Up to 5,000 HGV's travel through the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel to France each day. This represents 80 per cent of all roll on roll off HGV's travelling between Britain and Europe. In times of disruption this volume, accentuated by a peaked pattern of travel, results in HGV's being parked on public roads in Kent, Operations TAP and BROCK.

The University wanted to understand the potential for a systems approach to proactive management of HGV's throughout their journey. In effect to ‘hold’ trucks at many locations and release them as capacity recovers. A Virtual Queue (VQ). We analysed data from the Highways England Webtris system of traffic on the A2, 1 mile from The Port of Dover. We combined this with economic data to simulate the origin of and travel time to the Port. This would indicate our ability to influence or manage HGV's flows in Kent is potentially significant.

Our challenge is to establish a method to enable us to proactively manage HGV's. We think a commercial platform is the first stage. Linking up with SNAPaccount, a current platform provider to 40,000 trucks, we can access over 7,500 parking spaces to ‘hold’ trucks. The initial commercial platform, which is cashless, is managed through Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) integrating a range of services. VQ would be included outside of Kent as part of this package. VQ will save drivers time and stress.

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