

Letter from Heathrow

I wanted to make you aware that Heathrow will be moving to single runway operations from Monday 6 April. This means instead of operating one runway for departures and one runway for arrivals, we will see departures and arrivals on a single runway using mixed mode operations.

This is a temporary measure due to the unprecedented impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and it will provide us with greater resilience and safety for our colleagues, passengers and cargo. It should be noted that at this time we are facilitating significantly fewer flights due to travel restrictions around the world.

We will be alternating which runway we use on a weekly basis to ensure our local communities continue to get respite periods. Due to the significantly lower number of aircraft operating from the runway we will also be able to provide alternation on easterly operations – something we can't currently provide during our usual schedule.

We are making this change as we believe that it is vital that Heathrow remains open so that critical repatriation flights and cargo services can continue to operate. The airport is playing a crucial role in facilitating the supply chain of vital medical goods and food for the nation, with 41% of the UK's pharmaceutical products being imported via Heathrow. We can only remain open if we can continue to operate safely and this move to single runway operations will improve our resilience should we see a further COVID-19 related reduction in staffing levels either from NATS (our Air Traffic Controllers) or our Airfield Operations colleagues.

At present we are not able to predict how long we will need to operate in this way, but we will continue to review this situation and will look to revert to our usual operation when the number of daily aircraft movements significantly increases.