



Department for Transport

Peter Grant MP
House of Commons
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From the Secretary of State
The Rt Hon Grant Shapps

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Dear Peter,

At Transport Oral Questions on Thursday 30 June, in the context of your question regarding a flight from Inverness Airport to Moscow on 26 February, I committed to writing to you to explain how a Notice to Aviation (NOTAM) operates.

The restrictions that were in place at the time prohibited aircraft owned, operated, or chartered by a person connected with Russia, or registered in Russia, from flying in UK airspace. The NOTAM containing these restrictions was issued at 21:00 on 25 February.

Under the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) (www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/923/contents), which apply to every aircraft operating in UK airspace, it is the responsibility of the pilot to check for published restrictions which may be relevant for their proposed flight. It is also the responsibility of the aerodrome to be aware of any restrictions which may affect operations to/from their aerodrome.

Airports and the operators of aircraft are therefore responsible for proactively monitoring NOTAMs and responding accordingly.

I understand that Inverness Airport sought assurances from the NATS (En Route) Prestwick, which operates independently of government. NATS are responsible for ensuring flights have a compliant flight plan but are not responsible for holding passenger information. No clearance to operate the flight was required by NATS, and it remained Inverness Airport and their own air traffic control service's decision to clear the departure.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Shapps', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT