

Operation Brock to be deployed in Kent tonight

The company said any HGVs which arrive in Kent tonight will be diverted to Manston Airport to park.

Operation Brock is being set up tonight on the M20 motorway in Kent as part of a plan to keep traffic moving on the M20 during periods of cross-Channel disruption. It involves using a contraflow road layout on the M20 London-bound carriageway between junctions 9 and 8 (from Ashford to Maidstone) and directing lorries heading for mainland Europe onto the coastbound carriageway, where they can be queued if necessary.

A long concrete moveable barrier is put in place to allow the contraflow to happen safely.

Operation Brock will replace Operation Stack, which was activated overnight on Sunday as an initial response after the French government's announcement that it would not accept any passengers or hauliers arriving from the UK for a period, and the subsequent closures of the Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel.

Operation Brock opens up more of the road network in Kent because it means traffic can continue to move in both directions on the M20, whereas Stack effectively closes it to coastbound traffic.

Hauliers are advised to avoid travelling to Kent as disruption could last for several days.

The moveable barrier will be installed on the M20 tonight and will create a new layout with a contraflow system reopening the M20 in both directions. Once deployed, this will allow traffic to continue travelling in both directions on the motorway at the same time as port bound HGVs are queued, if necessary, on the coastbound carriageway until they can travel through to the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel.

The barrier was recently successfully tested and is part of a series of measures – known as Operation Brock – aimed at keeping the M20 open in both directions during periods of cross-Channel disruption.

To make sure the barrier is deployed and removed safely, the M20 will be closed coastbound between junction 7 (for Maidstone) and junction 9 (Ashford), and London-bound between junctions 9 and 8 (Maidstone East), overnight tonight (8pm to 8am). The M20 will reopen by 8am Tuesday morning with the new road layout in place. Whenever the M20 is closed, signed diversions will be in place.

What will the M20 look like from Tuesday morning?

- The M20 will close in both directions overnight between junctions 7 and 9 (coastbound) and junctions 9 and 8 (London-bound) tonight (Monday 21 December) for the installation of the moveable barrier.
- Depending on traffic levels, the M20 should reopen by 8am on Tuesday 22 December, with the contraflow in place. Drivers will need to follow the different layout on the M20 from just north of Junction 8 (for Hollingbourne/Leeds) to Junction 9 (Ashford). Lorries heading for mainland Europe could be routed down the coastbound carriageway, with a 30mph speed limit in place. All other traffic will be directed onto the contraflow, with two lanes in each direction operating at 50mph.
- Operation Brock will remain in place until further notice

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.