



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

9 June 2021

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Our Ref: AL6189

Dear Home Secretary

**Re: Shortage of HGV Drivers**

I am writing on behalf of a constituent who runs a haulage business in my constituency, and who recently contacted me regarding the shortage of HGV drivers.

My constituent believes that this shortage in the UK is at crisis point. She says that, prior to the pandemic, UK road transport businesses employed approximately 600,000 HGV drivers, including 60,000 from EU member states who resided and worked in the UK. Since then, many drivers have returned to their country of origin during extended period of lockdown and restricted travel. The uncertainty of Brexit and future rights to live and work in the UK have forced others to do the same and she says that the vast majority have not returned.

My constituent tells me that the problem is exacerbated by the increasing number of retiring drivers, with the average age of an HGV driver being 55 and fewer than 2% under the age of 25. However she is finding that it is impossible to fill the vacancies due to the complete shutdown of vocational driving tests throughout much of last year. She says that prior to the pandemic, a typical year would see 72,000 candidates training to become HGV drivers with 40,000 succeeding, but last year only 15,000 completed training successfully.

This shortage of drivers will inevitably have a significant deleterious effect on integrated supply chains. My constituent strongly believes that, for haulage businesses to survive, they need immediate access to the global labour market and she urges the Government to add HGV drivers to the UK Shortage Occupation List.

As you will be aware, DEFRA have existing arrangements in place which support our harvest periods where foreign labour restrictions are eased for specific demand. I would be grateful to know if this arrangement could be considered for HGV drivers, and that a Seasonal Visa Scheme be introduced for qualified lorry drivers.

I thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Kind regards

Alyn Smith MP

Alyn Smith MP Stirling constituency (SNP)  
Office 16, John Player Building, Stirling Enterprise Park, Stirling FK7 7RP  
Telephone 01786 471899  
Email: [alyn.smith.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alyn.smith.mp@parliament.uk) □