

Getlink (Eurotunnel) 33T– Supplementary written evidence

In response to an email inquiry from the Committee about border testing, John Keefe, Director of Public Affairs at Getlink (Eurotunnel), provided the following statement:

We have been working on testing programmes with the French Authorities for nearly 2 years (starting with preparations in advance of 29 March 2019). At each stage the tests have focused on one particular aspect of the new process, an updated element of a system, or an end to end trial. They have been highly successful and have enabled us to coordinate the speed and flexibility of our transport operations with the security needs of the French Authorities.

The trials you refer to were conducted by the French Authorities, notably the Police aux Frontières (PAF), at our terminal in Folkestone, at Dover, Calais and Dunkirk to test the 3rd country immigration controls that will be required, in the event of no deal being reached, on truck drivers entering the EU and Schengen zone, from 01/01/2021. They involved processing drivers as if they were third country nationals, which can take an average of 70 seconds per vehicle with one driver, or 140 seconds if two drivers are present.

The PAF used two of the four lanes that they will use post 01/01, thus reducing the flow and also, we understand, checked 100% of passports during the test, rather than just the 3rd country nationals (British drivers make up less than 20% of the total).

Currently, French Authority passport controls UK-France are conducted infrequently, often based on intelligence and are normally cursory. They have only rarely impacted traffic flow.

The UK has always conducted full passport controls on 100% of persons travelling inbound from France to the UK and has, since 2015, conducted 100% Exit Checks on persons travelling outbound UK to France (and all other destinations).

The traffic on the M20 was caused by a combination that we don't expect to be repeated next year: high volumes of trucks, due to stockpiling and Christmas combined, reduced ferry capacity following redundancies and reductions in ferry rotations between Dover and Calais, and passport checks on 100% of Drivers (expect only 20% post Brexit, corresponding to 20:80 split UK:EU).

Kent Police and Highways England managed the motorway traffic dynamically, without resort to any of the more robust traffic management measures that are available to them (Operations Brock or Stack), demonstrating that the traffic level was within acceptable parameters.