

£14million of cocaine and amphetamines seized by Border Force

Border Force has seized more than £14million of cocaine and amphetamines after stopping a lorry in Coquelles, the juxtaposed control for the Eurotunnel in France.

The detection was made at about 11:10pm on Wednesday 29 July, after officers stopped the lorry which was on its way to the UK from the Netherlands.

The drugs were found hidden within a load of flowers.

Border Force officers searched the lorry and found that each container of sunflowers and roses had a false floor. The floor of each of the 43 containers was unscrewed and 35 of them were found to contain an estimated 250kg of cocaine and 169kg of amphetamine. The cocaine has an estimated street value of more than £12.5million. The amphetamine is believed to be worth over £1.7million.

The operation and extraction of the illegal drugs took more than 12 hours and the detection of such a high quality concealment is testament to the skill and dedication of the officers involved. It is one of the largest commercial drugs seizures in the UK this year.

Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts Chris Philp said:

The sale of drugs such as cocaine and amphetamine fuels gang violence leading to the exploitation of vulnerable children.

This seizure is an excellent example of the crucial work Border Force does every day to prevent illegal drugs entering the UK in the first place.

We will do all we can to stop these heinous gangs and keep the public safe.

Border Force Director Ian Hanson said:

This was a sophisticated concealment. The smugglers had skilfully built a false floor into each container and this would have been undetectable to the untrained eye.

Following the Border Force detection, the seizure was referred to the National Crime Agency.

Border Force officers are the front line in protecting the country and play a key role in detecting illegal immigration, disrupting serious and organised

crime and helping to prevent the threat of terrorism. Border Force also protect the UK's revenue, contributing to the nation's prosperity and growth.

They use an array of search techniques including sniffer dogs, carbon dioxide detectors, heartbeat monitors and scanners as well as visual searches to find well-hidden stowaways, illegal drugs, firearms and tobacco which would otherwise end up causing harm to people, businesses and communities.

Anyone with information about activity they suspect may be linked to smuggling should call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or go to www.gov.uk/report-smuggling.