

# Press Release

T +44 (0)1227 913 567    E antony@antonyhook.org    @AntonyHookMEP    AntonyHookMEP

## **“YELLOWHAMMER” RISKS ARE REAL, SAYS MEP AFTER EUROTUNNEL VISIT**

Publish date: 20 August 2019

Antony Hook Liberal Democrat MEP for South East England visited the UK Eurotunnel site yesterday (19 August) to speak with senior staff about the on-going Brexit preparations.

During the visit, Mr Hook was told how Eurotunnel have been forced to spend €15 million euros building new infrastructure to carry out extra customs checks.

Huge uncertainty remains around whether small and medium sized businesses will be ready to comply with new red tape requirements if there is a No Deal Brexit.

Mr Hook said,

“If there is a No Deal Brexit, for goods crossing the Channel, lorry drivers will have to have additional paperwork for all their goods. Their firms will have to register with both UK and French customs and upload documents to both agencies’ computers in advance. In some cases this will be very complicated and will require new trained staff. This is administration that was never needed before. It is extra burden for hardworking companies.

“If lorries do not have the customs documents and satisfy British and French customs officers, they will be turned away from the terminal and back onto Kent’s roads causing congestion. Eurotunnel advised me that 245,000 businesses will be affected but only 1 in 5 are ready yet. It’s clear the potential for tailbacks is massive.

“I was also told that there may be big problems for holidaymakers taking pets on holiday. Currently 12% of Eurotunnel passengers take a pet with them. But after a No Deal Brexit the EU’s protections against rabies will apply to the UK and pets may require further medical procedures which will take up to four months. We won’t know what will be required until after Brexit has happened, which will be too late for Christmas travellers.

“Eurotunnel also advised that 88% of lorry drivers coming through the tunnel are non-British. If the Home Secretary’s threat to ‘end free movement of people on day one’ is carried out, who will drive these lorries from across Europe?

“There is evidence that customers in Europe may decide that buying from British companies is not worth the risk. Furthermore, for European companies supplying Britain, they have 27 other countries they can sell their goods to if exporting to Britain proves more costly and cumbersome, which appears to be a real danger.”

Mr Hook said,

“Visiting Eurotunnel has reinforced my view that Brexit should be stopped. There is no benefit from Brexit and a huge amount of new cost and hassle coming down the tracks. It is not working out anything like people were promised when they voted three years ago.

“The government’s Operation Yellowhammer report says there will be delays in food and medical supplies. It is outrageous that the government is hiding the truth from people and these documents had to be leaked for us to find out.

“I call on the government to be honest with people and disclose all further information about what Brexit will really mean.

“We’ve all seen the implications of Operation Stack on the M20 in recent years and Brexit will cause a permanent lorry park on Kent’s roads.

“The new customs checks also rely on maximum cooperation by French authorities. At present, their passport checks are part-time. If the French decide to check all passports as the UK currently does it can only add to delays.

“The best way to prevent the South East becoming a permanent lorry park and to keep our supply chain running smoothly is to stop Brexit”.

Communications Team

---

The Office of Antony Hook MEP  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
2 Jubilee Way  
Faversham  
ME13 8GD

01227 913567  
antony@antonyhook.org