Twitter Thread by Joe Mayes



Joe Mayes
@Joe_Mayes

It's been another torrid week at the border - inundated customs agents, goods stuck for days, companies buckling under the paperwork 1/ https://t.co/2A301guhB6 w/ @lizzzburden

Take Branimir Vuckovic, 45, who runs goods between the U.K. and EU. He spent this week stuck in Kent because he couldn't find a customs broker to do his Brexit paperwork. Even with traffic levels below normal, the system is being overwhelmed 2/

> "Who is going to do the paperwork?" Vuckovic said in a telephone interview. "No one."
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> Vuckovic's experience highlights a flaw in the U.K.'s preparations for Brexit: a lack of trained workers to help firms navigate their way through the labyrinth of customs procedures that have been imposed since Britain's departure from the EU. Even with a trade deal in place, businesses still face new checks and paperwork.

The government has admitted this problem itself. On a Q&A with businesses on Thursday, Heather Jones from the Border Delivery Group said: `We are starting to realize that customs agents' capacity and capability is being extremely stretched' 3/ ■

Eddie Maybank, an independent customs broker, says he's been having a breakdown. He's forwarding inbound queries on to other agents in Dover, but they've told him to stop. `I'm inundated, and so is everyone else,' he said 4/

UK-Ireland trade has been badly affected, particularly food shipments. Stephen McAneney of Allied Fleet Services in NI said he saw consignments of potatoes, apples and cream being destroyed at ports because they lacked the right documents 5/ https://t.co/4TjHPRa26I

Another example: Lukasz Piotrowski has a lorry containing plastic containers for mushrooms destined for Poland stuck in Dover, costing his business ~ £1k a day.

`Neither the export agency in the U.K. nor the import agency in the EU know specifically what to do,' he said 6/

The crunch is being made worse by some big names halting deliveries altogether, such as DB Schenker this week 7/ https://t.co/OaTXCkH1c9

A source at Kuehne & Nagel, one of the world's biggest freight forwarders, says they're pulling 90-hour weeks to keep the show on the road, and this is with freight levels at about 60% of the usual. They're worried about what it looks like when it gets busier still... 8/

Now the big test comes. Every week is proving harder than the last. A haulier messages today:

`If Jan 4 was the eye of the Brexit storm... it has just been upgraded to a tsunami' ends/ https://t.co/2A301guhB6