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Ministear an Àiteachais agus Ceangal
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Russell Borthwick
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5 November 2025

Dear Russell,

Thank you for your letter of 27 October 2025 to Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, about Eastern Airways. I am responding as this issue falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

I am saddened that Eastern Airways has filed a notice of intention to appoint administrators and my thoughts are with the staff and customers impacted. The Scottish Government fully recognises the economic and social importance of rural connectivity in Scotland. For that reason, I want to reassure you that the Scottish Government is doing everything possible to provide support to those impacted. The interest of AGCC is understandable and welcome and I would welcome your support, alongside other relevant organisations, in pursuing opportunities for growing demand in the longer term and boost the case for sustainable service provision.

In terms of staff, as you will be aware, until an administrator is appointed the actions that can be taken are limited but the Scottish Government's Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) programme stands ready to assist. As the company is based in England, the PACE National Team are in contact with DWP. As soon as an administrator is appointed, and impacted individuals can be identified then free advice and support will be offered to them.

Highland Council is actively trying to resolve the situation at Wick and the Scottish Government is fully engaged in that process. Highland Council is the lead organisation for the Public Service Obligation (PSO) on the Wick to Aberdeen route and they are working to use the emergency procedures within the PSO legislation to appoint a new operator to the route as soon as possible. The Scottish Government is in continuous contact with Highland Council and we have confirmed that our existing funding commitment for the route remains in place. I am meeting Raymond Bremner, the Leader of Highland Council, on 5 November to discuss the route and to confirm that the Council's work is progressing on schedule.

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I note your comments about Eastern Airways' wider operations and I am aware that other airlines are currently considering the commercial viability of taking these on. The UK has a vibrant airline industry and I trust that those routes that are commercially viable will be picked up.

Yours sincerely,



JIM FAIRLIE

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