



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

John Finnie

Member of the Scottish Parliament
Highlands and Islands

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Ball Pàrlamaid na h-Alba
A' Ghàidhealtachd agus na h-Eileanan

Edward Mountain MSP

Convener- Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee

By email

25th September 2020

Dear Edward

You'll be aware that the Cabinet Office has indicated that, without a free trade deal, and in its reasonable worst-case scenario, there may be maximum queues of 7,000 port-bound trucks in Kent and associated maximum delays of up to two days.

Setting aside the fact that we were assured by the UK Prime Minister prior to the General Election that he had "an oven-ready deal", I have greater concerns than ever about this casual acknowledgement of the delays for trucks in Kent, many of which will be carrying Scottish produce, including valuable, time-sensitive sea food from the Highlands and Islands.

I have frequently asked that the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee hears from UK Ministers about their seemingly uncertain plans to deal with leaving with European Union. I continue to be dismayed at the discourtesy shown to the Scottish people and their Parliament by the UK Government's unwillingness to engage.

All that said, the projected problems should not be a party political issue.

The Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee has a duty to try and understand these problems and any steps that can be taken by the UK Government to ameliorate them.

We also now learn today of the astonishing suggestion that road haulage would require a, "Kent Access Permit" which "would be enforced by police and ANPR cameras".



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Can I ask that, as a matter of some urgency, the Committee examines this issue and the potential impact for our exporting food producers, and asks a UK Minister to appear before us.

Kind regards

John Finnie MSP