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PRESS RELEASE

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## Opposition tone on Monarch collapse deeply regrettable

The Government is not surprised by the tone of the statement issued by the Opposition today on the collapse of Monarch airlines. It is deeply regrettable that they should seek to make political capital out of a difficult situation, particularly for Monarch customers and former airline employees.

In their overriding eagerness to find something to pin on to the Government, the Opposition have completely ignored the statement made in our earlier press release which made it abundantly clear that the Government "is actively engaging with the UK Government in order to identify ways in which it can assist."

Mr Hammond knows, as he is employed in the aviation industry, that the UK Government is providing replacement flights to the UK for all persons booked with Monarch, regardless of whether their journey will end in the UK. Therefore in effect this is the equivalent of a phased shut-down of operations that will allow the majority of passengers to complete their holidays / trips without inconvenience.

It does not equate to a repatriation, which suggests that as in an emergency situation rescue flights are sent to extricate UK nationals from a specific problem area.

The UK Government does of course have a huge advantage in that it has access to the Monarch reservations system and thus knows where passengers are in the World. However, even having this information, the UK Government has not attempted to just return UK Nationals to the UK as they recognise such a selection exercise is fraught with logistical challenges far beyond that of a simple phased draw down of operations.

The Government, through the GHA, has made immediate arrangements for affected Sponsored Patients to be re-booked on alternative flights.

The advice given by passengers from Gibraltar mirrors that given by the Civil Aviation Authority to all passengers. The category of passenger who is ATOL protected will be covered by the relevant guarantees. With the exception of those passengers with flights booked to the UK before the 15th October, the most sensible advice to those without ATOL protection is to organise alternative flights with another airline and subsequently contact their credit card or travel insurance company.