

UK OFFICE

October 2017 REPORT

Prepared by: Venessa Alexander
UK Director

Tour Operators

- **Barrhead** – We met with Jade Semple who advised that bookings to the USA for 2017 has been a struggle due to exchange rates. They have seen a shift to the Far East particularly Bali and Malaysia due to the good air fares. Dubai has also been a popular choice for families this year. Their two top destinations, New York and Vegas are significantly down for 2017. 2018 is looking better, with some good sales for summer. Jade suggested that they would like to partner with us on marketing activity, however we have advised that we are unable to commit to anything at the moment due to the budget being allocated elsewhere.

Meetings/Training/Events

- **TDC** – Attended and presented at October TDC in addition to conducting several area site inspections and presenting to VSPC staff
- **Barrhead** – We visited their Glasgow office and provided dedicated training to 25 of their sales agents, most of whom had not been to St. Pete/Clearwater. We gave an overview of the destination including new hotels and attractions, and distributed brochures, maps and giveaways.

TRADE LIAISON

- **Hayes & Jarvis** - We have now received the final results of the joint co-op marketing activity and the results are as follows:
 - The direct Email sent w/c 15 May was to a circulation of 100,000 Hayes & Jarvis (targeted segment of customer base) and had an open rate of 29% with a click to open rate of 6% and generated 42 room nights
 - The second direct email sent w/c 04 September again to a targeted segment of 100,000 customers on their database had an open rate of 19.5% and a click to open rate of 9.5% and generated 32 room nights
 - The third and final direct email sent w/c 18 September and circulated to 100,000 Hayes & Jarvis customers had an open rate of 26.4% and a click to open rate of 5.1%. 25 room nights were booked a result of this email
 - The Hayes & Jarvis destination guide which had an editorial mention was circulated to 100,000 ABC1 Hayes & Jarvis customers plus 150-200k insertions into National Press
 - Retail activity (TUI Retail and 3rd Party e-flyer – full page advert was circulated to 800+ Thomson travel shops and agent's bookings from 19th June to the 31st July generated 55 room nights being booked during this period

- **Ocean Florida Incentive** – We have now received the results for the incentive we ran for their sales agents during August and September.
 - The winners for the incentive were; Jack Lane, Marc Comer and Anthony Lynch
 - 207 room nights booked during the incentive dates (-41% vly)
 - Overall room nights booked for 2017 travel +120% vly.
- **USAirtours/Feel Unique competition** – We have worked to confirm the booking for the prize winner and provided Linda Dixey with the tickets for Clearwater Marine Aquarium.
- **VSPC and SeaWorld Mega Fam** – In partnership with SeaWorld Parks we hosted a joint fam trip to Orlando and St. Pete/Clearwater for 28 sales agents from our key UK and Irish Tour Operators. The itinerary in Orlando included visits to at SeaWorld, Aquatica, Discovery Cove and Busch Gardens. We then enjoyed 3 nights in St. Pete/Clearwater staying at Sunset Vistas. The trip included; beach yoga, Art from the Heart pottery painting, kayaking at Fort de Soto, Starlite evening dinner cruise, The Dali museum, Hot Shop and Chihuly. We also had hosted meals and site inspections at; Don Cesar, Maggie Mae's, Dunedin Brewery, Sheraton Sand Key, Sirata Beach Resort, Postcard Inn on the Beach, Skidder's and Frescos. The trip was a huge success with the agents gaining a better understanding of the attractions in St. Pete/Clearwater and we will start discussions at WTM with SeaWorld Parks to plan for another mega fam in 2018.
- **TUI/SeaWorld/VSPC FAM Trip** – We were contacted by Micaela Gray from the UK office of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment to assist with a fam trip they were hosting for 14 TUI Retail Travel Agents to Florida. The group would be starting off in Orlando but wanted to spend time in St. Pete/Clearwater and as such requested our assistance in offering a 3-day itinerary to our area. With the assistance of Rosemarie and Michelle, we secured a full itinerary for the group which included site inspections at area hotels, a trip to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, a VIP experience at the Clearwater Jazz Festival and other area highlights including beach time at The Tradewinds Resorts, a docent tour of The Dali Museum and a lunch cruise on The Calypso Queen. The fam took place from the 18th – 21st October.
- **Thomas Cook, Scandinavia** – We have received a further banner advertisement for approval as part of our co-op marketing agreement, this has now been duly signed off and the campaign is currently in market and will run until the end of December 2017.
- **WTM** – We have continued to schedule appointments for WTM ahead of the show in November. We also liaised with our UK mailing house regarding the shipment of brochures and giveaways. Also finalised arrangements and attendees for the pre event on 4th November.
- **VSPC/British Airways Reservations/Sales FAM** – We provided Rooster PR with an overview of the recent FAM trip including itinerary highlights and photographs in order to gain some trade press coverage and highlight this annual FAM.
- **British Airways** – We have scheduled a meeting next month with Marc James and Geminie Patel to discuss possible marketing opportunities.

- **Visit USA Ireland** – We submitted details of the forthcoming Dali and Schiaparelli Collaboration that will be taking place at the Dali Museum from 18 October – 14 January to include in the monthly e-zine newsletter that will be sent to their trade and consumer database. We have also provided VUSA.IE with a banner advertisement to include on their website which is part of our annual membership.
- **Ocean Florida** – We had a call with Lisa Barrington who advised that August and September booking months have been good. They launched a new CRM system in August which gives them detailed insight to what is being searched by customers and provides leads. The leads created since its implementation was +50% in the month. Last year they offered an initial deposit of £75, this year it was £250, so this may have affected bookings, however it has since been reduced to £125. BA didn't launch their sale until September so it did have an impact on their end of August bookings. Overall August bookings were flat, but revenue was up. They are waiting to finalise the numbers for September but expecting it to be similar to August, flat on bookings, up on revenue. During both months, approx. 50% of their enquiries were for travel in December 17, and they are getting a lot of interest for summer 18. St. Pete/Clearwater is still their top beach destination in Florida, however when they did some price comparisons they found that St. Pete/Clearwater was looking high compared to other Florida beach destinations. Fort Lauderdale are very competitive due to extra capacity, Miami are storming due to their rates but they do have more rooms to sell and their strategy has been to focus more on the UK market. Fort Myers are trying to get every booking they can. She feels as though there is more of a shift to other destinations rather than incremental business to Florida. The hurricane has not put people off booking, although there is more of an interest in travelling next year and even 2019! They are hoping to recruit 20 more sales agents in November ahead of peak season. Overall, they are happy with the business. We have received a draft proof of the next edition of their Florida brochure which has been approved.
- **Expedia** – We spoke with Keri Appleford, who advised that overall for Florida passengers for 2017 travel were -2%, whereas room nights for St. Pete/Clearwater were pacing at +3.8%. She confirmed that Florida is down, largely driven by family market, specifically from Miami and Orlando. The USA overall is still a popular choice for customers, but tracking at -2.7% vly. They anticipate ending the year a couple of percent up versus last year. Exchange rates continue to affect bookings to the US, but they have seen a significant increase in bookings coming from the US to the UK because of this. Brexit will continue to have an effect on bookings as we go into 2018. California is proving a popular choice for families in 2017 and they have just launched a partnership campaign with them. Since the hurricane, they have seen a dip in searches/bookings to Florida but expect this to improve.
- **Norwegian November Fam Trip** – We have continued working with Michelle to finalise the itinerary for this group which includes; Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Honeymoon Island, Palm Pavilion, Chihuly Collection, Hotshop, the Dali Museum, and lunch at Sea Salt. The group will also have site visits and hosted meals at The Edge, Hyatt Regency Clearwater and Renaissance Vinoy. Michelle has also arranged welcome bags for the group. This trip is being hosted by Norwegian Airline, Visit Orlando, Universal and SeaWorld Parks.

- **Icelandair November Fam trip** – We have worked with Michelle to finalise an itinerary for the group who will be arriving at the beginning of November. The group of 8 sales agents are from key agencies in Denmark, Sweden and Norway and will be joined by John Rassmussen from Icelandair. The itinerary includes a behind the scenes tour at The Clearwater Marine Aquarium, a visit to The Dali Museum and Chihuly Collection and a visit to Pier 60 and time to explore our beaches.
- **Scandinavia Sales Mission** – We have now finalised our event in Stockholm, which will be held at the Hilton Slussen hotel. We have sent invites to travel agents as well as Product/Marketing Managers and the evening will consist of presentations, networking and food. This will be followed by a prize drawing.
- **Discover America, Scandinavia** – We have received Jan – Apr 2017 US arrivals from Scandinavia from Karin Gert Nielson;
 - Denmark – 98,636 visitors -0.8% vly
 - Sweden – 170,514 visitors -3.9% vly
 - Norway – 91,893 visitors +2.5% vly
 - Finland – 50,508 visitors -2.9% vly
- **THG** – We have received a draft email for approval, which forms part of our marketing campaign with THG. This has been approved and will be distributed to their database this month.
- **Bookabed** – The joint campaign with Bookabed is now taking place and will run until the end of October. Results to follow in due course.
- **Travel Counsellors** – We have updated our company profile which includes copy and social media links, which will be used on a new app they are launching at the beginning of November for their staff.
- **Barrhead Travel** – Kimberley Ainslie, Business Development Executive, contacted us to advise that they were launching a new USA section on their website and would like some copy, images and videos for use. We have provided her with the necessary assets.
- **Tropical Sky, Ireland** – Brendan White, Senior Travel Consultant, contacted us to ask for recommendations for accommodation in Clearwater Beach. We have offered some suggestions and provided contact details for travel trade offers, for his stay in November.
- **Visit USA Ireland** – We received a request from Tony Lane at the Visit USA Committee in Ireland for a link to our image library and this was duly sent.
- **If Only** – We have been advised that Rachel McAneny has recently joined the tour operator If Only as their USA Product Manager.

ENQUIRIES:

Telephone/website enquiries for information and/or literature

MARKET INTELLIGENCE:

1 October 2017, Source Travolution

Booking.com to provide accommodation content for Aer Lingus website

Booking.com is to provide accommodation content for the Aer Lingus website. The global hotels firm will power an Aer Lingus Hotels microsite accessed via the Irish airline's main website. More than 1.4 million properties will be offered across 227 countries a price match pledge and flexible payment options. The airline's marketing and digital experience director Dara McMahon said: "We are a value carrier. Our focus is centred on cost, efficiency and providing the very best guest experience to the 12 million guests we fly each year. "Booking.com is a recognised world leader in the travel industry and is committed to offering the best value in accommodation properties across the globe so it's an ideal partnership. "Aerlingus.com is now very much a one-stop-shop catering for the varying needs of today's travellers. "There are many travel extras that come into play when planning a trip such as insurance, car hire and of course accommodation and with our relaunched Aer Lingus Hotels we're delighted to have a fully robust offering on aerlingus.com." Booking.com senior director of partnerships Bryan Batista added: "Partnering with Aer Lingus enables us to reach even more travellers who are looking for their ideal stay. "By integrating our diverse offering into Aer Lingus Hotels, no matter where customers may be flying to, we've got the accommodation that's just right for them."

2 October 2017, Source Travelbiz Daily

Monarch Airlines collapse sparking UK's biggest peacetime repatriation effort

The UK's biggest peacetime repatriation operation is under way to return 110,000 Monarch Airlines customers after the airline collapsed into administration. The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said it had been asked by the UK Government to charter more than 30 aircraft to bring the passengers back to the UK after the airline's board called in administrators KPMG in the early hours of Monday morning.

3 October 2017, Source Irish Travel Trade News

Icelandair to Operate New Dublin-Reykjavik Service

Icelandair has announced that it will launch a new six-times weekly, year-round service to Reykjavik from May 2018. The new service, which will also have connections to and from 20 gateways in North America, will operate six days per week. Vincent Harrison, Dublin Airport Managing Director, said: "Iceland is a very popular destination for short breaks and is on many people's bucket list and Dublin Airport warmly welcomes today's announcement from Icelandair, which further strengthens the connection between the two countries. This new service will also provide additional options for North American visitors to get to Ireland, which is great news for the Irish tourism sector and the many thousands of businesses that it supports throughout the country." "We are excited to provide a service to Dublin, also known as one of the friendliest cities in Europe," said Birgir Holm Gudnason, Chief Executive,

Icelandair. "Ireland will be a welcome destination for North American travellers wanting to explore castles, culture and have access to the beautiful Irish countryside, with green fields, friendly, English-speaking residents and a rich and exciting history." When it launches its services next May, Icelandair will become Dublin Airport's 22nd new scheduled airline since 2010. "We are growing the business at Dublin Airport for the benefit of the entire Irish economy, offering more choice and connectivity for passengers," added Vincent. Icelandair will operate its new Dublin to Reykjavik service with a Boeing 757-200 aircraft. Flights will operate Sunday to Friday departing Keflavik Airport at 07.30 arriving in Dublin Airport at 09.15, with the return flight departing Dublin Airport at 11.50 arriving in Keflavik at 13.15. Icelandair has been in operation since 1937 and celebrates its 80th anniversary this year. The airline offers service to and from Iceland through its hub at Keflavik International Airport serving 20 destinations in North America and more than 25 destinations in Scandinavia, the UK, and Continental Europe.

5 October 2017, Source TravelMole

Norwegian reports rise in September traffic

Norwegian carried 3.1 million passengers in September, a 14% increase on the same month last year. The airline said the growth was strongest on its intercontinental routes and load factor overall was up 0.3 percentage points to 90%. The total traffic growth (RPK) increased by 29% while capacity growth (ASK) increased by 28%. "We're very pleased to see that more passengers are choosing Norwegian when they travel, not least business travellers," said CEO Bjorn Kjos. "The demand is good and stable in Scandinavia, and the growth is highest on our intercontinental routes. Global expansion is important to position ourselves in a market with such strong competition, but also for creating economic value in the markets we operate."

10 October 2017, Source TravelMole

Brits taking more holidays per year

The average number of holidays taken per person per year has grown from 3.4 to 3.8, according to ABTA research. This is the highest number of holidays taken per person in the last five years and almost equal to the 3.9 figure in 2011. The average number of overseas holidays has bounced back to the 2015 figure of 1.7 per year, having dropped to 1.4 in 2016. Breaks in the UK have remained steady after a 'very successful' 2016. Releasing its Holiday Habits Report 2017 at its Convention in the Azores this week, ABTA said the research had 'remarkably positive' results. It also found that in the 12 months to August 2017, 87% of Brits took a holiday either at home or abroad. This is the highest figure seen since 2011 and is a big jump from 77% in 2015. Over a quarter (26%) of holidaymakers are booking earlier, up from 21% in 2016. Spend on longer breaks overseas has increased to £586 from £537 last year, but spend on shorter breaks overseas has decreased to £285 per person from £301. Almost a third of people (31%) are planning to spend more, a notable increase on last year's figures of 24%. The number one reason cited was to ensure they get their first choice of destination.

10 October 2017, Source Travel Weekly

Thomas Cook appoints new UK managing director

Thomas Cook Group plc has appointed Tui's Andrew Flintham as managing director of its UK business as Chris Mottershead moves into the role of chief of UK source market & group differentiated product. Flintham will take responsibility of the day-to-day operations in the UK from March 2018. Flintham is commercial director for Tui UK&Ireland and has spent over ten years at Tui. Prior to becoming commercial director his roles included mainstream planning director, aviation planning director and planning & trading director. Before joining Tui, Flintham began his career in travel with British Airways in 1998. Former UK managing director Chris Mottershead has moved into the role of chief of UK source market & group differentiated product, meaning he will take responsibility for the relationship with Thomas Cook Group's most important partners and hotel procurement, along with the service and experience that customers enjoy in those hotels when in resort. Flintham will report directly into Mottershead, who retains overall responsibility for the UK source market alongside his new responsibilities. Flintham said: "I'm very excited to be joining Thomas Cook to lead the UK business at such an interesting time for the tour operating industry. Their customer at our heart strategy is a great proposition – I am looking forward to next year."

11 October 2017, Travelbiz

Families and 'well-off' most likely to book through agents

Families and richer consumers are the most likely to use a travel agent or operator to book their holidays. Abta's Holiday Habits Report 2017 report has revealed that 38% of all consumers have booked a holiday through a travel professional in the past 12 months. This percentage was even higher for people in the upper middle class (social grade A) category with 50% of them using a travel professional, while 47% of families with children aged under five and 44% of families with children over five also booked through the travel trade. The top reasons for booking through the trade were: to make the booking easier (60%), provide greater confidence (52%) and save time (48%). Ease of booking was particularly important for older clients with 75% of over-65s saying this was the main benefit of booking with an agent or travel company. Saving time was key for those in both the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups with 56% and 63% respectively giving it as the main reason for booking with a travel professional. For younger travellers, aged 18-24, and those in social grade A, the most important factor is the confidence they feel when booking through the trade. Abta chief executive Mark Tanzer said: "Our research shows that even during booking, people want a stress-free experience and they particularly value the assistance of travel professionals in helping them to do so. "Families and the well-off particularly value travel professionals' experience and expertise. People also continue to appreciate the convenience of packages, with package holidays remaining the single most popular overseas holiday option, particularly for families."

16 October 2017, Source TravelMole

Flights cancelled as Hurricane Ophelia approaches

Aer Lingus, British Airways, Air France, Flybe, CityJet, Emirates, KLM and Ryanair have cancelled flights at several UK airports today as Hurricane Ophelia approaches. Hazardous sea and weather conditions are forecast for Ireland from around midday and are also affecting ferry services. Up to 130 flights have been cancelled to and from Dublin Airport today but flights at other airports, including Heathrow, have also been affected. BA said due to strong winds forecast for Monday and Tuesday, it is giving customers travelling to or from Dublin or Belfast on Monday the option to move their travel dates. Customers travelling to or from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds-Bradford, Manchester or Newcastle on Tuesday can also opt to change their travel dates. "We expect at times that the winds may be too strong to safely operate loading and unloading vehicles at some UK airports, so some flights are likely to experience delays," it said. "For safety reasons, there will be a reduction in the number of aircraft from all airlines that can land each hour at Heathrow. This has unfortunately meant we have had to cancel a small number of flights." Flybe initially said it was cancelling 47 flights on Monday, mainly serving Belfast City, Dublin, Knock and the Isle of Man, but the number later climbed to 170. Ryanair cancelled more than 60 flights and warned there could be more cancellations and delays. Stena Line and Irish Ferries have also cancelled ferry sailings. The Met Office has warned of 'potential danger to life' as Hurricane Ophelia, which has now been downgraded to category 1, heads for the British Isles from the Azores, which hosted the ABTA Convention last week. An amber warning has been issued for Northern Ireland, where all schools are closed today, while in the Republic of Ireland, Met Eireann has issued a red wind warning and the government has deployed the army. Met Office chief forecaster Paul Gundersen said: "Ophelia weakened on Sunday night and is now no longer classified as a hurricane. That said, storm force to hurricane force winds of up to 80mph across Northern Ireland, and some areas bordering the Irish Sea will result in travel disruption, power cuts and some damage to buildings such as tiles being blown from roofs."

18 October 2017, Source Travelbiz

Tui calls time on Thomson with revamp

The Thomson name is being ditched as German group Tui brings it under its own logo. One of the UK's best known travel brands will disappear on Wednesday following a revamp by its owner. The Thomson name, which is more than 50 years old, is being ditched as German group Tui brings it under its own logo. The UK is the last of Tui's markets to see the rebrand, which was announced in 2015. Thomson's 600 shops have been renovated to display the Tui name and the company has been running a television advertising campaign to inform customers that "Thomson is changing to Tui". Tui UK and Ireland managing director Nick Longman said he hopes the move will boost sales as the firm expands its range of holidays from traditional bucket and spade breaks. In an interview with the Press Association, he said: "Thomson is a great heritage brand with rich nostalgia and that's fantastic, we've all had great Thomson holidays over the years, but it can also be a bit limiting. "Holidays are changing, people want different things, not just seven and 14 (night) beach packages.

“They want to go for different durations, with different generations of their family, do city breaks, do tours, all those different types of holiday experiences. “I think that it can be harder to change people’s perception of a brand when you try to introduce a wider type of holiday. “Tui is a much more contemporary brand and certainly the research we did said people are much more likely to consider going on those other types of holidays if they go with Tui.” The Thomson brand was established in 1965 by Canadian media baron Roy Thomson. Mr Longman insisted that the firm would “still do the things we’ve done before”, but also appeal to a broader range of customers. He went on: “It’s a great thing to be part of a truly global brand as Tui’s leading travel business in the world. “It brings us a wealth of expertise, it means that we can utilise the knowledge of all of the representatives we have serving our customers overseas, doing that as one group. “I think we can provide better experiences, better service for our customers.” Tui marked the announcement by unveiling a prototype of an innovative system which matches customers’ facial and emotional responses to images of destinations and experiences to calculate their perfect trip. The firm claims the Destination U technology is a “world first in travel retail”. It hopes to make the system available for public use “in the near future”.

18 October 2017, Source TravelMole

TUI unveils virtual travel agent

TUI has developed new technology which it claims could help customers identify their ideal holiday by presenting them with images of activities and destinations and recording their facial responses to determine what sort of trip they'd prefer. A prototype of its 'Destination You' computer will be installed in its newest and largest store in Merry Hill near Dudley to test customer reaction. If successful, it could be rolled out to its flagship shops. Customers stare at images of holidays flashed up on a computer screen, which has a built-in camera to capture their reactions. These are then analysed by facial recognition technology and the images are changed according to the customer's reactions. At the end, the computer suggests a holiday type, based on their responses to the images they were shown. "It adds a bit of fun," said managing director Nick Longman. "It won't be in every store, but it is something that might be able to suggest to the customer holidays they hadn't even thought of. "Our intention is to get the prototype in store and see customers' reactions to it and go from there."

21 October 2017, Source TravelMole

TUI UK and Ireland appoints new commercial director

TUI UK and Ireland has appointed Richard Sofer as commercial director, with effect from December 1. His new role will include responsibility for TUI UK & I's product offering, yield management and aviation planning, as well as being a board member. Sofer joined TUI UK in September 2016 as managing director of Thomson Cruises, overseeing the launch of Discovery 2 in May 2017 and the recent rebrand to Marella Cruises as Thomson changed to TUI. Prior to joining TUI, he worked for GLH Hotels where he held a number of roles. His last role was chief executive of Thistle and Every Hotels. The appointment of the new MD for Marella Cruises will be confirmed shortly.

21 October 2017, Source Travelbiz

Parents are STILL booking term-time holidays for their children, despite hefty fines and government warnings

More than 50,000 term-time holiday fines were issued by local councils in 2015. Despite this, many parents continue to bend the rules regarding academic leave. New figures show various families will indulge in pre-Christmas breaks, this year. It has previously been an expensive decision for parents. But, despite this, children are still being taken on foreign holidays during academic term-time - regardless of both £60 fines and government warnings to the contrary. That's according to new data that says families are shunning official guidelines to score off-peak deals ahead of the forthcoming Christmas break. According to travel agent Oliver's Travels, there's been a surge in winter sun reservations for the period between October and Christmas 2017. Specifically, 117 bookings out of 650 involve pupils taking leave from school. Likewise, nearly a fifth (18 per cent) of all the company's bookings for August 2017-August 2018 also involve term-time absence. And, although the numbers don't reveal how many are based on authorised leave, it suggests mothers and fathers would rather risk a local authority's financial penalty, than lose a bargain. In 2010, the number of days lost because parents took their children out of school for unsanctioned getaways was 1.9million, while in 2014 it was three million. Separate figures reveal more than 50,000 term-time holiday fines – which double to £120 if not paid quickly enough – were issued by local councils in 2015. That was a rise of 25 per cent on the previous 12 months. Previously, ministers have said that allowing children to skip school can affect their grades, but campaigners say the policy will make holidays the preserve of the rich. Speaking of his company's findings, Oliver Bell, founder of Oliver's Travels, told MailOnline Travel: 'This is clearly a very controversial subject. 'With the looming threats of rising interest rates before the year is out, coupled with the ever increasing costs of living, it comes as no surprise that parents are opting to break the rules to take their children on affordable holidays before Christmas. 'Quality family time has a profound impact on children's mental health and their adjustment to life but the harsh reality is that 66 per cent of us wish we had taken our kids on more holidays when they were younger but didn't because of lack of time or money.'

26 October 2017, Source Travelbiz

Passengers on US bound flights face 'security interviews' from today

Airlines say passengers to face short security interviews. Changes are complex security measures - US trade group. New measures spark concerns over delays, long processing. New security measures including stricter passenger screening take effect today on all US-bound flights to comply with government requirements aimed at responding to threats of hidden explosives, airlines said. Airlines contacted by Reuters said the new measures could include short security interviews with passengers at check-in or the boarding gate, sparking concerns over flight delays and extended processing time. They will affect 325,000 airline passengers on about 2,100 commercial flights arriving daily in the United States, on 180 airlines from 280 airports in 105 countries. US Transportation Security Administration officials are giving some airlines or airports additional time to comply with the new interviews as long the US government has approved security plans by Thursday. "TSA will continue to work closely with our aviation partners and verify that all security enhancements are accurately implemented," TSA spokeswoman Lucy Martinez said in a statement

Wednesday. The United States announced the new rules in June to end its restrictions on carry-on electronic devices on planes coming from 10 airports in eight countries in the Middle East and North Africa in response to concerns that explosives could be hidden in electronic devices. Those restrictions were lifted in July, but the Trump administration said it could reimpose measures on a case by case basis if airlines and airports did not boost security. European and US officials said at the time that airlines had 120 days to comply with the measures, including increased passenger screening. The 120-day deadline is Thursday. Airlines had until late July to expand explosive trace detection testing. US authorities in June also ordered increased security around aircraft and in passenger areas, and other places where travelers can be cleared by US officials before they depart and ordered enhanced screening of personal electronic devices. Some of those new requirements take effect this week as well. The TSA said in July it was imposing new security rules requiring US domestic airline travelers to remove all electronic items larger than mobile phones such as tablets, e-readers and video game consoles from carry-on baggage for screening.