

27 October 2022

Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

Secretary of State for Transport

Via email – mark.harper.mp@parliament.uk / DfT.Ministers@dft.gov.uk

Open letter

Dear Secretary of State

Is the CAA's Air Travel Trust a going concern?

For every ATOL protected booking a small amount of money, typically £2.50 per person, is paid into the Air Travel Trust (ATT). This is an insurance policy against the Travel Organiser failing.

Prior to Thomas Cook's failure in September 2019 the ATT had hundreds of millions together with many further millions covered by an insurance policy.

Thomas Cook's failure all but wiped out the ATT and triggered a large claim on the insurance. We understand, it has not been possible to insure the risk of an ATT shortfall since.

In the 2019-20 ATT accounts, the last set published, the 'going concern' statement said that the then Secretary of State for Transport had provided written assurance that the government would provide support if the ATT was short.

Due to a lack of published accounts, it is not known how much is in the ATT today, but it would likely not be enough to cope with a failure of even a fraction the size of Thomas Cook's.

Are the 2020-21 and the 2021-22 ATT accounts unpublished because the government is no longer willing to stand guarantor? A matter of public concern.

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If the government is no longer willing to back the ATT with tax-payers money, does the ATT and ATOL scheme still meet the obligation of Package Travel Regulations, 2018?

The Package Travel Regulations permit three methods of protecting packages:

- 1) Bonding
- 2) Insurance
- 3) Trust Account

Given that most packages are protected only by the ATT insurance, is the ATOL scheme still compliant or should Tour Operators ensure they have one of the above in place?

Yours Sincerely



Toby Kelly
CEO

CC: Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for Business, Grant Shapps MP

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