

Industrial Action Toolkit: UK Border Force



Home Office



Key information

- The Public Commercial Services (PCS) Union's National Executive Committee has announced strike action affecting UK Border Force on **1 February until circa. 7am 2 February 2023**.
- The proposed strike action **will impact international arrivals at all UK air and maritime ports** and those travelling to the UK **from UK Border controls in Calais, Dunkirk and Coquelles** in Northern France.
- If you are travelling into the UK via any entry point, you should prepare for disruption and check before you travel.
- Border Force's number one priority is to keep our borders safe and secure, and we will never compromise on this.
- Border Force will continue to maintain the checks we need to keep the public safe, while minimising disruption.
- Border Force are working closely with all UK ports and carriers to ensure we have robust plans in place to minimise any delays if strike action goes ahead, **however travellers should be prepared for disruption** and should check with their operators before travelling.
- Resource and staffing requirements at every port are reviewed continually by Border Force who work closely with port operators to ensure resources are deployed to meet demand as and when they are required.
- Our eGates will be operating as normal and we encourage passengers who are able to use eGates to do so. Passengers can find more information [about eGates here](#).
- We recommend all travellers check the latest advice before travelling.

Strike action to affect travellers and goods entering the UK

We have prepared this communications toolkit to support you when communicating to your customers, passengers and stakeholders about disruption at the UK border as a result of strike action.



Lines for travellers arriving into the UK

The below messaging can be used to inform and prepare travellers in a timely manner about the impact of potential strike action and what it means for them, including advance warning to expect delays when entering the UK.

Please share across all of your communications channels including social media, email, mobile apps, SMS messaging, websites, screens and tannoy.



Be prepared

- Passengers who are due to travel into the UK during the proposed strike action may face longer wait times at border control.
- Planned strike action may affect travellers entering the UK. Please check the latest advice with operators before travelling.
- Please be patient and respect officers who are working to keep the UK border secure and support passengers during strike action.



Hauliers

- Hauliers who are moving goods during the proposed strike action should be prepared for potential disruption and longer queues at Ports and Inland Border Facilities.
- Please check with your operator before travelling, be prepared for delays and carefully plan your movements if they coincide with days of strike action.



eGates

- We encourage all travellers eligible to use eGates to do so; the quickest and most efficient method of crossing the border.
- With nearly 300 eGates operational across the UK, speed up your journey by using our eGate services to enter the UK.
- Find out more on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)



Lines for passengers arriving into the UK

The below messaging can be used for passengers as they prepare to arrive into the UK, for example for airlines to use on the on-plane tannoy system before disembarkation or for airports to use on screens/tannoys as passengers disembark and walk to border control.

Our main aim is to prepare passengers to expect longer wait times at border control due to strike action, and have time to react accordingly; to ensure passengers are patient and kind to staff who are working to support them and to encourage passengers to use egates if they can as the most efficient way through Border Control.



Be prepared

- Due to strike action by the Public and Commercial Services Union affecting UK Border Force on **1 February and until 7am on 2 February**, passengers should be prepared for longer wait times at border control.
- Border Force has worked closely with airports to ensure adequate resourcing of staff to carry out passport checks and are working really hard to support the processing of travellers through control points as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- We understand that waiting in a longer queue is frustrating. We apologise and encourage you to prepare yourself for any delays.
- Thank you in advance for your patience. Please do be patient and respect Border Force officers who are working to keep the UK border secure and support passengers during strike action.
- To help avoid further delays, please make sure you have all your documents ready for inspection before arriving at the border.



eGates

- eGates will be operating as usual throughout the strike periods.
- Border Force encourage all travellers eligible to use eGates to do so; which is the quickest and most efficient method of crossing the border.
- There are staff on hand to help you through eGates if you are unsure.

[Download eGates and strike action assets](#)

Social media assets



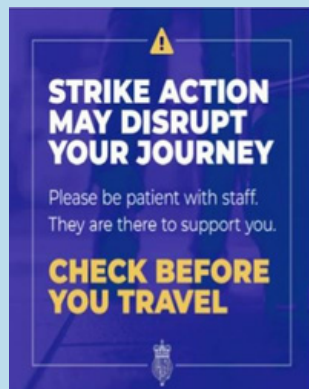
Home Office

We have prepared social media assets and supporting social copy to make it as easy as possible for you to share updates with your audience and stakeholders.

Social media assets

You can access social media assets and supporting social copy to use across your social channels to communicate disruption to travellers.

[Download the high-quality social media assets](#)



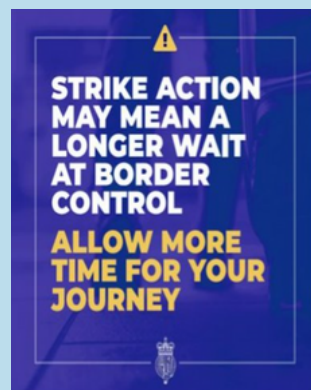
COPY: Please be patient and respect officers who are working to keep the UK border secure and support passengers during strike action.

Check with your operator before you travel and allow extra time.



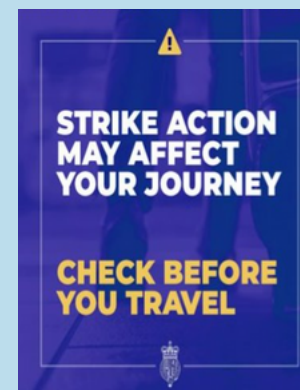
COPY: UK Border Force strike action will impact all travellers entering the UK on 1 February.

Check with your operator before you travel and allow extra time.



COPY: If you're travelling to the UK during the proposed Border Force strike period, you could face a longer wait at border control.

Check with your operator before you travel and allow extra time.



COPY: UK Border Force strike action will impact the movement of goods on 1 February.

Check with your operator before you travel and carefully plan your movements if they coincide with days of strike action.



The following Q&A is designed to help with your communications. The below is a guide, **please do not copy and paste into your comms.**

What plans are in place to avoid disruption and queues at the border during the strike action?

- Border Force continues to work closely with port operators and carriers to make sure all travellers can have a safe and hassle-free journey; however passengers should be prepared for potential disruption and may experience longer wait times at the border if strike action goes ahead.
- Border Force and the travel industry work together very closely at a local and national level and have regular meetings to understand demand while keeping the public safe.
- Resource and staffing requirements at every port are continually reviewed by Border Force.

What checks will you be making on the day? Will you be relaxing them to minimise queues?

- Border Force will never compromise on security. Border Force will continue its vital work. Maintaining the security of the UK border is our top priority.

What are doing to ensure we maintain a safe and secure border?

- Border Force's number one priority is to keep our borders safe and secure for all travellers and we will not compromise on this.
- Border Force uses a range of methods to identify potential criminal activity at the border and will continue to ensure that those who attempt to break the law are dealt with accordingly.

Will outbound travel be impacted as well as inbound?

- Whilst we have robust plans in place to minimise inbound delays, travellers should still be prepared for disruption and take action to plan ahead. Those intending to travel over strike days should keep up-to-date with the latest advice from operators to check how the proposed strike action will affect their journey.

Will the Border Force strike action just impact passengers, or will freight be impacted as well?

- Border Force are working closely with all UK ports and carriers to ensure we have robust plans in place to minimise any delays if strike action goes ahead.
- However, hauliers and passengers should be prepared for disruption and should take action to plan ahead and check with their operators before travelling.



What checks will you be making on the day? Will you be relaxing security to minimise queues?

Will all contingency staff, including volunteers and military personnel, deployed at the border be properly trained?

Are military personnel just for checking passports?

The following Q&A is designed to help with your communications. The below is a guide, **please do not copy and paste into your comms.**

- Maintaining the security of the UK border is our top priority and Border Force will never compromise on security.
- Yes. All contingency staff deployed will be sufficiently trained for the activities they are being required to undertake.
- Border Force will never compromise on security.
- Military personnel, civil servants and volunteers are currently being trained to support a range of services including Border Force at airports and ports in the event of strike action.
- We don't comment on operational deployments, but all contingency resources will be sufficiently trained for the activities they are being required to undertake.
- Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) is a long standing and established process which allows the specialist capabilities of the UK Armed Forces to be utilised to support civil authorities responding to a domestic emergency, whilst also ensuring that the use of the Military is a last, not first, resort.