

Brexit taskforce meets to ensure businesses get the support they need

- Brexit Business Taskforce meets to identify challenges facing traders and find solutions to outstanding issues;
- Government will “pull out all the stops” to help businesses adjust to new rules;
- Compliance with border rules remains high and there are still no queues at ports as flows approach normal levels.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, will chair a meeting of the Brexit Business Taskforce today with leaders of the UK business community from the CBI, FSB, IoD, BCC and Make UK. He will reaffirm the government’s commitment to help companies adjust to new trading rules with the EU that have been in effect for nearly a month.

Overall businesses have adapted well to the changes. The latest data shows that border traffic is increasing day by day and there is no disruption at UK ports. The level of compliance is also very high with turnbacks stable at less than 5% of total traffic – either for failing to meet customs requirements or lack of a negative COVID test. Over the past week (19-25 January) there have been 371 enforcement notices issued either for failure to have a KAP or to comply with traffic management requirements.

While traders on the whole are managing the changes well, the government knows that some businesses are facing challenges with some of the new rules that are now in place. That’s why the government is:

- Meeting businesses from specific sectors across all parts of the UK weekly through the Brexit Business Taskforce chaired by Michael Gove;
- Managing dedicated HMRC exporting telephone and online helplines. The number is 0300 322 9434 and businesses can also speak to an adviser online at tax.service.gov.uk.
- Running regular webinars with policy specialists;
- Providing the [Brexit Checker Tool](#) on gov.uk which gives businesses a personalised list of actions that they need to take;
- Offering face-to-face support for exporters in delivered via a network of around 300 International Trade Advisers (ITAs);
- Setting up a taskforce with businesses and the devolved administration in Scotland to understand and address any practical issues facing Scottish businesses, including the seafood sector; and
- Offering support to businesses moving goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland through its Trader Support Service.

The above is in addition to a range of other support schemes available to businesses which include a guarantee scheme aimed at SMEs which means the government can provide an 80% guarantee on financial support from lenders to help with general exporting costs, up to the value of £25 million.

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

I would like to thank traders and hauliers for the preparations they made for the changes that came into force at the beginning of the year. There is currently no disruption at UK ports and goods continue to flow effectively.

However, some businesses are facing challenges with specific aspects of our new trading relationship with the EU, and I want to let them know that we will pull out all the stops to help them adjust. To this end, we have set up export helplines, invested millions in the customs intermediaries market, and continue to direct them to the [Brexit Checker Tool](#) to see exactly what actions they need to take.

We will continue to work hand in hand with the businesses community through the Brexit Business Taskforce to get them the tailored support to tackle any outstanding issues. Together we will seize new opportunities open to a fully independent global trading United Kingdom.

Ahead of the Brexit Business Taskforce meeting, BCC Director General Adam Marshall said:

As firms navigate new trading arrangements, Accredited Chambers of Commerce – through our network of trade experts – are uniquely positioned to feed in to government the on the ground challenges businesses in every region of the UK are facing.

Supporting and encouraging businesses to trade with Europe, and indeed the rest of the world, must be at the heart of our economic recovery. This taskforce represents an important opportunity to engage constructively with business to help develop solutions to keep trade flowing smoothly and ensure Britain remains truly global.

[Clinical evaluation confirms high](#)

accuracy of highly mobile LamPORE test

- Evaluation carried out by NHS trusts and universities finds test to be highly effective in detecting the virus in people with and without symptoms
- LamPORE technology is highly mobile, with pop-up laboratories being piloted in Aberdeen, Telford, Brent and Newbury

A technical and clinical evaluation conducted by NHS trusts and universities has confirmed the LamPORE COVID-19 test, produced by Oxford Nanopore, to be accurate and sensitive enough to detect the virus in people with and without symptoms.

LamPORE test technology is a highly mobile and scalable solution – it can be operated in traditional laboratory settings, as well as smaller spaces. This means the technology can be quickly deployed to areas to provide additional testing capacity where it is needed for large numbers of people, alongside existing PCR testing capacity and community testing using lateral flow tests.

LamPORE uses swab samples in the same way as a traditional PCR test, but also shows high performance with saliva samples. The LamPORE test was assessed on saliva and swab samples from symptomatic and asymptomatic participants. With samples from asymptomatic participants, the LamPORE test was found to have an overall sensitivity of 99.57% and specificity of 99.4%, meaning the test is highly effective for testing people without symptoms in the community.

As well as detecting SARS-CoV-2, LamPORE is in development for the detection of other respiratory viruses at the same time, including flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

LamPORE technology is currently being piloted for use in mobile laboratories. In these pilots, pop-up laboratories which can process tests on-site using LamPORE technology have been set up in trucks which can travel to areas where there is a need for testing, processing up to 2,000 tests a day.

There are currently 4 mobile LamPORE units, deployed in Aberdeen, Telford, Brent and Newbury, being piloted to provide local testing services. This week, the first LamPORE mobile laboratory to arrive in Scotland started testing in Aberdeen, where it will move around to provide testing for those in remote locations. Pilots will continue into next month, followed by an evaluation of the mobile units.

LamPORE technology combines loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) and nanopore sequencing to provide highly scalable detection of COVID-19. The test is CE marked for usage with the Oxford Nanopore GridION device, which can process thousands of tests a day.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

With one in three people not displaying symptoms of COVID-19,

broadening asymptomatic testing is critical to protect those at highest risk. Oxford Nanopore's LamPORE test is another example of British innovation leading the way, and is an incredibly useful addition to our COVID-19 testing toolkit – delivering accurate results to people with and without symptoms.

The LamPORE mobile laboratories provide a new way in which we can respond to testing demand where there is most need. I am hugely grateful to Oxford Nanopore for their efforts in producing this technology.

Professor Dame Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer for England in NHS Test and Trace, who led the evaluation of Oxford Nanopore LamPORE test, said:

The LamPORE test shows very high sensitivity, so can be used for the full range of diagnostic and other use cases. This study showed it to be effective when using saliva samples from people without symptoms and it has the additional advantage of being able to detect other winter viruses, such as flu, increasing the scenarios in which it could be deployed.

Minister for Public Health Mairi Gougeon said:

I welcome the arrival of this unit, which will significantly decrease turnaround times for people being tested at mobile testing units (MTUs) and drive-through testing centres in the north east.

This follows the expansion of our community testing programme through the national MTU fleet, which is operated by the Scottish Ambulance Service. In partnership with the UK government, and through additional funding of £800,000 from the Scottish government, this fleet will grow from 18 to 42 by March 2021, with capacity to reach 84 communities.

We will continue to work with the UK government and local partners to improve access to COVID testing. However, it's important to remember testing is only one layer of protection – all others, including vaccination and the [FACTS guidance](#) work to greatest effect when they work together, so it is essential people continue to follow the restrictions currently in place to suppress COVID to the lowest possible level in Scotland.

Dr Gordon Sanghera, CEO of Oxford Nanopore, said:

This remarkable study is a testament to the scientific teams who worked so hard over the summer to validate a new generation of diagnostic test.

We believe there are phenomenal opportunities here: not only to deliver high quality COVID testing, but to catalyse the development and delivery of real-time, data-rich clinical testing using nanopore sequencing. This has the potential to tackle infectious disease and to reach into cancer, rare disease, and tissue typing/immunology.

Background information

Read the full [LamPORE evaluation report](#).

A brief summary of key findings from the pilot studies:

- on swab samples from symptomatic patients, the LamPORE assay with RNA extraction returned a sensitivity of 100% and a specificity of 100%
- on swab samples from asymptomatic patients, the LamPORE assay with RNA extraction returned a sensitivity of 99.6% and specificity of 99.4%
- on saliva samples from asymptomatic patients, the LamPORE assay with RNA extraction returned a sensitivity of 98.9% and specificity of 99.4%

The Technical and Validation Group was established under NHS Test and Trace, inclusive of NHS and PHE experts and working closely with MHRA and research bodies. The technical and validation function considers manufacturers of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) tests for viral detection and registers their interest in the national procurement process if their test meets, or are intended to meet the requirements of the relevant Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) target product profiles.

The asymptomatic pilot study recruited 1,200 healthcare workers across 4 hospital sites:

- University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
- Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Manchester Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

A total of 3,966 swab and 18,435 saliva samples were collected as part of this study.

UK statement on detention of Guyanese fishing vessels

News story

UK calls for release of Guyanese fishing boats and crew detained by Venezuelan vessels.



The UK is concerned at reports that Venezuelan vessels have detained Guyanese fishing vessels and crew. We call for their early release.

The UK is clear that the 1899 Arbitral Award settled the border between Guyana and Venezuela. We encourage a bilateral resolution to the controversy and support the efforts of the UN Secretary General.

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Ormskirk security man convicted for second time for operating illegally

Press release

Ormskirk security man was prosecuted for a second time at Blackburn Magistrates' Court after being found working illegally at Accrington's The Berkley Club.



Security Industry Authority

On Tuesday 19 January 2021, Lloyd Irwin from Ormskirk was [prosecuted for a second time](#) by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) at Blackburn Magistrates' Court after being found working illegally at Accrington's The Berkley Club. He pleaded guilty and was fined £184, required to pay court costs of £358.20 and a victim surcharge of £32.

Irwin, who is a former director of Hunter Irwin Security Specialists Ltd (HISS Ltd), was prosecuted initially for working without an SIA licence. He was also charged with supplying unlicensed security officers to The Berkley Club on several occasions during the busy Christmas and New Year period of 2019/2020. His former business was also prosecuted for the supply of unlicensed security. In addition, Irwin altered evidence he submitted to the SIA following a request for information. This is a criminal offence. The business pleaded guilty and was fined £1,000 and required to pay court costs of £358.20 and a victim surcharge of £100.

The case began when an allegation was made that unlicensed security officers were working in Accrington. The SIA responded by inspecting The Berkley Club with the support of Lancashire Police and Hyndburn Council. They found Irwin and Daniel Webb working without a licence.

Having initially pleaded not guilty, Webb pleaded guilty at Blackburn Magistrates' Court on 17 December 2020 for working illegally at The Berkley Club on 18 January 2020. Webb was sentenced to a 12-month conditional discharge and is required to pay £100 court costs and a £21 victim surcharge.

When sentencing Webb, the magistrates expressed a hope that he would take on board the lessons from this case and undertake his own research with the SIA in relation to his licensable status.

Pete Easterbrook, the SIA's Head of Criminal Enforcement, said:

Irwin has been prosecuted again for working unlicensed himself and supplying other unlicensed security staff. The licensing regime is there to keep the public safe, which is particularly important at a night club. Both Irwin and Webb now have criminal records and will not be able to work legally in the private security industry.

Notes to editors:

- by law, security operatives working under contract must hold and display a valid SIA licence
- information about [SIA enforcement and penalties](#) can be found on our website
- the offences relating to the Private Security Industry Act (2001) that are mentioned in the above news release are as follows:
 - Daniel Webb – Section 3 (working without a licence)
 - Lloyd Irwin – Section 3 (working without a licence); 2 counts of Section 5 (being a director deploying unlicensed guards); 2 counts of Section 22 (providing false information)
 - HISS Ltd – 2 counts of Section 5 (deploying unlicensed guards)
- the Private Security Industry Act (2001) is available online via: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/12/contents.

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).
- Media enquiries only please contact: 0300 123 9869, media.enquiries@sia.gov.uk

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[CSPL Submission to Welsh Assembly Code of Conduct Consultation](#)

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