

# No deal disruption at Port can easily be avoided – Jeremy Miles

Welsh ports are the gateway between Ireland and the rest of Europe, with 80% of goods carried in Irish-registered HGVs between the Republic of Ireland and Europe passing through Welsh ports.

Holyhead is a key entry point – its status as the second busiest roll-on roll-off ferry port in the UK means it provides a vital link in a seamless supply chain for businesses across Wales, the UK and Ireland.

Earlier this year the head of Stena Line, the company which runs the Port of Holyhead, said he fears significant disruption in the event of a no deal Brexit and claimed it was impossible to plan for such an event.

The Counsel General yesterday visited Holyhead where he met the Port's manager, Captain Wyn Parry, who set out some of his concerns about operations in Holyhead if the UK crashes out of the EU without a deal in just 35 days.

Jeremy Miles said:

"I've said it before, but it feels like it needs repeating – there is no way of fully mitigating the effects of a no deal Brexit.

"Our priority is to ensure we are doing everything within our power to minimise the effect on Welsh communities and businesses.

"Ports in Wales make a critical contribution to our economy, not least by providing jobs and added value to local communities. Any risk to their operation poses a substantial risk to Wales as a whole. Our ferry ports are particularly vulnerable to the shocks that could arise following a no deal Brexit.

"Most of the risks relate to border arrangements – to customs and safety checks. These are for the UK government to resolve. But the requirement by the EU for member states, including Ireland, to treat goods from the UK as a third country – with all the additional checks that involves – could cause knock-on delays at Welsh ferry ports, especially Holyhead.

"I am grateful to Captain Wyn Parry and his team for showing me around the port and explaining to me some of their concerns were we to face a no deal Brexit.

"It's clear Holyhead would find it difficult to absorb the effects of any delays caused by additional checks. We are working on solutions to manage traffic disruption from delays at the port and potential sites on Anglesey have been identified and assessed to deal with any overflow on the road network, should delayed traffic

not be contained within the confines of the port.

“All this could be avoided if the Prime Minister listened to and acted on our calls and removes no deal as an option.

“We’ve long advocated a different approach to Brexit – one built around consensus. This was set out in our White Paper, Securing Wales’ Future, which was agreed jointly with Plaid Cymru 2 years ago. This recognises there are trade-offs, and that involves participation in a customs union and the Single Market. The UK government must now swallow its pride, drop its red lines and provide the certainty the country needs.”