



BY EMAIL

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FreeMovementofPersonsBoC@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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Dear Sirs,

Balance of Competences – Free movement of Persons and Goods

The Port of Dover's response relates to the issue of border controls that affect our ferry and cruise passengers and the movement of trade. For the Port of Dover, the two are to some degree intertwined and so the Port's response covers both issues.

The Port handles over 12 million passengers every year as Europe's busiest international ferry port and the UK's second busiest cruise port. There are two key points that the Port of Dover wishes to raise here. Firstly, based on statistics provided by the Border Force, some cross-Channel passengers actually spend longer queuing at the UK checkpoint in Calais than crossing the Channel. This is not only inconvenient, but these delays can and do result in passengers missing the sailing on which they were booked. This is not acceptable for an internal border. It can cause additional cost to passengers and it can result in a ferry operator not being able to load to its full capacity in order to meet sailing schedules and not disrupt the rest of the ferry schedules at Dover and Calais.

Secondly, what must be understood is that the vast majority of the 12 million passengers using the Port of Dover are travelling by car, coach or lorry i.e. they are in vehicles. Therefore any delay to passengers means delays to other vehicles and queues of traffic. Border controls therefore interrupt the free movement of goods, which whilst of course another issue it has a direct connection to this topic. Each ferry contains around 2 miles of traffic. It does not take much to cause significant delays if the traffic for one ferry is held up. The Port of Dover handles 100 miles of traffic every day (from Dover to the Houses of Parliament and beyond) as part of the vital £80 billion of trade handled by the port every year. Any delays not only impede passengers, they also impact on the UK economy.

Turning to cruise, in September 2012, the Home Office began stopping all cruise passengers coming ashore on day calls at UK ports and inspecting their passports, where it had never done so previously. This has the effect of depriving passengers of time ashore, causing the curtailment of excursions



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which they had booked (and paid for), and reducing the benefits for local businesses from the influx of tourists into these ports. We cannot stress enough the impact this has on UK ports' abilities to attract high paying international cruise companies and their passengers to the UK. One cruise line has already decided to call it a day in the UK (including calls at Dover) and others may follow suit.

Specifically, the volume of information that is already made available by the cruise lines to Border Force and the checks that are carried out by the port agents and the cruise ships make these tourists an extremely low risk category. Cruise lines are already working with Border Force to ensure that any additional information that is required is supplied. Over the 2012 cruise season, low-risk day visitor to British ports were increasingly subject to full face-to-face document checks. This is extremely time consuming and can take up to four hours on a half day call or 11 hours on a full day call. This does nothing to promote the UK and is already losing us business by tarnishing the UK's reputation as an open and welcoming nation.

Yours faithfully

Tim Waggott
Chief Executive



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