

# Potential of transmission of SAR-CoV-2 from humans to animals and risks of onward transmission, 6 April 2020

Letter from Professor Tom Evans, chair of the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP), to Dr Helen Roberts, chair of the Human Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance Group (HAIRS), on the potential of transmission of SAR-CoV-2 from humans to animals, and the risks of onward transmission.

The letter was considered at SAGE 24 on 9 April 2020.

It should be viewed in context: the document was the best assessment of the evidence at the time of writing. The picture is developing rapidly and, as new evidence or data emerges, SAGE updates its advice accordingly. Therefore, some of the information in this document may have been superseded and the author's opinion or conclusion may since have developed.

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## New measures to support customs intermediaries

Press release

HMRC has unveiled a new package of measures to accelerate growth of the UK's customs intermediary sector.



- £50 million added to popular grant fund for customs agent recruitment, training and IT
- Government plan to change the rules to help agents to take on more clients
- New opportunities to be created as industry grows

Today (Friday 12 June 2020), the [government has announced](#) the transition period will not be extended and controls for importing goods will now apply from July 2021.

As well as giving businesses more time to prepare, HMRC has unveiled a new package of measures to accelerate growth of the UK's customs intermediary sector.

As well as injecting £50 million to support businesses with recruitment, training and supplying IT equipment to handle customs declarations, the government intends to remove barriers for intermediaries taking on extra clients by adapting the rules around financial liability.

In total, the government has now made available a total of £84 million to grow the customs intermediary sector to encompass EU trade after 2020. At the moment, agents cover non-EU trade though many, like parcel companies, do operate in the EU market.

The previous £34 million grants fund supported more than 20,000 training courses being undertaken, plus the purchase of 15,000 pieces of IT equipment and software.

The intermediary sector – including customs brokers, freight forwarders and express parcel operators – help businesses to import and export their goods by ensuring the necessary customs paperwork has been completed.

The £50 million funding is one part of the measures to support the customs intermediary sector meet the increased demand it will see from traders at the end of the transition period. The government also intends to change rules which will remove the financial liability from intermediaries operating on behalf of their clients and allow parcel operators to continue declaring multiple consignments in a single customs declaration. This will help intermediaries increase their operations.

Applications for the new funding will be open from July and HMRC will unveil more details in due course.

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# Organising mixed ability pupils in smaller groups and helping those who need to catch up

We are handling the fact that pupils are working in different places. We acknowledge that the current situation presents a huge challenge. In particular it:

- affects the continuity on which our education system is built: one teacher in a classroom with pupils they know well – to cope with the need for social distancing, each subject will now be taught by 2 teachers: one remotely and one in school
- means pupils will fall into one of three 'pods': face-to-face (on a rota as we can only have a quarter of our year 10 and 12 cohorts on site at any one time), home learning (years 7-9), and then our most vulnerable children, who will be in school as much as staffing allows – we will be thinking very carefully about which students we put together in bubbles
- will mean watching closely to see what happens with this approach, and being ready to adapt as needs be
- means thinking about constructing bubbles partly around prior attainment

Where more disadvantaged pupils are concerned, we will have a permanent in-school pod for the most vulnerable. It will reduce the time learning remotely, but we anticipate having 15% of learners persistently disengaged. We know that around 25% are logging on to avoid being chased by school (and then not completing tasks).

We are planning:

- a full 4 days of face-to-face teaching for these pupils
- to work through long-term plans and identify the most crucial concepts for teaching
- to identify subjects and topics that underpin multiple other aspects of the curriculum
- subject teams to work on making sure what's learned at home aligns with what's taught in school

In history, for example, pupils can't understand Elizabeth I unless they already have a firm grasp of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.

Our school aims to optimise teacher face-to-face time with classroom teaching focused on the things a teacher does that cannot easily be replicated remotely.

It's the quality of explanation, modelling and questioning that makes great teaching.

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## **DAO 02/20 Revision of target dates for implementing PAC recommendations**

DAOs supplement guidance published in [Managing Public Money](#).

This letter informs accounting officers of United Kingdom government departments and arm's length bodies of their responsibilities in relation to implementing recommendations of the Committee of Public Accounts.

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## **UK extends commitment to fight violent extremism in the Sahel**

Personnel from RAF Odiham have been deployed in non-combat roles in Mali since 2018 with the aircraft contributing a unique logistical capability to the French-led operation. The Chinooks and aircrew allow French troops to cover a much larger field of operations by moving personnel to the front-line of activity, eliminating the need for dangerous road moves, and help move vital support equipment to strategic locations.

Since arriving in Mali the RAF has clocked over 2,000 hours of flying and moved over 13,000 passengers and 1,100 tonnes of equipment. Currently, the Chinooks are being flown by aircrew from 18(B) Squadron and are supported by personnel drawn from across the RAF and British Army. The conditions are often challenging, with over 40 degree heat in the summer months and regular sandstorms.

Alongside international partners, French forces operate across the Sahel to counter the threat from militants linked to groups such as Al-Qaeda and Daesh. Forces deployed on this mission have had a number of successes and recently killed the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and several other high-profile members of the group.

Today, June 12, Defence Minister James Heappey joined a remote conference with over 15 Defence Ministers of the Coalition for the Sahel to highlight our growing role in the region and help co-ordinate the international response. The aim of the Coalition, launched by France, is to coordinate international activity in the Sahel and promote long-term stability in the region.

Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey said:

West Africa is as important to the United Kingdom as it has ever been and we have many friends and allies in the region who share our desire to promote peace and prosperity.

Combating extremism in the Sahel is vital for the security of the wider region and the UK will play its part tackling the declining security situation.

The aircraft operate across Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso

Marked by chronic poverty, instability, high levels of gender inequality, and acute vulnerability to the effects of climate change, the Sahel is one of Africa's poorest and most fragile regions. The scale and spread of terrorist violence and conflict continues to increase.

UK support to the region goes beyond military commitments, with the Government supporting development in the region and providing life-saving support and protection to those most in need. The UK is one of the largest humanitarian donors to the region, and has contributed over £500m in bilateral development and humanitarian assistance since 2015. With COVID-19 now an additional challenge in the Sahel, a significant part of the UK's £764m contribution to the global COVID-19 effort will be channelled to the region.

Later this year the UK will deploy 250 personnel to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Mali, also based in Gao. Responding to a UN capability gap, personnel from The Light Dragoons and The Royal Anglian Regiment will form a long range reconnaissance capability, providing greater awareness of possible threats and contributing to the protection of civilians. Initially deploying for three years as part of a 12,500 strong international force, the UK contribution will assist the UN mission as it seeks to deliver long-term and sustainable peace in Mali. By working to stabilise fragile states and tackle the root causes of conflict, the UK is helping to prevent conflict from spilling over to neighbouring states. This deployment will, alongside the UK's broader development and diplomatic efforts, help address the increasing instability in the region, protect the civilian population, and strengthen the authority of the Malian Government.

The aircraft and aircrew often have to operate in difficult conditions