The Covid-19 outbreak is the biggest public health emergency in a generation. The United Kingdom (UK) is doing everything it can to tackle the pandemic and mitigate its impact. The UK has already taken several steps. These include reducing dwell times for shipments to allow for quicker permission to progress, assessing the need for personnel to be on site if such functions can be discharged remotely and changes to site opening hours to allow for greater facilitation.

We have also introduced the use of email in lieu of postal applications for authorisations to reduce cross contamination and viral spread and we are allowing the use of estimated figures for the completion of supplementary declarations.

We are advising traders, their agents and relevant government agencies to exchange documents electronically. This can be by email, fax or digital photograph. Traders may also apply for their existing authorisations to apply to additional locations. We will also be publishing online an exhaustive list of government agencies at the border and their email addresses and contact details.

We have also taken a number of measures in relation to transit movements. These include goods moving under transit procedures being taken directly to any approved Temporary Storage Facility even if the facility is not located with a Transit Office of Departure.

Providing relief from import duties (customs and import VAT) for medical equipment to assist in the fight against Covid-19 has been a key part of the UK response. We have also activated our disaster relief clearance route to allow for faster clearance through the ports of goods to combat Covid-19.

The Chancellor has announced an unprecedented package of support for businesses. This includes enhanced Time to Pay arrangements, £330 billion worth of government-backed and guaranteed loans and a workers’ support package. VAT registered businesses can also defer their domestic VAT payments due with their VAT returns between now and the end of June and will have until the end of the financial year to pay the VAT due.

These changes have been published on the Gov.uk site and we have interacted with trade bodies to maximise the distribution to businesses across the country. Please follow these links to the relevant guidance:

- https://www.gov.uk/difficulties-paying-hmrc

In order to prepare effectively for Brexit, Dutch stakeholders involved in Brexit, including TLN, have launched a mini-campaign to inform the public of the procedures for transport to the United Kingdom from 1 January 2021.

Digital pre-notification of customs documents will be mandatory at all ferry terminals and most short-sea terminals. Without this pre-notification, trucks will not be allowed to enter the ferry terminal and will be diverted to parking areas.

Attached you will find information in English and German and a YouTube video on how transport to the United Kingdom will work from 1 January 2021.

Dutch website with information on Brexit:

- German: https://www.getreadyforbrexit.eu/de/
- The YouTube movie in both languages:
  - English: https://youtu.be/4Ip0mpP11q4
  - German: https://youtu.be/o5BYDKSK8X0
- A short outline of the five steps to be taken:
  - German: https://www.getreadyforbrexit.eu/de/der-brexit-in-5-schritten/

More countries have been removed from the UK Travel Corridor list, this includes France and the Netherlands.

To re-iterate, international drivers who are actively engaged in cross border work ARE exempt from the requirement to isolate, but must still carry the evidence of their status, community authorisation, consignment note and COVID movement documents.

International drivers who have been on holiday and returning to the UK from a country that has been removed (or is not on the list) after 4am Saturday 15th August, WILL have to follow the rules and isolate. Their tourist/holiday maker status supersedes their driver status.
Information about travel restrictions and impact on transport

The UK Department for Transport has sent a letter outlining COVID-19 response actions that are being taken in relation to road transport:

https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/uk-actions-road-tra...

Further information:
https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/uk_covi...

Source: European Commission

08.04.2020

Temporary and limited relaxation of the enforcement of driving and rest times for the drivers of vehicles transporting essential goods

The UK has notified to a temporary and limited relaxation of the enforcement of driving and rest times for the drivers of vehicles transporting essential goods. This relaxation is granted pursuant to Article 14(2) of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 and the purpose of this document is to notify the Commission accordingly. It will apply to those drivers involved in the delivery of food, non-food (personal care and household paper and cleaning) and over the counter pharmaceuticals when undertaking certain journeys in England, Scotland and Wales.

Start date: 18.03.2020
End date: 16.04.2020

Further information: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/temporary-relaxatio...

Source: RHA

16.03.2020

On 6 July, the UK Home Office published the list of travel corridors from which people arriving into the UK will not have to isolate for 14 days upon arrival, unless they have visited or stopped in any other country or territory in the preceding 14 days. Those arriving in the UK whose journey started from a country that is not on the list will still have to follow the isolation requirements. It is expected that the list will grow as time goes on. Rules on travel corridors will apply from 10 July onwards.

Members are reminded that anyone entering the UK (drivers included) is still required to fill the passenger locator form. In case of multiple entries in the UK within 48 hours, multiple journey can be included in the form. Drivers are still exempt from the isolation requirements.

Source: RHA

30.06.2020

On 28 June, the Government announced that the HGV Road User Levy, which is applied to HGVs of 12 tonnes or more, will be suspended for a year. The suspension runs from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

A Levy rate of zero will automatically apply at a vehicle’s normal VED/Levy renewal date from August onwards. The suspension is applied to UK and overseas-registered HGVs using the UK’s roads.

Foreign operators who have already paid the levy as an annual payment will be able to claim a refund for the period 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021, through their user account. Foreign operators who would normally ‘pay as they go’ will not be charged for use of the UK network between 1 August 2020 and 31 July 2021.

More information can be found here.

Source: RHA
UK authorities have provided guidance in several languages about the contact locator form that individuals need to fill in upon entry into the UK territory. Members are reminded that these documents have been drafted to cover all passengers, not only freight drivers. Whilst freight drivers are exempt from the 14-day self-isolation requirement, referred to in the document, they do have to fill in the form.

The following languages are available:

- Italian: guidance and instructions
- French: guidance and instructions
- German: guidance and instructions
- Romanian: guidance and instructions
- Czech: guidance and instructions
- Dutch: guidance and instructions
- Lithuanian: guidance and instructions
- Polish: guidance and instructions
- Portuguese: guidance and instructions
- Russian: guidance and instructions
- Slovak: guidance and instructions
- Spanish: guidance and instructions
- Turkish: guidance and instructions
- Bulgarian: guidance and instructions
- Hungarian: guidance and instructions

Members are reminded that the locator form can only be filled out online.

Sources: FTA and RHA

17.06.2020

Since 8 June, new border measures as well as a 14-day quarantine apply to most arrivals in the UK.

Drivers of goods vehicles and bus/coach drivers are exempt from the 14-day quarantine requirement. Drivers have to demonstrate that their travel into the UK is part of their job. They can do this in a number of ways (e.g., a letter from their employer, a consignment note or the operator licence). UK authorities also confirmed that annex 3 is acceptable proof.

Even though they are exempt from quarantine, drivers will have to fill in an online locator form with their contact details and details of their journey. A recent update now allows drivers to complete the form for multiple journeys to the UK over a 48 hour period. UK authorities have confirmed that they are currently working to further improve the process for hauliers and freight workers, particularly for those travelling to and from the UK multiple times during a one-week period.

Official guidance is available here.

Source: FTA

12.06.2020

Following the enter into force of measures set out by the UK government earlier this week, members and drivers are reminded of the following:

- Drivers need to prove that the travel is part of their job. This can be done by, for example, a letter from their employer, the EC International Workers Declaration, a consignment note or the operator’s licence.
- In addition, the UK locator form must be completed by any one arriving in the UK, including all professional drivers and freight workers. Other documents that drivers must have are the consignment note and the True Certified Copy of the Community Licence
- The locator form declaration cannot be submitted more than 48 hours before the arrival in UK.

Source: RHA
05.06.2020

The UK has introduced new border measures that will be implemented from 8 June:

- Drivers of goods vehicles and bus/coach drivers will be exempt from the new 14-day quarantine requirement that will apply to most arrivals in the UK. Drivers will have to demonstrate that their travel into the UK is part of their job. They can do this in a number of ways, for example a letter from their employer, a consignment note or the operator licence would be acceptable. UK authorities provided an indicative template for a letter from the employer; using this template is not mandatory.

- Even though they are exempt from quarantine, drivers will have to fill in an online locator form with their contact details and details of their journey. Officials confirmed the “address” field will be optional. Drivers can complete the form no more than 48 hours in advance and will have to show either the digital version or the printed version of the form upon arrival at the UK border.

Official guidance is available here.

Source: FTA

02.06.2020

On 29 May, the British Government advised that the relaxations of the EU driving and rest times rules would cease to apply on 13 May, at 23:59. Therefore, Regulation (EC) 561/2006 fully applies from 1 June at 00:00. The relaxations of the GB driving and rest times rules have been extended to 14 June at 23:59, but will be kept under review. Further information can be found here.

Source: RHA

25.05.2020

The government has announced new plans for passengers arriving in the UK from abroad. As expected, these introduce new measures at the UK border to guard against a second wave of coronavirus (Covid-19) infections and include 14 days self-isolation for anyone entering the UK, bar a short list of exemptions.

FTA is pleased to confirm that road haulage and freight workers are exempt from the requirements in order to ensure the supply of goods is not impacted. Exemptions also include anyone travelling within the Common Travel Area, covering Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. The Home Office announcement may be found here.

Source: FTA

22.04.2020

In response to unprecedented pressures on local and national supply chains, the Department for Infrastructure has introduced a temporary and limited urgent relaxation of the enforcement of EU drivers' hours rules in Northern Ireland. It has also introduced a temporary and limited urgent relaxation of the enforcement of NI drivers' hours rules in Northern Ireland.

This relaxation began on 23 March 2020 and was due to end on 21 April 2020.

A specific review of the continuation of the relaxations past 21 April 2020 has been conducted and on the basis of the current evidence, a decision has been made to continue with the relaxations (apart from the relaxation on break requirements) until 23:59 on Sunday 31 May 2020.
The Department will keep these temporary arrangements under review and the relaxation may be amended or brought to an end earlier if circumstances change.

The Department would like to remind all transport operators and the customers who influence their practices that:

- The standard drivers’ hours rules are important safety-related rules. They are in place to improve road safety and the working conditions of drivers, and reduce the risk of drivers being involved in fatigue-related accidents.
- Therefore, these temporary relaxations should only be used where absolutely necessary. Operators should, wherever possible, attempt to recruit additional drivers from other sectors who are out of work or facing being furloughed.
- The temporary relaxations are designed to support the transport of vital goods, including the supply chains related to medicines, health, fuel, food and other necessities.

The current situation is being kept under review and the relaxation may be amended or withdrawn earlier than 31 May 2020 if circumstances change. Operators should use this period to increase resilience.

If any drivers or operators consider that they are being asked to use the relaxation without correct justification then they can email their concerns to drivershours@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk.

Retrospective checking of the use of these relaxations will take place as necessary, including by the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA).

Please note that the previous relaxation of the EU drivers’ hours rules on breaks (i.e. the requirements for daily breaks of 45 minutes after 4.5 hours driving replaced with a break of 45 minutes after 5.5 hours of driving) was applicable from 23 March 2020 until 21 April 2020 only.

Those wishing to use this relaxation should read the full notice here and must follow its requirements.

Source: FTA

17.04.2020

Following a recent review of the current relaxation of the enforcement of the driver hours’ rules; which is due to end on 21 April, a decision has been made, based on the current evidence, to continue with the relaxations (apart from the relaxation on the EU break requirements) until 23:59 on Sunday 31 May.

Detailed information has been provided by UK DFT and is available here.

Source: RHA

09.04.2020

In cases of non-resident drivers becoming unwell with the coronavirus (Covid-19) symptoms while in the UK, the national authorities recommend the following:

1. If emergency/clinical care is needed, an ambulance should be called;
2. The official guidelines must be followed, i.e. immediate self-isolation, it is the responsibility of the freight company to safeguard employee well-being and therefore place them in suitable individual accommodation;

3. Foreign nationals can also approach their embassy for assistance;

4. In exceptional circumstances, depending on capacity, it may be possible to arrange accommodation at the London Isolation Centre.

Source: FTA

22.03.2020

The Department for Transport (DfT) has introduced a temporary and limited urgent relaxation of the enforcement of EU drivers' hours rules in England, Scotland and Wales. It has also introduced a temporary and limited urgent relaxation of the enforcement of GB drivers' hours rules in England, Scotland and Wales.

This applies to those undertaking carriage of goods by road in all sectors, between 00.01 on Monday 23 March and 23.59 on Tuesday 21 April (continuation of the relaxation past 5 April is subject to review).

The EU drivers' hours rules can be temporarily relaxed as follows:

a) Replacement of the EU daily driving limit of 9 hours with one of 11 hours.

b) Reduction of the daily rest requirements from 11 to 9 hours.

c) Lifting the weekly (56 hours) and fortnightly driving limits (90 hours) to 60 and 96 hours respectively.

d) Postponement of the requirement to start a weekly rest period after six-24 hours periods, for after seven 24 hours period; although two regular weekly rest periods or a regular and a reduced weekly rest period will still be required within a fortnight.

e) The requirements for daily breaks of 45 minutes after 4.5 hours driving replaced with a break of 45 minutes after 5.5 hours of driving.

Drivers must not use relaxation 'a' and 'd' at the same time. This is to ensure drivers are able to get adequate rest. DfT guidance can be found here.

From Monday 23 March all road user charging schemes in the capital will be temporarily suspended until further notice. This includes the Congestion Charge, the central London ULEZ and the London-wide LEZ.

Source: FTA

20.03.2020

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has issued notification of a relaxation in the drivers' hours rules for Northern-Ireland. This temporary relaxation applies from 00:01 on Wednesday 18 March 2020 and will run until 23:59 on Thursday 16 April 2020. Initially, this will apply for the drivers of vehicles involved in the delivery of food, non-food (personal care and household paper and cleaning), and over the counter pharmaceuticals when undertaking the following journeys:

- Distribution centre to stores (or fulfilment centre).

- From manufacturer or supplier to distribution centre (including backhaul collections).

- From manufacturer or supplier to store (or fulfillment centre).

- Between distribution centres and transport hub trunking.
- Transport hub deliveries to stores.

This exemption does not apply to drivers undertaking deliveries directly to consumers.

Operators are reminded that this relaxation does not excuse them from their duty of care to drivers and that drivers should not be allowed or required to drive whilst tired. Operators seeking to use the exemption should read the DfI notice in detail; this can be found here.

Source: FTA

18.03.2020

On March 17th, the government has taken new measures, which include advising British nationals against all non-essential international travel.

The advice against non-essential travel is not intended to apply to international and domestic freight transport. Thus, haulage continues under no extra restrictions in the UK officially.

A guidance note on Coronavirus (Covid-19) and freight transport has been published by the UK Department for Transport.

Sources: RHA and FTA