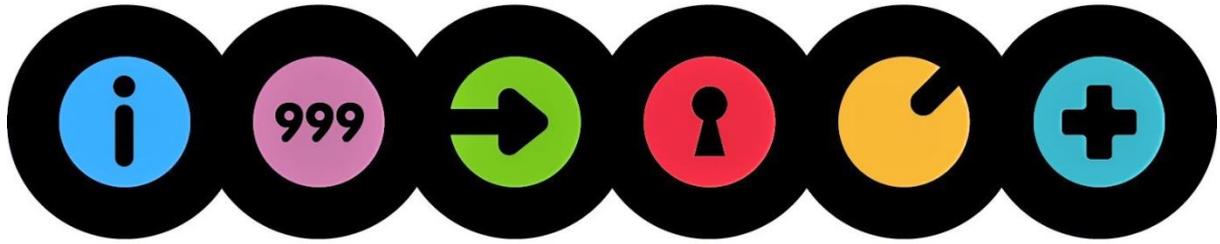


Kent Resilience Forum



PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES IN KENT AND MEDWAY

Preparing Kent for the end of the Brexit Transition Period

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The multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) is committed to working with the Department for Transport, Kent County Council, Kent Police, Port of Dover, Eurotunnel, local authorities and Highways England to prepare for any traffic disruption on Kent's roads, following the end of the Brexit Transition Period.

This document outlines the plans that have been developed to ensure the M20 can be kept open to traffic and that disruption for local residents, businesses and other road users is kept to a minimum, in addition to plans for temporary traffic holding areas, under a reasonable worst-case scenario.

The KRF is also planning for a wide range of other contingencies, including the welfare of those drivers and passengers who may be delayed in queues for long periods of time and communities that may be impacted as a consequence of the traffic management plans. Plans have considered concurrent incidents, including Covid-19 and severe weather.

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INTRODUCTION

The United Kingdom formally exited the European Union on 31 January 2020 and entered a transition period until 23:00 (GMT) on 31 December 2020. During the transition period, the UK will continue to be treated as a Member State and no new border controls will be implemented.

When the transition period ends, the UK will no longer be a member of the Single Market or the Customs Union. Therefore, new border controls and checks will be implemented which will impact the short Channel crossings. The UK will be treated by the EU as a third country and will be subject to full third country controls and a variety of border checks. Even if a trade agreement is reached, new customs declarations and some new border checks will still be required.

Any additional border controls will have a direct impact on Kent from 01 January 2021, in terms of the increased likelihood of disruption to the short straits and the need for multi-agency management of the consequences.

This document sets out the Kent Resilience Forum's plans to mitigate traffic disruption in Kent as a result of the Brexit Transition Period ending.

These plans have been developed with the key aim of keeping the M20 open and moving at times of disruption, and that Operation Brock be developed as a preferred response option to Operation Stack.

Following intensive work by all partners, the Kent Resilience Forum is now confident that these plans can deliver a multi-agency response to anticipated disruption as a result of friction at the borders.

It is important to note that these plans have been developed in line with Central Government planning assumptions and the Operation Brock infrastructure commissioned by the DfT and delivered by Highways England. The plans are also being incorporated into communications around managing Kent and wider national disruption.

The Operation Fennel Plan is designed to cope with 7,000 HGVs which is the maximum queue length of HGVs expected in Kent, as detailed in the national reasonable worst case scenario (RWCS) planning assumptions.

The multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum will continue to develop these plans further as we head towards the 31st December and partners are moving to fully resource and train staff in line with the operational requirements.

BACKGROUND

- The aim of our plans is to keep Kent moving, to mitigate the impact of disruption on our roads and to our communities and businesses.
- Even if a trade deal between the UK and the EU is agreed, the way that goods and people move across the border will change from 1 January 2021 and there will be changes to customs procedures. The Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) has received planning assumptions from government for the reasonable worst case scenario and has been developing robust plans to prepare accordingly.
- The extensive and detailed plans have been developed to strengthen the resilience of all our partners and to support our communities, businesses and service providers to mitigate disruption caused by freight traffic delays due to additional checks that will be required at the ports in Kent.
- We have tested, and will continue to test, our traffic management and driver welfare plans in a number of multi-agency exercises.
- The KRF has trained its partners to ensure each organisation is prepared, has considered its own business continuity plans and is contributing towards the plans and processes that we have put in place.
- We have worked with large employers, organisations and service providers in Kent and Medway to ensure that they are aware of, and can adapt to, any disruptions that may impact their business continuity and operations.
- We continue to work with local businesses to ensure they have access to all relevant information to keep running during this period of potential disruption.

RISK FROM EU TRANSITION

The end of the Transition Period creates the risk of additional congestion at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel. The primary risks are that processing freight and tourist traffic leaving the UK will take longer than at present, causing delays in passing through the border controls. This could lead to queues extending back onto the road network. The multi-agency command and control centre will be set up in order to co-ordinate the response and meet the duties under Cabinet Office Emergency Preparedness to ensure an integrated approach to prevention, preparation, response and recovery. The KRF has developed a comprehensive command structure to manage impacts from EU Transition and Covid-19 simultaneously.

PURPOSE

Operation Fennel is the multi-agency response to delays in freight and passenger traffic using the Port of Dover or the Channel Tunnel to cross the Short Straits. The Operation Fennel Plan effectively collates Department for Transport, Highways England, Kent Police, and Kent County Council responses into a single plan. Operation Fennel sets out the operational measures, practices and resources required to deliver the strategic intention; taking account of any additional specific requirements that may be agreed through the Tactical Co-ordinating Group. This plan is not designed to replace the individual response plans of agencies.

This multi-agency plan sets out the operational methods to accommodate delayed vehicles. The Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel are facilities of national importance. As the shortest crossing point between the UK and mainland Europe, the short straits ports (Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel) account for 69% of all goods vehicles and 89% of all powered goods vehicles that travel between the UK and mainland.

STRATEGIC INTENTION

“Together with multi-agency partners we will protect life and aim to keep Kent moving, preventing and minimising the impact of cross channel disruption on the community, freight and non-freight traffic and the environment. We will continue to operate a safe, local and strategic system using the transport network in Kent and provide reliable travel information. Where we cannot achieve this fully we will ensure that we provide a driver welfare regime and ensure that our multi-agency communications are clear and consistent to the travelling public. In doing so, we will attempt to mitigate the consequences caused to our surrounding communities. Everything we do will be in accordance with the principles of JESIP.”

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We will work with our strategic partners to:

1. Deliver a response that protects life and minimises the risk of serious harm to human welfare including; loss of life, illness or injury to the public, road users and staff deployed before, during and after the event.
2. Develop information and intelligence with key stakeholders to assess threat and risk in order to deliver a proportionate partnership response, which is JESIP compliant.
3. Protect and maintain the critical infrastructure and critical services, minimising the occurrence and impact of Operation Fennel where possible, whilst endeavouring to keep the County moving.
4. Prevent and minimise disruption where possible to the road network, businesses and the local community. We will provide reassurance and preserve public trust and confidence.
5. Ensure that they share information and work collaboratively to enable the development of appropriate contingency plans for implementation during the emergency.
6. Provide timely, clear and relevant information to warn and inform the public, using all relevant mediums, including social media and will identify 'talking heads' from the multi-agency partnership, who are briefed effectively.
7. Take reasonable steps to prevent crime and disorder, and where it does occur we will deliver an effective and proportionate investigation securing the best possible evidence to support bringing offenders to justice.
8. Maintain adequate service resilience and business continuity to deliver 'business as usual'.
9. When the intelligence/information indicates that there is no longer a requirement for the partners to be in a state of emergency within the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), establish the appropriate governance led by the relevant authority to take forward activity to support the recovery phase and when it is appropriate to plan for a return to a 'new normality'.
10. When the state of emergency has been stood down, establish appropriate processes in order to develop a debrief mechanism to facilitate an environment to provide feedback and a "lessons learnt" forum.

OPERATION FENNEL

Operation Fennel is an escalating series of plans to deal with the regular flow of traffic at peak times (TAP 20) along with short and long-term cross-channel service disruption (Op Brock).

TAP 20

- Capacity to hold 500 HGVs.
- TAP 20 manages traffic flows during periods of disruption at the Port of Dover. It is designed to hold HGVs on one lane of the A20, preventing congestion to traffic in Dover centre.
- TAP 20 is managed and maintained by Highways England and Port of Dover Police.
- When Brock M20 is made active, TAP 20 will remain in place and will assist the control of freight into the Port of Dover.

BROCK M20

- Capacity to hold 2,000 HGVs.
- Brock M20 is a tactical option available to manage traffic heading to the Port of Dover or Channel Tunnel.
- Brock M20 is designed to keep the M20 open by operating a contraflow system between junctions 8 and 9 on the London-bound carriageway of the M20. The contraflow is for all traffic other than HGVs heading to the ports. The coast bound carriageway is utilised for port bound freight.
- A concrete barrier, known as the Moveable Barrier Solution (MBS), will be deployed on the M20 to create the contraflow on the London-bound carriageway. This will keep the M20 open in both directions. This is managed by Highways England.
- Brock M20 will be available for deployment by 30th December 2020.
- The coast-bound carriageway can be used in two ways:
 - Brock M20 active free flow with port bound freight flowing freely on the coast-bound carriageway.
 - Brock active with control with port bound freight being held in two lanes on the coast-bound carriageway using traffic signals and being released to Eurotunnel or Port of Dover via TAP 20 as capacity becomes available.

BROCK MANSTON

- Capacity to hold 4,000 HGVs.
- Brock Manston has been available since 2015 as a tactical option for managing disruption at the ports. It was included as part of the plans for a potential 'no deal' Brexit scenario in 2019 and will be available until the end of June 2021.
- Brock Manston is a tactical option, located in Thanet, for holding HGVs prior to their release into TAP 256. Primarily Brock Manston is designed to hold Port of Dover freight and is a private contract between the Department for Transport and a contractor who will manage all activities on the site.
- Brock Manston will also be used to manage HMRC customs clearance and as a border checking site to ensure that freight is border ready before it reaches the port.
- Tests have been carried out to establish the safest optimum release rate of HGVs along the proposed route on the A256 to the Port of Dover, and how any impacts could be managed. Freight held at Manston will leave along the A256, and travel from the bottom of the A256 to the Eastern Docks roundabout at the entry of the port.
- Appropriate signage will be placed on the strategic and local road networks to direct freight as required. The primary route to Brock Manston will be the M2/A2 corridor into the A299 Thanet Way.

TAP 256

- Capacity to hold up to 450 HGVs.
- HGVs will be released from Manston and held in TAP 256, meaning there is a constant supply of freight to meet the requirements of the Port of Dover.
- TAP 256 is a holding area and will be positioned on the A256 Whitfield Bypass around ½ mile north of the junction with the A2. TAP 256 has a similar set up to the TAP 20, where freight bound for the port will be held at traffic lights in lane 1 on the southbound carriageway and then released as requested by the Port of Dover. The journey time from TAP 256 to the entrance of the Port of Dover will take between 5-8 minutes in normal traffic.
- Kent County Council Highways is the lead agency for TAP 256.

SEVINGTON INLAND BORDER FACILITY (IBF)

- Capacity to hold 1,200 HGVs.
- Sevington IBF is located in Ashford, off of the A2070 and junction 10a on the M20.

- From January 2021, the site will be used to manage HMRC customs clearance (inbound and outbound) and border checks to ensure that freight is ready before reaching the ports.
- It will also be used as a temporary lorry park facility should additional capacity be required.
- From July 2021 (Day 200) when full import controls are implemented, the site will also be used for additional HMRC checks and DEFRA checks.

EBBSFLEET

- A car park located at Ebbsfleet International will be used to manage HMRC customs clearance from January.
- Ebbsfleet will also be used as a muster point in the event that freight carrying certain goods (seafood and day old chicks) is prioritised.

WATERBROOK

- The Waterbrook site is located in Ashford, close to Sevington IBF.
- Waterbrook will be ready by January 2021 to manage HMRC customs clearance. Depending on the dynamic traffic situation, a decision may be made to keep Waterbrook on stand-by as a contingency for Sevington IBF.

OPERATION STACK

- Op Stack is implemented as a last resort. It is currently an emergency contingency option for managing high numbers of freight bound for the Channel Tunnel and Port of Dover so they can be kept in line, do not overly obstruct other major and local roads; and can be released fairly and in turn whenever space becomes available.
- It is accepted that Kent Police and partners may have a scenario where Operation Stack is necessary. Operation Stack could therefore be introduced at any stage of the Op Fennel Plan as an emergency contingency measure, depending on the threat and risk presented.
- Op Stack involves the parking of freight on the M20 motorway when the capacity for these vehicles to leave the country via the Port of Dover or the Channel Tunnel is compromised.
- Compromised capacity can occur spontaneously, for a number of reasons: industrial dispute; anticipated weather conditions; major incident; or other events affecting the capacity of either the Port of Dover or the Channel Tunnel.

NON-FREIGHT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- Generally, disruption at the ports affects freight, however it can also impact non-freight traffic (including tourists, local residents and businesses).
- A specific risk relating to EU Transition is that British passport holders will be subject to increased immigration checks at the ports because the UK will be classed as a “third country” by the EU.
- There are usually increased volumes of tourist traffic during the seasonal and school holidays. However, the impacts of Covid-19 and lockdown/travel restrictions may reduce passenger traffic.
- The general strategic principle for non-freight traffic is that it will not be directed to use a particular route and should be allowed to make its own way to its destination. There may be some local exceptions, such as diverting traffic away from town centres, and this principle could be revised dynamically if appropriate.
- There are four stages to non-freight traffic management which may be activated if required. The stages are cumulative and can be scaled up or down as necessary depending on the type of incident and the volume of traffic.
 - Stage 1 – Monitor, no action (business as usual)
 - Stage 2 – Monitor, no deployment (plan activation)
 - Stage 3 – Patrol and monitoring
 - Stage 4 – Proactive traffic management

DRIVER WELFARE PLAN

- It is recognised that during periods of significant congestion, there may be a need for welfare to be provided to freight and non-freight drivers and their passengers.
- Although no single agency has a legal requirement to provide emergency welfare, it is accepted that multi-agency welfare provision must be considered during significant congestion or gridlock upon the declaration of a Major Incident by the lead agency and / or an Emergency as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). Kent County Council will act as the lead agency for the provision of welfare and partner agencies will support with this.
- The plan will cover the following locations: all Highways England managed roads (Strategic Road Network), all Kent County Council managed roads and all Medway Council managed roads.
- The KRF Driver Welfare Plan is for use for any situation that requires welfare to be provided to the travelling public during periods of significant congestion or gridlock. Historically, this has most commonly been caused by disruption at the ports. However, the end of the Transition Period creates a risk of additional congestion originating at the ports.
- The focus for public warning and informing will be to promote pre-preparation and self-help to the travelling public. The communications strategy will be multi-agency, built around a core group of Kent Police, Kent County Council, Highways England, and the Department for Transport.
- Due to the risks to motorists and responders associated with providing welfare on the live highway, and the low likelihood of closing the highway to deliver welfare, this will be a last resort. However, if necessary, a number of reasonable & proportionate options for welfare provision have been developed, which can be deployed by the Tactical Commander where appropriate.

‘CHECK AN HGV IS READY TO CROSS THE BORDER’ SERVICE

The Government has developed a GOV.UK web service which will be known as ‘Check an HGV is Ready to Cross the Border’. The aim of this service is to ensure that freight is ready for new border controls before it enters Kent, therefore reducing congestion by avoiding any unnecessary queues in the county.

Department for Transport ran a public consultation in August 2020 which proposed that use of the service be made mandatory in Kent, while remaining available on an advisory basis for the rest of the country. The response to the consultation is now [available](#). The service will only be relevant for goods vehicles weighing more than 7.5 tonnes. There will be several stages to how the service works in Kent:

1. An HGV driver or haulier will use a web portal to answer questions about whether they have the correct documentation needed to cross the border.
2. If the HGV driver/hauler has declared that they have the correct documentation, and they intend to cross the border via Port of Dover or Eurotunnel, the web portal will issue them with a Kent Access Permit (KAP) and instruct them to proceed on their journey. If the HGV driver/hauler does not have the correct documentation, the web portal will instruct them not to proceed with their journey and will provide guidance on how they can become border ready.
3. The Kent Access Permit is issued digitally for an HGV, based on self-declared information regarding whether the driver has all the documentation they need to take goods across the Short Straits.
4. On arrival in Kent, enforcement officers can use an operator app to scan a vehicle registration number (VRN) to determine whether an HGV is border ready and has been issued with a Kent Access Permit. ANPR cameras will also alert enforcement officers if an HGV is travelling without a valid KAP.
5. If an HGV does not have a valid KAP, or is found to be using non-Operation Brock routes (as specified in the Statutory Instruments), enforcement agencies can fine the driver up to £300.

The level of enforcement in Kent, for vehicles without a valid KAP, will depend on what elements of the traffic management plan have been activated. Domestic hauliers making a journey through, or ending in, Kent will not require a Kent Access Permit and will not be required to use the service.

SELF HELP PUBLIC INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

LOCAL INFORMATION

Additional information on preparing for EU Transition can be accessed on the [Kent Prepared](#) website.

This includes:

- information on the KRF Threat and Risk Assessment: <https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/eu-transition-threat-and-risk-asses>
- business advice: <https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/eu-transition-business-advice>

In the event of disruption to the transport network, businesses and residents should visit the below social media sites for up to date information and travel advice:

- Kent County Council Twitter: https://twitter.com/Kent_cc
- KCC Highways Twitter: <https://twitter.com/KentHighways>
- Port of Dover Travel Twitter: https://twitter.com/PoD_travelnews
- Eurotunnel Twitter: <https://twitter.com/leshuttle>
- Medway Council Twitter: https://twitter.com/medway_council
- Highways England South East Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HighwaysSEAST>

INFORMATION FROM GOVERNMENT

More information on preparing for EU Transition can be found on the government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/transition>

COMMUNITIES

In the event of disruption following the end of the Transition Period, it is anticipated that some communities may experience disruption to local road networks and the provision of some local services such as waste management and health and social care services. We are working hard with local authorities to anticipate and minimise any impact, and are encouraging residents to consider how they can build their own resilience:

- Residents are encouraged to develop household contingency plans and to put measures in place to ensure they are prepared in the event of an emergency or any likely disruption. More information on creating a household plan can be found on the Kent Prepared website: <https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/make-a-household-plan>

- Check your local borough / district council website and social media channels for localised advice and updates about local services.
- Tune into local radio and social media channels for updates, guidance and safety messages/ advice.

JOURNEY PLANNING

- Check your route before you travel to ensure you can complete your journey.
- Allow extra travel time and consider alternative routes to your destination in the event of a hold up.
- If using public transport check for any changes to the service that could affect your journey.
- Ensure you take extra food and water, warm clothing and any prescription medication that may be needed in the event that your journey is delayed.

BUSINESSES

The government has issued guidance for traders who import goods from, and export goods to, the EU.

- Importing goods from the EU: <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-to-import-to-great-britain-from-january-2021>
- Exporting goods to the EU: <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-to-export-from-great-britain-from-january-2021>

General advice for businesses:

- Check your business continuity plans to mitigate possible disruption.
- Consider any risks to your supply chains.
- Consider any changes to tariffs and arrangements for export and imports of goods and services.
- Make contingency plans for keeping your business operating.
- Check the advice for businesses on the Kent Prepared website: <https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/eu-transition-business-advice>.