

# Department of Home Affairs

**Consultation:** Proposal to require passengers to carry ID and introduce proportionate ID verification on Isle of Man Steam Packet Company Journeys

Part of the **Securing our Island** Strategy

20 April 2026 – 08 June 2026



**Isle of Man**  
**Government**

*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

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As a whole-nation UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, our shared vision and aim is to work across the economy, environment and society for a sustainable future.



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# 1. Introduction

The Isle of Man Government is seeking the public's views on a proposal to –

1. **require all passengers travelling with the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company (“IOMSPC”) to carry identification (“ID”) whilst travelling on its services, and**
2. **implement proportionate ID verification checks during the check-in process.**

To be clear - this proposal is **not** intended to introduce routine immigration controls within the Common Travel Area (“CTA”) but aims to address local security risks while remaining compliant with CTA requirements and human-rights obligations.

This consultation invites stakeholders' initial views on the principles and scope of the proposed changes. Following the consultation, further policy work will be carried out to assess the detailed arrangements required to implement and operationalise the proposal.

The proposal forms part of the wider **Securing Our Island Strategy**, updated in September 2025<sup>1</sup> which aims to protect the Island from evolving threats and ensure the safety and wellbeing of our community.

The following policy principles in the Strategy underpin this consultation:

- **We will develop and maintain comprehensive security measures and those who come here to do harm will be identified and targeted**
- **Our entry processes will be efficient, fair and proportionate**
- **We will maintain compliance with our international obligations**
- **We will be adaptive and resilient**

## 2. Why We Are Proposing This Change

### Threats Identified by Law Enforcement

The Isle of Man Constabulary and partner agencies have advised Government of an **increased threat from Organised Crime Groups (OCGs)** targeting the Island. These groups use the Island's sea routes to facilitate the movement of illicit drugs, cash, criminals and people.

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<sup>1</sup> [Isle of Man Government - Securing Our Island](#)

Recent updates show:

- More than £1m in drugs and criminal assets have recently been seized at ports, demonstrating both the scale of criminal activity and the effectiveness of enhanced interventions.
- Law enforcement agencies report that the **ability to book IOMSPC travel using assumed identities** presents a significant risk.

### **Steps already taken to Secure Our Island**

This Government – in partnership with law enforcement agencies - has already taken several critical steps towards Securing Our Island, including at the ferry ports, such as -

- Law enforcement agencies have implemented a range of measures including the phased implementation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (**ANPR**) technology, which has improved the identification of vehicles connected to criminal activity.
- Ports Policing officers have been formally transferred to the Isle of Man Constabulary, resulting in closer collaboration and enhanced resilience at the sea terminal.
- Drug detection dogs are now deployed for all sea arrivals, and a permanent customs presence at the ports has contributed to the seizure of around £1 million in illicit substances and £100,000 in cash during 2024/25.
- Routine access to passenger manifest data is in place, supporting the identification of threats and known criminals, with ongoing work towards increased automation of data collection from the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.
- Furthermore, proactive scanning and monitoring of inbound and outbound post, parcels and freight have led to the recovery of thousands of pounds in cash and drugs, bolstered by the use of technology and detection dogs.

These actions demonstrate substantial progress in protecting the Island's ports and sea routes from criminal exploitation.

### **Gaps in Current Passenger Verification**

While the steps taken have increased the security and safety of our Island, certain vulnerabilities remain which can be exploited. At present, passengers are not required to carry or present ID at check-in, which creates opportunities for individuals to book travel using assumed identities. The existing approach can limit the effectiveness of other measures to bolster border security and make it more challenging for authorities to monitor those who may be involved in unlawful activities.

Additionally, the absence of a standardised ID verification process means enforcement agencies encounter difficulties in confirming the identity of some passengers, especially those travelling as foot passengers or using tickets purchased online. Without consistent checks, criminal investigations may be hindered, and there is a potential risk that the Island could be used as a transit point for illicit goods, cash, or individuals. Addressing these gaps will help further strengthen the Island's security and support public confidence in the safety and integrity of its sea routes.

### 3. Why are we consulting

Feedback from this consultation will help shape the final policy approach and ensure that proposed changes strike an appropriate balance between public safety, efficiency, and the Island's commitment to proportionate entry controls. The Department has engaged with the IOMSPC on this proposal prior to the launch of this consultation and has committed to consulting with the public about the approach to be taken.

### 4. What Is Being Proposed

At this stage, the Department is setting out high-level proposals to implement mandatory carriage of ID for all passengers on IOMSPC sailings and the implementation of proportionate verification checks during the check-in process. This includes:

1. Passengers, including foot passengers and vehicle travellers, must carry and - when requested - present valid ID at the point of check-in for all IOMSPC sailings (subject to exemptions provided in 2, below).
2. Exemptions or special arrangements may be considered for passengers of a specific description, e.g.:
  - o Minors up to and including the age of 15
  - o Individuals without access to standard forms of ID
  - o Medical evacuation or emergency travel
  - o Assisted travel needs
3. Specified forms of accepted ID would be required, which could **potentially** include both photo-ID, or a combination of other forms of specified documentation.

Similar ferry services already require the production of ID by passengers travelling within the CTA. For example, StenaLine currently require valid forms of photo-ID in order to travel on their services. In the case of UK citizens travelling between Britain and Ireland<sup>2</sup>, passengers are required to produce one of the following –

- A current or recently expired passport
- A government-issued photo ID card
- A health insurance or social security photo ID card
- A photographic driving licence
- A photographic bus or train pass
- An international student card

We know that not everyone has photo-ID. The Department, working collaboratively with the IOMSPC, are considering policy options to accommodate residents and visitors who are unable to provide a photo-ID.

## 5. How would the proposal be implemented?

At this stage, the Department is proposing that the IOMSPC implement the proposed requirements as a condition of travel. **It is not anticipated that the Department would introduce legislation in order to impose the proposed requirements.**

After reviewing responses to this consultation, and subject to final decision, the Department will work with the IOMSPC to support an effective introduction of proposed changes. This will include clear communication with passengers, setting out a timeline for introduction and clear guidance on new requirements.

## 6. How the Proposal supports the Securing Our Island Strategy

Introducing mandatory carriage of ID and proportionate verification checks on ferry routes directly aligns with, and helps deliver, the core aims and policy principles set out in the *Securing Our Island Strategy*. The Strategy seeks to protect the Island from “criminals who come here to do harm” and emphasises the need for robust, proportionate measures across

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<sup>2</sup> [What identification documents do I need to travel between Britain and Ireland? | FAQs | Stena Line](#)

air and seaports to safeguard our community. The proposed ID requirement strengthens several of the Strategy's foundational commitments.

### **Delivering Comprehensive Security Measures at Points of Entry**

The Strategy commits to “develop and maintain comprehensive security measures” across air and sea ports to detect and deter illegal activity. Mandatory carriage of ID and proportionate verification checks provide a practical enhancement to existing controls by enabling a means of passenger identity checks before travelling, strengthening the Island's ability to prevent exploitation of ferry routes by OCGs.

### **Improving the Collection of Traveller Information for National Security and Crime Prevention**

A central policy principle of the Strategy is to “collect information on those travelling to the Isle of Man in a proportionate and targeted manner.” Verified identity checks improve the accuracy of passenger manifests and support law enforcement partners who already have routine access to this data.

### **Enhancing the Island's Ability to Identify and Target Those Who Seek to Do Harm**

The Strategy stresses that individuals who pose a threat “will be identified and targeted.” Introducing ID checks strengthens the Island's capability to screen, detect, and disrupt individuals associated with organised crime or other harmful activity by preventing anonymous or falsely documented travel. This supports the broader strategic objective of protecting the Island from external threats.

### **Supporting Collaboration Across Law Enforcement Agencies**

The Strategy emphasizes the need for closer joint working between Police, Customs and Immigration, and UK partners, including enhanced data sharing. The proposed ID checking system improves the quality of intelligence available to all agencies and supports the multiagency working model central to the Strategy's ongoing delivery.

### **Maintaining Compliance with International Obligations While Taking a Proportionate Approach**

The Strategy commits to maintaining compliance with international obligations - including those relating to the CTA - while applying proportionate, risk-based controls. Mandatory carriage of ID and proportionate verification checks meet this principle by enhancing border security without introducing full immigration checks for CTA travellers. This reinforces the Strategy's commitment to fair, efficient processes that balance facilitation of travel with the need to manage genuine threats.

## **Building an Adaptive and Resilient Border System**

The Strategy highlights that the Island must remain “adaptive and resilient,” updating practices to respond to emerging risks. The introduction of a requirement to carry ID – and produce ID on request as part of proportionate verification checks - reflects this principle by adapting security measures to evolving criminal methodologies and strengthening resilience across ferry operations, a key transport channel identified in the Strategy.

## **7. Potential Benefits**

Introducing a requirement for all passengers to carry ID travelling on IOMSPC sailings and implementing proportionate verification checks would offer several important benefits for community safety, law enforcement effectiveness, and the integrity of the Island’s transport system and border security. The requirement for passengers to present valid ID if requested at check-in would strengthen existing controls in a proportionate and targeted way, supporting wider efforts to protect the public while maintaining compliance with CTA arrangements.

### **Strengthened Protection Against Organised Crime**

Requiring all passengers to carry ID with proportionate verification checks would make it significantly harder for individuals linked to OCGs to travel anonymously, use false details, or exploit gaps in passenger information, thus supporting law enforcement agencies in preventing individuals “who come here to do harm” from using the ferry network to facilitate illicit activity.

### **Improved Accuracy of Passenger Manifests**

ID checks would ensure that the name associated with a booking matches a verified individual. This will enhance the quality and reliability of passenger data already shared with law enforcement agencies, supporting targeted interventions where necessary and improving the Island’s ability to respond to evolving security risks.

### **Enhanced Ability to Detect and Disrupt Criminal Couriers**

Ferry routes are a known route for transporting illicit goods, cash and the illegal movement of people. Introducing passenger identity checks linked to the manifest increases the likelihood that criminal couriers are identified, scrutinised, or deterred from attempting to enter or exit the Island. This strengthens the Island’s overall security posture and supports multi-agency efforts to disrupt organised crime.

### **Greater Alignment with UK and Common Travel Area Partners**

The proposal supports the Securing Our Island Strategy by enhancing “comprehensive security measures” at ports and fostering alignment with practices in the UK and the wider CTA. Improved data quality and passenger verification will contribute to more effective information sharing and cooperation with partner jurisdictions, particularly where cross-border criminality is involved.

### **Supports Proportionate, Intelligence Led Security Measures**

By introducing mandatory carriage of ID and proportionate verification at check in, Government and the IOMSPC can strengthen security without imposing routine immigration controls. The measure ensures that controls remain proportionate, targeted, and focused on preventing abuse of the transport system, while maintaining the ease of travel expected within the CTA.

### **Provides a Clear Framework for Passenger Assurance and Operational Consistency**

Proportionate ID checks create a transparent and predictable system for all travellers. They also support operational integrity for the IOMSPC through improved linkage of booking details, manifests, and passenger movements. This contributes to safer, more resilient transport operations and improved public confidence.

## **8. Potential Impacts and Considerations**

Introducing a mandatory requirement for all passengers to carry ID and implementing proportionate verification checks at check-in will offer clear security and public protection benefits. However, it is important to recognise and assess the potential impacts on passengers, operators, and wider stakeholders. This consultation seeks views on how these impacts should be managed to ensure that proposed changes are proportionate and effective.

### **Passenger Convenience and Journey Experience**

Introducing ID checks involves additional steps during boarding, which could lead to longer check-in times at busy periods or during adverse weather-related disruptions. Some passengers may experience inconvenience as processes bed in, particularly in the early stages of implementation.

## **Impacts on Those Without Photographic Identification**

A small proportion of residents, visitors, and younger passengers may not currently hold photographic ID. Without appropriate mitigations - such as a clear list of acceptable documents or accessible routes for obtaining ID - these groups could face barriers to travel. The consultation therefore seeks feedback on how to minimise unintended exclusion.

## **Privacy and Data Handling Considerations**

The proposed requirement for ID must be accompanied by robust safeguards for how passenger information is collected, stored, and shared. The proposed approach must ensure compliance with both the Island's data protection framework in the form of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **Ticket Transfers, Family Bookings, and Group Travel**

Some passengers book on behalf of others, transfer tickets at short notice, or travel as part of large groups. The mandatory requirement to carry ID and implementation of proportionate verification checks may require adjustments to these practices to ensure that manifests match verified passengers. Stakeholders are invited to comment on the practicality of alternative booking arrangements or process changes.

## **Operational Impacts for the IOMSPC**

At present, **the Department is not proposing full ID verification for every passenger** due to the level of anticipated impacts on check-in times and procedures, and the level of financial and resource implications required for a smooth rollout, including staff training, customer-communication materials, and potentially terminal infrastructure.

Instead, the Department is proposing **proportionate ID verification** (i.e. the requirement for passengers to carry ID, and produce it if requested), which would mitigate the extent of impacts highlighted above. The proposal to introduce a proportionate approach to ID verification has been developed following engagement with the IOMSPC and other stakeholders via the Securing Our Island Strategy Working Group. Nonetheless, the introduction of proportionate ID verification may still have operational impacts on the IOMSPC, and this consultation seeks to understand those impacts in greater detail.

## **Ensuring the Policy Remains Balanced and Proportionate**

The purpose of this consultation is to understand these impacts fully and ensure that the proposed policy strikes the right balance between public safety, the Island's commitment to proportionate border security controls, and maintaining a positive travel experience for residents and visitors alike.

## 9. Consultation Questions

We welcome views from residents, businesses, community groups, and visitors on the proposal to introduce a requirement for all IOMSPC passengers to carry ID, and to implement proportionate ID verification at check-in. Your feedback will help ensure that the proposed changes are proportionate, effective, and sensitive to the needs of all who rely on the Island's sea routes.

The consultation invites responses to the following questions:

### 1. About you.

- **What is your name?**

- **Are you responding on behalf of a group or organisation?**

Yes – I'm responding on behalf of a group or organisation.

No – I'm responding as an individual.

If Yes, please give details:

- **Which of the following best describes you/your organisation?**

Island resident

Island business

Visitor

Other

If Other, please give details:

- **How frequently do you / does your organisation use IOMSPC services?**

Never

Rarely (1-2 times per year)

Occasionally (2-5 times per year)

Regularly (6-10 times per year)

Routinely (10+ times per year)

- **May we publish your response?** Please read our privacy policy<sup>3</sup> for more details and your rights.

- No, please do not publish my response (*nothing will be published publicly on the hub – your response will only be part of an aggregated dataset published within a summary response document*).
- Yes, you may publish my response **anonymously** (*only your responses may be published on the consultation hub – your name / organisational details will not be published*).
- Yes, you may publish my response **including my name/organisation** (*your responses may be published on the consultation hub, including your name / organisational details*).

**2. Considering the proposed introduction of a mandatory requirement for all passengers to carry ID whilst travelling on IOMSPC services as a “Condition of Carriage” - are there specific groups that may require exemptions or special arrangements? Please provide details.** This may include minors (i.e. young people up to and including the age of 15), individuals without standard identification, emergency travelers, or those requiring assisted travel. Please provide any other feedback you think should be considered. Your views will help ensure the policy remains fair and inclusive.

- Yes.
- No.
- Unsure.

**3. What forms of ID should be accepted (Please tick as appropriate)?** We welcome suggestions on which forms of identification would be appropriate, accessible, and secure. In particular, the Department welcomes the views of people who may be unable to produce government issued photo-ID.

- A current or recently expired passport
- A government-issued photo ID card
- A health insurance or social security photo ID card

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<sup>3</sup> [Isle of Man Government - Home Affairs Privacy Notice](#)

- A photographic driving licence
- A photographic bus or train pass
- An international student card
- Other (please specify below)

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 4. Considering the proposed introduction of proportionate ID verification during check-in on IOMSPC sailings – what challenges do you foresee for residents, businesses, and/or visitors?** We are interested in any practical issues, unintended impacts, or barriers that may arise for regular travellers, commercial operators, or tourists. Please provide any other feedback you think should be considered.

- 5. Do you have any views on how Government and the IOMSPC can ensure smooth implementation?** We welcome suggestions relating to communication, timelines, customer-service arrangements, operational considerations, and any other steps that may support an effective rollout.

- 6. Do you believe this measure will contribute to reducing organised crime on the Island?** We would like to understand public perception of the security benefits, including whether ID checks are seen as an effective tool for disrupting those who seek to exploit the Island’s transport links.

- Yes.
- No.
- Unsure.

## 10. Review and the future

The Department proposes to review the effectiveness of the changes in collaboration with the IOMSPC and other relevant stakeholders. Should there be evidence to support further strengthening ID requirements on IOMSPC sailings (including full ID verification for all passengers) the Department may consider further developing these requirements in consultation with the IOMSPC and relevant stakeholders.

## 11. Why your views matter

Your views are important in helping Government make informed, balanced and evidence-based decisions about how we progress the proposal for mandatory carriage of ID for all IOMSPC passengers. Effective policymaking relies on open, two-way communication, and this consultation is an opportunity for you to shape an important proposal that affects residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

By sharing your experiences, concerns, and suggestions, you help ensure that proposed changes are practical, proportionate, and aligned with the needs of our Island community. Feedback gathered through consultations plays a vital role in refining proposals, identifying potential challenges, and strengthening public trust by ensuring that people feel informed, valued, and heard.

Your response will be considered in taking forward this policy area.

## 12. Responding to this consultation

Open dialogue with stakeholders is important for successfully developing the Department's proposals. Respondents should note that submissions received by the closing date will be considered but may not necessarily result in a change to the proposals following a review of all responses received.

Following closure of the consultation period on **08 June 2026**, the Department will review the responses received and publish a Summary of Responses on the Consultation Hub and the Department's website.

This consultation can be responded to by visiting the Consultation Hub website ([www.consult.gov.im](http://www.consult.gov.im)), or alternatively you can submit written responses via email to PolicyAndAdmin.DHA@gov.im or post it to:

**IOMSPC ID Consultation**

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## **13. Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats**

The Department is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our documents easy to use and accessible to all.

The Department will take steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments and provide such assistance as may reasonably be required to enable access or reply to this consultation.

If this document is required in another format or assistance is required with accessing or replying to this consultation, please email [PolicyAndAdmin.DHA@gov.im](mailto:PolicyAndAdmin.DHA@gov.im)

If you have a query in relation to how this consultation has been carried out, please contact the DHA Executive Office by emailing at [GeneralEnquiries.DHA@gov.im](mailto:GeneralEnquiries.DHA@gov.im) or by telephone on +44 1624 694306.



# Isle of Man Government

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