

Traders must act now with border traffic expected to increase next week

- Traders urged to ensure they are fully ready under new rules as lorries expected at GB-EU border will reach pre-Christmas levels next week;
- Compliance with new rules remains high, however, increased border traffic raises possibility of disruption;
- So far 18,000 Kent Access Permits have been issued, around 700 lorries have been turned away from the border and circa 150 fines handed out for non-compliance.

Businesses and hauliers trading between Great Britain and the EU have been urged to ensure they meet necessary requirements before travelling to the border, as the Government warns that expected traffic could increase next week.

Exporters must provide the right documentation to hauliers, including export declarations and the extra certificates needed for products like plant and animal products, and hauliers heading to Kent must get a negative Covid test and obtain a Kent Access Permit before heading to port, or risk facing a fine and being turned away.

Since the end of the transition period the flow of lorries heading through Kent to the GB-EU border has been low. Over the last week there has been an average of 1584 lorries per day attempting border crossings, which is only around 40% of historical norms. This time last year, we were seeing an average of 4067 lorries crossing the border each day.

Compliance has also been relatively high with around 700 lorries turned away from the border since the end of the transition period – the majority of which were based on the lack of a negative covid test. We've also seen strong compliance with the requirement to obtain a Kent Access Permit with 18,000 issued in total so far.

The combination of low border traffic, and good compliance, has kept disruption at the border to a minimum.

However, we are seeing the volume of HGV traffic steadily increase by around 20% each day. As a result from next week we are expecting that volumes will reach their business as usual levels for this time of year, which equates to c. 5000-6000 vehicles per day. This means border and trader readiness is critical. By the fourth week of January we expect to see around 40,000 trucks heading to France each week.

These increased flows have the potential to cause significant disruption if traders and hauliers have not taken the necessary steps to comply with the new rules.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove said:

I'd like to thank hauliers, traders and our key industry partners for the hard work they have been putting in to make sure that they are compliant with the new rules.

The preparations they have made have paid dividends and disruption has been minimal so far, but the real challenge and potential for significant disruption starts next week when we expect that the number of lorries heading to the border may return to normal levels.

We have always been clear there would be changes now that we are out of the customs union and single market, so full compliance with the new rules is vital to avoid disruption, and the best way to ensure readiness is to follow the guidance on gov.uk and use the ['Check an HGV'](#) service.

We stand ready to help keep goods flowing smoothly as we adjust to our new relationship with the EU and ensure we take advantage of the opportunities it brings.

Exporters must provide the right documentation to hauliers – including export declarations and the extra certificates needed for things like plant and animal products – to avoid goods being held up at the border.

Hauliers heading to Kent must get a negative COVID test within 72 hours of crossing and obtain a Kent Access Permit before heading to port. They can get the permit and find out what documents traders should give them by using the [Check a HGV is ready service on GOV.UK](#).

Failure to secure either a test or Kent Access Permit will mean the driver cannot cross the border and will be fined £300. Around 150 fines have already been handed out due to non-compliance with the Kent Access Permit requirement, and for attempting to queue jump at the border.

For full details on what you need to do to comply with the new procedures, please visit www.gov.uk/transition.