



Andrew RT Davies MS,
Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

11 April 2025

Dear Andrew,

Please find below additional information on what's been done over the past three to four years in terms of progress made on freight and logistics that was requested following the ETRA Committee on 06 March.

The Covid pandemic, rising inflation, energy, fuel and labour costs highlighted more than ever the role that freight and the logistics industry plays in supporting the Welsh economy and in peoples' everyday lives. The Welsh Government has made positive strides in focussing more strategically on freight and logistics within this Government term.

The North Wales Transport Commission ensured that freight was central to the work and examined origin and destination data to understand freight movement patterns in the region. The report has clear recommendations on freight and logistics.

Following the publication of the Roads Review Panel's 'The future of road investment in Wales's on February 14th, 2023, the remit of the North Wales Transport Commission was extended to consider how the connections to and from Ynys Môn could be made more resilient. Considerations were made in the context of the Menai Suspension Bridge commenced in 2023, and recurrent incidents and bad weather events that affect the crossings.

In July 2021 the Holyhead Road King Truckstop (third party operated) closed and the land was sold to HMRC to house their Inland Border Facility. Holyhead Port is the 2nd largest roll-on/roll-off ferry port in the U.K. and facilitates the movement of a large volume of HGV's every day. Consequently, a parking facility was still required, and the Welsh Government opened a temporary HGV parking facility on a non-prejudice basis. Since opening the facility has been used extensively and is full most nights. This facility is a secure area which reduces theft in the region, it is also equipped with basic welfare facilities (toilet and showers).

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We completed the £30m A55 Aber to Tai'r Meibion Improvement in April 2023 which improved safety and resilience against flooding along a stretch of 1.2km on the A55. We also completed the £46m A487 New Dyfi Bridge in February 2024 which also improved resilience against flooding and safety. Both schemes improve journey reliability for freight along these key east - west route in north Wales and north - south route in mid Wales. In south west Wales, we'll be opening the £60m A40 Llanddewi Velfrey to Redstone Cross Improvements in early May which will improve safety, journey times and access to the Haven Enterprise Zone, ports at Fishguard, Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock, and the county town of Haverfordwest.

We're also in the final stages of completing the 28-mile upgrade to the A465 heads of the valleys road designed to bring prosperity to one of the UK's most deprived areas. The £590m final section from Dowlais to Hirwaun is due to open this summer and will make it easier for local people and businesses to get around and create a resilient alternative route between the Midlands and south-west Wales, easing pressure on the often-congested M4 at Newport.

This upgrade isn't just about moving people and goods, but it also about generating jobs, prosperity, opportunities and better connecting and benefiting communities across the region supporting inward investment to areas like the Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone. We are continuing to improve the resilience of the strategic road network including the replacement of the River Dee Bridge in North East Wales and developing options to improve the resilience of the bridges across the Menai Strait in North West Wales.

We have also developed a Major Asset Renewals programme to address key structures that require significant repairs or replacement – this will ensure the strategic road network remains resilient and open for the movement of goods and services. Regional Transport Plans are now out to consultation and freight and logistics will play a prominent role within those.

Policy officials meet with industry on a regular basis via Logistics UK and Road Haulage Association. These include roundtable events with Cabinet Secretaries and formal Senedd receptions. We also ensure we are aware of others who represent the industry and publish articles such as Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport. There is a commitment within Llwybr Newydd to develop a freight and logistics plan and we are looking at what actions are realistically deliverable by the end of this government term setting a pathway for any new incoming government to refresh the plan in 2026, with five further years of deliverables.

Zemo Partnership was commissioned by the Welsh Government to assess the policy options to decarbonise the commercial vehicle (CV) sector in Wales utilising the main technology pathways. The report was launched on 21 March. The long-term primary pathway to decarbonising the commercial vehicle sector will be electrification. However, this will take time and there are types of operation where electrification may not currently be a viable option. Therefore, to maximise the decarbonisation of commercial vehicles in Wales, all pathways must be adopted in parallel. Welsh Government will now consider the report and respond.

The Welsh Government's ReAct+ programme is designed to help people who have been impacted by redundancy to acquire the skills that recruiting employers are looking for. The programme can provide a vocational training grant of up to £1500 and can support people to gain LGV licences, the driver CPC qualification and complementary qualifications such as HIAB and ADR. The programme can also fund refresher training for lorry drivers who wish to re-enter the sector. ReAct+ can also support ex-offenders or offenders who are serving community sentences, and we are planning pilot programmes to help serving prisoners who are due for release to complete the LGV theory test so that they can undertake the practical training and test soon after they are released from custody. ReAct+ and its predecessor programmes have funded well over 1,000 people to gain HGV/LGV licences.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales