

No: 149/2020

23rd March 2020

For the Immediate Attention of All:

Postal Branches
Divisional Representatives
Area Distribution Representatives
Regional Fleet Representatives

Dear Colleagues

COVID 19 (CORONAVIRUS) TEMPORARY RELAXATION OF THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE EU AND GB DRIVERS' HOURS RULES / SUSPENSION OF TRAILER MOT'S

Branches may be aware that as a response to growing Supply Chain disruption resulting from the Coronavirus crisis, the Government has announced a temporary relaxation of the EU and GB Drivers' hours rules.

The advice on the Department of Transport Website states that these two temporary relaxations apply from 00:01 on Monday 23rd March 2020 and will run until 23:59 on Tuesday 21st April 2020. The DoT reserves the right to withdraw the relaxations earlier or extend the relaxations if circumstances change. In addition, the continuation of the relaxations past Sunday 5th April 2020 is subject to a specific review.

The specific measures include:

Relaxation of EU Drivers Hours Rules

The EU Drivers' Hours rules can be temporarily relaxed as follows:

- a) Replacement of the EU daily driving limit of 9 hours with one of 11 hours*
- b) Reduction of the daily rest requirements from 11 to 9 hours*
- c) Lifting the weekly (56 hours) and fortnightly driving limits (90 hours) to 60 and 96 hours respectively*
- d) Postponement of the requirement to start a weekly rest period after six-24 hours periods, for after seven 24 hours period; although two regular weekly rest periods or a regular and a reduced weekly rest period will still be required within a fortnight*
- e) The requirements for daily breaks of 45 minutes after 4.5 hours driving replaced with replaced with a break of 45 minutes after 5.5 hours of driving*

Drivers must not use relaxation 'a' and 'd' at the same time. This is to ensure drivers are able to get adequate rest.

Relaxation of GB Drivers' Hours Rules

The GB Drivers' Hours rules can be temporarily relaxed as follows:

a) Replacement of the GB duty time limit of 11 hours with 12 hours

b) Replacement of the GB daily driving time limit of 10 hours with 11 hours

Drivers can only take advantage of this temporary relaxation 5 days in any 7 day period, and must take a rest period of 24 hours within the same 7 day period when taking advantage of this relaxation.

Discussions have taken place with Royal Mail this morning to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the intentions of the business to adapt to the relaxation of the rules and any implications.

Following that discussion Branches are advised of the following clarifications that have been provided.

- Royal Mail do not intend to re-plan current workload on the basis of the relaxation of the rules and have issued advice to their managers to that effect.
- That should an increase in absence as a result of COVID 19 require a rethink on this policy, that National discussions will take place with the department before any revised advice is issued by the business.
- That no individual driver will be required to work beyond the current limits should they not wish to do so.

Separately the union has also been advised that the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have approved a 3 month suspension on all Trailer MOT's scheduled for March and April 2020 to allow for the absence of testers at their stations. All trailers that have been prepared for test will be released back into service and recalled at the appropriate time. All outstanding tests or re-tests for February 2020 will continue as normal.

Any enquiries in relation to this LTB should be addressed to:

Drivers: Davie Robertson, Assistant Secretary, email: dwyatt@cwu.org quoting reference 014.14

or

Fleet: Carl Maden, Acting Assistant Secretary, **PTCS** Department; email: khay@cwu.org quoting reference 220.

Yours sincerely

Davie Robertson
Assistant Secretary

Carl Maden
Assistant Secretary (Acting)