

Our ref: CRS 718,424

Your ref:

Mr [REDACTED]
Via email

[REDACTED]
Charging and Enforcement Policy Team
Leader
WMRCC Quinton
1 Ridgeway, Quinton
Birmingham B32 1AF

17 April 2015

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE DART CHARGE - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your request for information about Dart Charge dated 19 March 2015 under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

With reference to your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the specific details highlighted in bold with our responses below.

In response to the following questions -

1 How many foreign vehicles have been traced and made to pay any amount for not having a valid payment for the QE bridge?

2 How many foreign vehicles have crossed the bridge without paying in the first 6 months or to date without paying?

3 What is the breakdown of foreign vehicles that have crossed without paying, that have successfully been subsequently chased and paid?

The Dartford Crossing is made up of the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge and the two Dartford Tunnels. For the avoidance of doubt the figures used in this letter refer to the entire Dartford Crossing; our figures do not differentiate between the bridge and the tunnels.

We can confirm that from when Dart Charge began operating on 30 November 2014, until 31 March 2015, there were 864,438 passages made over the Dartford Crossing during chargeable hours (6am to 10pm) by drivers of foreign registered vehicles.

Of these foreign registered vehicles, we can confirm that 73.64% (636,633) paid the road user charge. Those that have not paid represent less than 2% of total vehicle passages during this period.

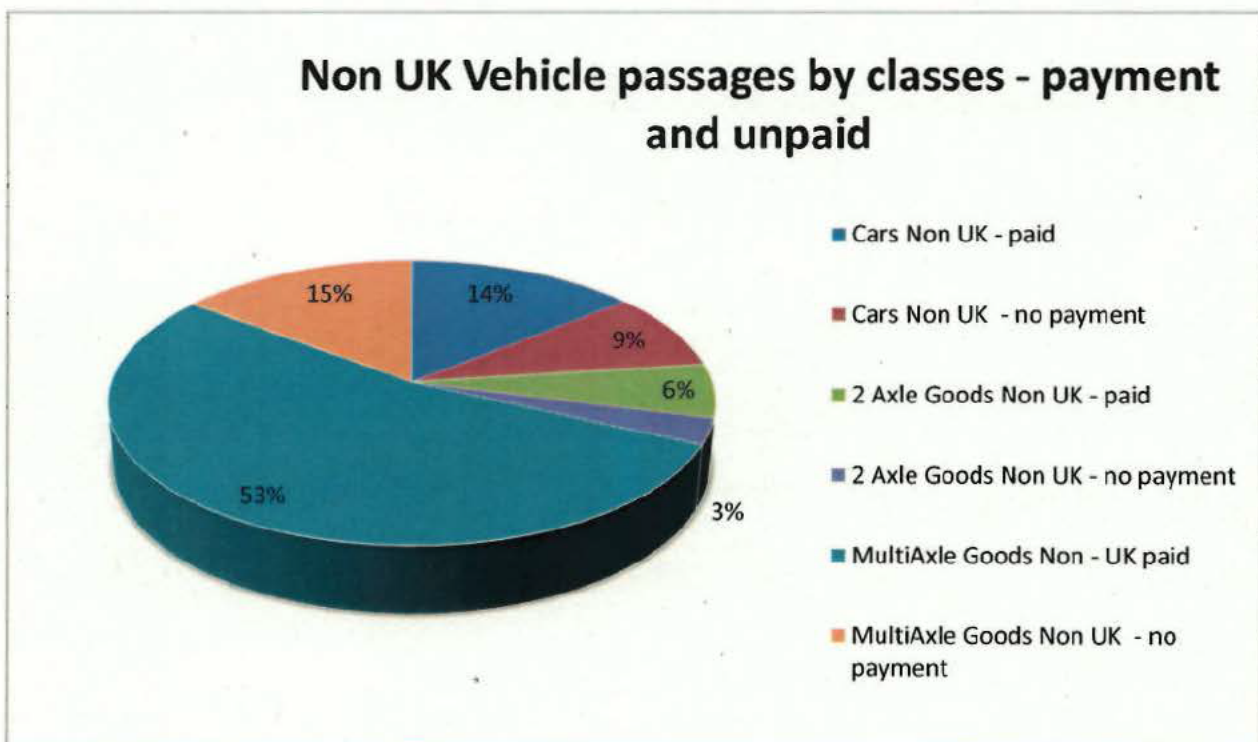
Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency) recognise that Dart Charge was a big change for drivers and wanted to do everything possible to help all crossing users adjust to the new arrangements and pay the crossing charge. As part of this we delayed issuing the first Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to give drivers more time to pay. Also the first PCN issued for any vehicle includes an offer to the registered owner to pay the outstanding charge or charges within 14 days to avoid a penalty. This balanced approach means that we expect to receive

further payments for crossings during this period further reducing the number of unpaid charge by foreign registered vehicles.

In line with the approach set out above we can confirm that to date 58,251 PCNs have been issued to the European Debt Recovery Agency (EDRA) for progression. It is too early to provide a clear and accurate assessment of this recovery process as it can be lengthy (for example the process for obtaining registered keeper details in some countries is postal). However, we are monitoring compliance by foreign registered vehicles closely and will publish data in due course.

4 What is the breakdown of foreign vehicles that have not paid?

The following chart is representative of the number passages by foreign registered vehicle owners broken by class. This also includes vehicle passages where payment has been received as a comparison. Please note that the figures in the pie chart have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



5 How many foreign vehicle non payments have been "written off"?

We can confirm that no foreign vehicle payments have been written off.

6 Where in France, and in how many languages, is the situation posted, and where on the ferries.

Information on how to pay Dart Charge and the road layout changes at the Crossing are available in 10 languages in the form of our multilingual booklet. These booklets and additional

updates in the form of newsletters have been and continue to be distributed across Europe in digital and hardcopy formats via our stakeholders.

Hardcopies of this information have been provided and are currently available at the Port of Dover, Calais and in both the freight and passenger terminals at Eurotunnel both in the UK and in France. Cross Channel ferry Company, *myferrylink* receive regular updates and have been supplied with the same hardcopy information for their customers. The ferry company itself decides where on board they make the material available. Information banners and posters have also been provided to the ports.

European freight organisations Motis and Multi Service Europe regularly send out updated Dart Charge information via their customer databases this comprises in excess of 85,000 contacts across 24 countries.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the legislation, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. We may therefore be publishing the information you requested, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context, via the [Gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number CRS 718,424 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

P.P

[Redacted name]
Charging and Enforcement Policy Team Leader
Email: [Redacted]@highwaysengland.co.uk