

The latest news, views, and announcements

Further Delays to EES

The EU's new Entry/Exit System (*EES*), which has faced multiple delays due to technical challenges and concerns from member states is now facing further setbacks. In a recent interview with KentOnline news, Doug Bannister, Chief Executive of the Port of Dover, stated that the system is now not expected to be introduced until November 2025.

The EES aims to enhance border security by electronically recording the entry and exit of non-EU travellers, replacing the traditional passport stamping method. This system will require non-EU citizens to register biometric information, such as fingerprints and facial images, upon their first entry into the Schengen Area and every subsequent three years.

However, the implementation has been postponed several times since its planned launch in 2021. While some ports and airports are prepared, others lack the necessary facilities, leading to concerns about potential long queues at entry points such as Dover and Eurostar's St Pancras terminal.

The European Commission is now considering a phased or "ultra-soft launch" later in 2025 to prevent severe disruptions and is expected to announce more details by May.

Once operational, the EES will be followed by the introduction of the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS), which will require travellers from 60 countries, including the UK, to apply for authorisation to enter 30 European countries. The ETIAS is slated to launch 6 months after the EES.

For more information, visit etias.com

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Dates for Your Diary



25th February

Members Meeting

9th March

Members Dinner

The Stratford Manor Hotel,
Stratford Upon Avon

10th March

AGM & Conference

Volvo Group, Warwick

27th March

The Big Coach Conversation

Derbyshire County Cricket Club

12th & 13th April

UK Coach Rally, Blackpool

UKCOA Industry Partners. Supporting Our Members and the Coach Industry

The UKCOA is proud to work alongside a wide range of Industry Partners who provide essential products and services that help keep the coach sector moving. From vehicle suppliers and maintenance specialists to insurance providers, software developers, and legal experts, our partners offer invaluable support to operators of all sizes.

Their contributions are vital to the success of our association, helping us to advocate for the industry while ensuring our members have access to the best resources available.

By working with our Industry Partners, coach operators can take advantage of expert knowledge, innovative solutions, and exclusive offers designed to support their businesses.

We encourage all our members to explore the services our partners provide and consider them when making key business decisions. A full list of UKCOA Industry Partners can be found on our website.

Visit [Our Industry Partners - UKCOA](#) to learn more.

UKCOA AGM & Conference

We delighted to announce our annual Members Dinner will be taking place on Sunday, 9th March at The Stratford Manor Hotel - Stratford upon Avon, an informal yet engaging opportunity to network with fellow members, exchange ideas, and discuss industry topics in a relaxed setting.

This will be followed by our Annual Conference and AGM, taking place on Monday, 10th March at one of our Industry Partner's headquarters - Volvo Group UK in Warwick.

These events provide a platform to discuss the key issues shaping our sector and to network with fellow operators, suppliers, and policymakers. The conference programme is packed with insightful sessions, engaging speakers, and valuable updates on regulatory and operational matters.

Conference Highlights:

- **Industry Keynote Speech** - Hear from Alex Mayer MP, member of the Transport Select Committee, on the vital role of the coach industry
- **UKCOA's Driver Academy Initiative** - Gain insights from Carl Widdowson (Department for Work and Pensions) and Andy Palmer (A Palmer Associates), including an interview with the first UKCOA Driver Academy applicant.
- **Regulatory Update** - Get the latest legal insights from Ian Jones, Legal Director at Backhouse Jones.
- **Key Issues for Women in the Industry** - Candice Mason, Director of Women in Bus and Coach, will explore the challenges and opportunities for women in the coach sector.
- **Zero Emission and Alternative Fuels** - A crucial discussion led by Claire Haigh from ZEMO on Delivering Net Zero Transport in the UK.
- **Q&A Sessions** - Get your pressing questions answered in two interactive discussions chaired by UKCOA Vice Chair, Tom James.

The conference will be followed by a networking lunch, and access to industry partner stands.

Afterwards, UKCOA members are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 13:30, where we will review the association's progress, discuss future plans, and provide an opportunity for members to have their say.

This is an essential event for anyone in the coach industry looking to stay ahead of the latest developments. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to engage with key decision-makers and contribute to the future of our sector.

To register your attendance, please complete the invitation that was emailed to all members by 12th February or contact info@uk-coa.co.uk for more information.

Driving Change in Our Industry

The Women in Bus and Coach group is leading the way in making the passenger transport industry more inclusive, diverse, and welcoming for women. With the industry still being heavily male dominated, this initiative aims to break down barriers, provide support, and create opportunities for women to thrive in bus and coach operations.



Women in Bus and Coach was launched to increase the number of women entering and staying in the industry while ensuring they have access to mentorship, career development, and leadership roles. Their goals include:

- Raising awareness of the opportunities for women in the industry.
- Challenging outdated perceptions about the role of women in bus and coach operations.
- Providing networking and mentorship opportunities to support career growth.
- Encouraging businesses to create more inclusive workplaces.

By creating a strong community, the group is not only helping individual women but also working to tackle the driver shortage and make the industry more appealing to a broader talent pool.

The UKCOA encourages members to support and engage with the Women in Bus and Coach group by:

- Spreading awareness within your own business and networks.
- Encouraging female employees to join and benefit from mentorship and resources.
- Reviewing workplace policies to ensure they support inclusivity and career development.
- Sharing success stories to inspire more women to join the industry.

A more diverse and inclusive workforce will only strengthen the coach sector, bringing new skills, perspectives, and talent to the industry. To learn more about the initiative and how you can get involved, visit womeninbusandcoach.org.uk