Boosting reassurance for international travel through reliable COVID-19 testing

As international travel begins to re-open following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, there's a growing need for reliable, high-quality tests to satisfy the border requirements of different countries. The travel industry and private testing providers need to be assured that the tests they use are fit for purpose – not just in terms of performance but also that they meet **government standards** and international regulations. As of June 22, 2021, there is a range of different testing requirements for travellers who arrive in England from abroad, depending on where they you have been in the 10 days before you arrive. Other countries have their own varying requirements – and the situation is fluid as governments regularly change or update their guidelines. But no matter that world travel COVID-19 parameters are constantly changing, the need for reliable testing remains paramount.

English example*

In England, countries overseas are classified under a 'red-amber-green' coding, which then determines what quarantine and/or testing is required on arrival in England. Every traveller to England from any country needs to take a **COVID-19 test** before they travel. If a traveller has been in a country or territory on the red list in the previous 10 days, they will only be allowed to enter the UK – even if they have been vaccinated - if they are a British or Irish National or have residence rights in the UK. Before travelling to England from a red list country, the traveller must have proof of a negative **COVID-19 test**. They also need to complete a **passenger locator form** and book and pay for a **quarantine hotel package** for 10 days after arrival, including two COVID-19 tests, on or before day 2 and on or after day 8 of quarantining. Travel from England to red list countries or territories is not allowed. For travellers to England who have been in amber list countries in the previous 10 days, they must also prove a negative COVID-19 test result before travel. On arrival in England, travellers need to quarantine for 10 days at home or in the place in which they are staying. They must also book and pay for **COVID-19 tests on day 2 and day 8** after arrival in England and complete a passenger locator form. Children aged 4 and under do not need to take the day 2 or day 8 test.

Test to release

Travellers to England from amber list countries or territories may be able to leave quarantine early, by choosing to pay for an additional private test using the **Test to Release** scheme. The test is carried out at day five of quarantine, and isolation can end as soon as a person receives a negative result. However, they must still take a compulsory test on day eight. This scheme doesn't apply to inbound travellers from red list countries, who still have to quarantine for 10 days. Travellers to England from green list countries do not need to quarantine on arrival, but they must still take a COVID-19 test to prove no infection before they travel. On arrival, they need to complete a passenger locator form and **book and pay for a day 2 COVID-19 test** – to be taken after arrival in England. If the test result is positive, they then need to self-isolate for 10 days.** By law, all tests privately provided on day 2 and day 8 for international arrivals to England must meet **minimum standards**. Test providers must sign declarations that their tests meet these standards. There are minimum standards that apply for both day 2 and day 8 tests, plus additional specific standards for day 2 tests and additional specific standards for day 8 tests. Tests for international arrivals who have been in green list countries only, taken on or before day 2, must meet day 2 standards. Providers for Test to Release must meet separate **minimum standards**.

Reassurance

As travellers come to terms with the new quarantine and testing requirements, they need reassurance that the tests administered by private testing companies meet regulations and deliver reliable results. Novacyt's genesig® COVID-19 3G is one such test - the latest addition to a growing portfolio of products that build on the company's well-established reputation for diagnostics and testing. Designed specifically to meet the stringent needs of the travel industry and private testing, it has recently been clinically validated as meeting the standards required by the UK Government for private-sector providers of COVID-19 testing for Fit to Fly certification, Days 2 and 8 testing, and 'Test-to-Release' for international travel. The CE-IVD-marked product enables testing via a variety of sample types, including Nasopharyngeal, Oropharyngeal and Saliva. Strong performance characteristics are proven, with

validation for 100% in specificity, sensitivity, NPV and PPV. Our genesig® COVID-19 3G was developed through the innovation and high performance of our diagnostic technologies, which allowed us to rapidly respond to the pandemic through the development of a reliable COVID-19 PCR testing portfolio. The genesig® COVID-19 3G is a CE-Marked three-gene assay to detect the ORF1ab, M gene, and S gene targets of SARS-CoV-2, enabling fulfilment of certain international testing requirements, including Fit to Fly Certificate, Test to Release and US Food and Drug Administration regulations. Novacyt's genesig® portfolio is a well-established range of PCR kits for pathogen detection. The new three-gene assay for COVID-19 has been developed in recognition of rapidly changing testing needs dictated by SARS-CoV-2 mutations and complements the Company's existing one-gene, two-gene, and high-throughput tests. The genesig® range has been built around robust design principles and our real-time bioinformatics surveillance programme to monitor new SARS-CoV-2 genome sequences. As a result, our genesig® COVID-19 portfolio is highly accurate despite mutations, offering a robust and pragmatic option to support both public health and private sector testing alike. *Quarantine requirements in the UK is changing variably, please head to the government websites for most up to date travel requirements - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19. ** Travellers do not need to take a COVID-19 test or quarantine on arrival in England if they are travelling within the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, (the Common Travel Area), and have not been outside of the Common Travel Area in the previous 10 days. Travellers from England to other Common Travel areas will need to check entry requirements in those areas. Likewise, overseas travellers to Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland or Scotland will need to check local-entry requirements, including whether or not local governments are allowing the Test-to-release scheme. Travellers need to factor in any transit stops before arrival in England. For instance, if they arrive in England from a green country but travelled through an amber country, they need to take the arrival precautions specified for amber list countries.