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Dear Mr Rees,

Thank you for your letter of 31 July asking whether the Rail Freight Group wishes, in the light of the evolving situation, to add to the written and oral evidence we submitted in 2017 to the Committee's inquiry into the implications of Brexit for Welsh ports.

In our written evidence we concentrated on activities on the port estates and on land-side connectivity with those ports and these remain important concerns to our members. We also stressed that whatever customs arrangements were put in place, it was essential that they were frictionless to ensure port operations were not constrained and transport operators were not adversely affected by delays and disruption.

In this context we welcome the current proposals by the UK Government for a Facilitated Customs Arrangement and hope that agreement can be reached and the necessary procedures speedily implemented. In particular, it is important that "Landbridge" traffic between Ireland, the UK and Europe, (another area of concern featured in our 2017 submission) continues to be facilitated in order to sustain throughput (and, hopefully, growth) at the major Welsh Ferry Ports.

If you require any clarification or additional information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

*Robin C Smith*

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