

Le Havre, 20 November 2020

Making a success of Brexit

Clément Beaune, Secretary of State at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs with responsibility for European Affairs, is visiting Le Havre today. The aim of the visit is to determine the current status of the “Brexit” arrangements implemented in the port, with regard both to the infrastructure necessary to its satisfactory management and the proposal for an additional transit solution for services between France and Ireland.

In cooperation with the official authorities and Brittany Ferries, HAROPA – Port of Le Havre therefore presented the work done with the whole range of actors and partners involved in traffic flows to and from the UK and in checks on entries to, and departures from EU territory (Sub-Prefecture, the Normandy ports, border police, customs, shippers, among others).

The future relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom is still under negotiation. The transition period is to end on 31 December 2020 and new rules will apply starting on 1 January 2021. The possibility of a “hard Brexit” cannot however be ruled out at this stage and it is therefore necessary to put goods checks in place at the border, which will entail an obligation for businesses to complete import and export declarations as well as obtaining, where appropriate, sanitary or phytosanitary certificates, etc.

In addition, whatever the nature of the relationship that follows the transition period, the Port of Le Havre will once again be a physical border between the United Kingdom and the EU for people and goods entering the single market.

This will entail:

- The return of customs checks on goods,
- An obligation to carry out veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary inspections of goods of plant or animal origin,
- A probable strengthening of immigration controls on travellers (French border police – PAF).



The UK terminal in Le Havre.

A major issue: ensuring seamless port processes for imports and exports.

Baptiste Maurand, CEO of the Port of Le Havre points out: *“Our priority at Le Havre port has been to put everything in place, in conjunction with our partners, to ensure that goods throughput continues to be fluid, especially for imports, seeking to ensure that inspection times are short so that congestion can be avoided at the terminal”.*

As early as September 2018, the port began to prepare its response to the challenges of Brexit by:

- ensuring good coordination between the Le Havre port complex and the Normandy ports,
- developing essential infrastructure (offices and checkpoints),
- preparing for the processing of documentary and physical flows.

The various postponements of Brexit have enabled us to consolidate the initial measures (begun as long ago as 2018 for the first deadline on 31 March 2019) by organising for the long term with our partners in the port community and rolling out permanent infrastructure.

The project has been structured around two core programmes for seamless goods flows:

- **organisation of documentary flows** based on the advance customs clearance system (clearance during the crossing rather than on arrival at the terminal): the smart borders system (SI BREXIT) implemented by customs allows the status of goods to be identified and thereby the determination and issuance – or non-issuance – of permits for exit from the unloading terminal;
- **organisation of physical flows:**
 - o development work carried out at the Port of Le Havre is a response to the need for additional checks (customs, border police, veterinary and phytosanitary inspections) in order to avoid any congestion at the terminal caused by possible vehicle tailbacks (heavy goods vehicles in the main),
 - o construction work has been carried out by the management body for the facility operated by the French veterinary and phytosanitary inspection department (SIVEP), and this is now capable of processing trailers as well as containers.

Taken together, all the measures implemented by the Port of Le Havre in preparation for Brexit total €1.75m.



To find out more: [Brexit-ready by HAROPA](#)

A reminder...

On 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the British public chose to leave the European Union. Following the triggering of Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union on 29 March 2017, the United Kingdom and the 27 other EU Member States had two years to prepare for the UK's departure.

Brexit occurred on 31 January 2020 following a number of postponements. This political exit, which has no parallel in the history of Europe, was accompanied by a transition period **ending on 31 December 2020**, a period during which the UK continues to apply EU rules and to benefit from them.

The future trading relationship between Europe and the United Kingdom, **due to enter into force on 1 January 2021**, is still being negotiated.

About HAROPA - Port of Le Havre

Owing to an outstanding location on the West-European sea board, HAROPA - Port of Le Havre, #1 French port for external trade and 5th largest North-European port for container trade, accommodates each year around 6,000 vessels among which the world largest containerships. Accessible 24/7 without any limitation of tide, it handles over 70 million tonnes of cargo every year and 40 % of the French imports of crude oil.

Being a member of HAROPA, #1 French port system, together with the ports of Rouen and Paris, Port of Le Havre offers an easy and fast gateway to all continents for all world major shipping lines with around 700 ports of call. As one of the biggest European port systems, HAROPA has about 500 hectares of available land and estate reserves along the Seine corridor. It helps its customers setting up and managing competitive and sustainable logistics systems to serve the N° 1 European consumer basin with 25 million inhabitants.

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