

19 April 2021

An Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar TD.
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment

By email

Re: Urgent need to address Mandatory Hotel Quarantine (MHQ) requirements for essential Subject Matter Experts

Dear Tánaiste

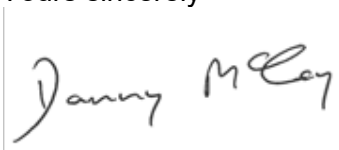
The most recent Government guidance on the mandatory hotel quarantine regime for international travel is causing significant concern to business. The exclusion from the quarantine requirement exemptions of Subject Matter Experts who need to travel internationally in order to deliver essential repair, maintenance and regulatory approvals to support production processes and equipment, risks major disruption to a range of essential business and other services, including health.

Since the onset of the crisis businesses and other organisations have worked to ensure the safe and controlled international travel of these subject matter experts. These workers were necessary in supporting repair and maintenance of technical equipment in essential areas of the economy such as in the manufacture of food, medical devices and pharmaceuticals and also the preservation of essential services such as energy, telecommunications, IT and in the delivery of health services. In the absence of these specialist and technical workers, essential production processes and services would inevitably have been disrupted with many potentially disastrous consequences.

With the extension of the mandatory hotel quarantine requirements to a total of 71 countries, the absence of provisions to support the travel of subject matter experts is now a material threat to essential business and public service delivery. Ibec's members have reported in recent days that the restrictions in travel from a number of EU countries and the US and Canada have caused particular problems. They have also told us that in many cases it is not possible to procure the services of these experts from other countries not on the mandatory hotel quarantine list.

I am therefore urging Cabinet colleagues and you, to urgently address this issue in order to ensure that essential manufacturing, business services and the repair and maintenance of medical equipment in our hospitals can be supported.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danny McCoy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Danny McCoy
Ibec CEO

Cc: An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, TD
Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD
Secretary General Martin Fraser, Department of An Taoiseach
Secretary General Dr Orlaigh Quinn, Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment
Secretary General Robert Watt, Department of Health
Martin Shanahan CEO, IDA