# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **End of Transition Traffic Contingency Plans – Holyhead** |
| **DATE**  | **7 December 2020** |
| **BY** | **Ken Skates MS, Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales** |

With less than a month now to go before the end of the EU Transition Period I want to update Members on our current traffic management contingency plans at Holyhead.

We have always been clear that the UK Government’s approach on our future trading relationship with the EU would risk major disruption in Wales and nowhere is that clearer than at the border. It still remains to be seen whether a trade deal will be agreed but the UK Government’s position guarantees that whether or not this is the case EU member states will impose import controls on UK traffic from 1 January 2021.

Ferry operators carrying freight to Ireland will require their customers to link customs information to their booking and they won’t be able to enter the port if they haven’t done so.

The reasonable worst case scenario published by the UK Government highlights that 40-70% of HGVs arriving at ports after the end of the Transition Period could be turned away as they do not have the right documentation. For Holyhead this represents a significant amount of traffic, which will be looking to find somewhere to park whilst they either obtain the documentation and complete their booking or have to decide they are unable to complete their journey.

Our main aim is to ensure, as much as it is possible to do so, that any disruption to the port of Holyhead, residents of the town and wider area is kept to the absolute minimum.

As a result, we will be operating a temporary contraflow between junctions 2 and 3 of the A55, with the option to extend to junction 4 if required, from 1 January.

In current circumstances, operating a temporary contraflow on the A55 is the only certain option to ensure unready HGVs can be parked in a Covid-secure way and local traffic can continue to flow around Holyhead from 1 January.

We are planning on securing access to Roadking as a primary holding site and, in parallel, we are starting urgent works at Parc Cybi to make additional space available over the course of January.

Unready HGVs arriving at the port will be directed back to join the traffic management on the westbound carriageway, where they will be directed to Roadking or Parc Cybi if possible and there is space, or stacked on the A55 until they are able to continue or cancel their journey as a contingency. We will work with Stena Line and Irish Ferries to help make sure their customers understand where they can go if they aren’t able to board their ferry.

Introducing a temporary contraflow is not something we want to do but it has become the necessary thing to do. The uncertainty we face means we have to take every step to protect the port and town of Holyhead from disruption.

This is a situation we have never faced before and we have to protect local communities, and the road network, against the modelled reasonable worst case disruption. As we see the extent to which this is borne out in practice, and seek to make additional spaces available for lorries at Parc Cybi, we will review how much space is required and will seek to stand down the contraflow as soon as we are confident it is no longer required and are safely able to do so.

We have been working with our partners across North Wales, including Isle of Anglesey Council, to do the upmost to protect the port of Holyhead, maintain this vital route and minimise any disruption for communities and will continue to do so as we face the consequences of the UK Government’s approach to leaving the EU.