

“ Plain speaking legal advice ”

**Volcano Ash –
Stranded Employees**

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The UK's airspace and airports have now been closed since Thursday morning due to the volcanic ash. As a result of this, more and more workers are becoming stranded overseas and we are now hearing of schools having to close due to the fact that their teachers are stranded.

Whilst we understand that the Royal Navy is to draft in ships to help rescue some of the estimated one million Britons stuck abroad, the majority are being left to find their own way home. One important issue that is now arising is how do employers treat this additional time off work once the employees do come back?

The answer to this will depend upon each employer's policies. If they did not have policies in the past, many companies will have put a policy in place to cover emergency events such as this following the snow and the chaos that it caused earlier this year. If as an employee you do not have any procedures to cover this, then your existing absence policy will continue to apply.

Therefore, generally speaking, if your employees are abroad for personal reasons, then you are entitled to request that they either:

- (a) take additional holiday allowance to cover the extra time off; or
- (b) take unpaid leave for the days that they were not at work; or
- (c) if it is possible, make up the time owing.

Wherever possible, it is sensible to communicate with any stranded employees to agree on the most suitable arrangements.

If you want any further information on this issue, then please do not hesitate to contact Ashley Holden on ashley.holden@herrington-carmichael.com.