Your responses will remain anonymous.

This wave of the survey will close at 12 noon on Monday 30 March.

Please click [here](#) to complete.

Scotland Food & Drink Update

Our friends at Scotland Food & Drink are updating their Coronavirus advice page on a daily basis – please do have a look for all of their updates, links to advice and summary of their activity.

[Click here to read](#)