

# Lifting of lockdown restrictions prompts work to activate Operation Brock

Operation Brock is part of a series of measures to improve Kent's resilience in the event of disruption to services across the English Channel. To ensure safe deployment of the contraflow system, the M20 will close at 8pm on Saturday night between junctions 7 and 9, with both carriageways set to reopen by 8am on Sunday 18 July with the contraflow active. These times have been chosen to minimise disruption to road users.

This is a precautionary measure taken by the government and Kent Resilience Forum partners in anticipation of increased international travel by car drivers from Monday as a result of the lifting of restrictions.

As with previous deployments, Operation Brock will keep the M20 open in both directions by using a contraflow road layout on the M20 London-bound carriageway between junctions 8 and 9 (from Maidstone to Ashford) and directing lorries heading for mainland Europe onto the coastbound carriageway, where they can be queued if necessary.

Nicola Bell, Highways England Regional Director, said:

The lifting of the lockdown restrictions will inevitably mean more travel across to France from 19 July and, we, along with our Kent Resilience Forum partners, have taken the decision to reinstall the moveable barrier on the M20 to prepare for this. We know that some people won't welcome its return, but we need to be prepared for an increase in not only HGVs but also in passenger traffic. We feel it is the right decision to redeploy the barrier in case it is needed to keep Kent moving should levels of HGVs and cars heading to the border be high. The deployment of the barrier on the M20 will of course be kept under constant review and we will remove it as soon as we can.

The A20 Roundhill Tunnel near Folkestone will also be closed overnight from 11pm on Saturday 17 July until 5am on Sunday 18 July for an emergency safety exercise. Signed diversions will be in place.

Once the barrier is in place, the road will reopen in its new configuration, with HGVs and other freight heading for the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel using the coastbound carriageway on the M20, where it will be queued if necessary. All other traffic – including local freight and car drivers headed for the continent – should follow the signs and cross over to enter the contraflow on the M20 London bound carriageway.

Drivers should look out for signs directing them to either stay on the

coastbound carriageway or to enter the contraflow. All cars and motorbikes should enter the contraflow.

Car drivers making their way to France via Eurotunnel or the Port of Dover should check France's restrictions and make sure they are border ready before they set off on their journey.

Operation Brock is part of a series of measures which crucially keeps the M20 open in both directions using a contraflow system.

When Operation Brock is in force it is a legal requirement to use the signed routes only for HGV journeys to Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

The barrier is deployed using two specialist machines, and over 14,000 tonnes of concrete blocks will be moved into place in just a few hours, together with more than 8,000 cones.

[How Operation Brock will affect your journey.](#)

[Government advice for travellers post 19 July 2021](#)

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.