

The IGC met in London on 18 April 2019. The Head of the UK Delegation took the chair. The points dealt with were as follows:

Brexit

The IGC confirmed that the European Council decision of 10 April would extend the deadline for the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union. Many uncertainties remained concerning the date and terms of the UK exit from the EU, with or without a withdrawal agreement.

The European Parliament and the Council had adopted a European regulation containing various contingency measures on 25 March 2019. This extended the validity of the safety approval, issued by the IGC to the infrastructure manager, Eurotunnel, for nine months from a UK exit without a withdrawal agreement. It also extended, by the same period, the safety certificates and licences of the railway undertakings and the drivers' licences issued by the UK authorities. These extensions were valid only as far as the frontier station, Calais-Fréthun.

The French authorities had also adopted contingency measures, in order to get ready themselves for a no-deal Brexit.

Eurostar had formed a subsidiary in France called Eurostar France. It had been operational since 30 March 2019 and held a licence and safety certificate. Parallel to this, nearly all Eurostar drivers had been licensed by Etablissement Public de Sécurité Ferroviaire (EPSF).

Eurotunnel reported that it had carried out the necessary work to put infrastructure in place for border checks in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

Safety approval

The IGC reported that it had issued safety approval to the infrastructure manager, Eurotunnel, on 28 March. However, it pointed out that this agreement stated that further information had to be supplied. Technical discussions might be held on this subject.

The IGC's future as the national safety authority (NSA) competent for the whole tunnel was highly uncertain, due to Brexit. If the Safety Directive were not amended to allow a binational NSA to consist of a Member State and a third state, Eurotunnel should submit a safety approval file to EPSF for the French part of the tunnel.

ElecLink

Technical discussions were ongoing between the Eurotunnel teams and the Channel Tunnel Safety Authority's French and UK experts. At this stage the IGC did not intend to revise the decisions it had made on this project.

In accordance with the IGC's letter in reply to Eurotunnel, sent on 11 April, Eurotunnel was going to propose a high-level meeting very soon, for discussion of the project. The IGC's aim was to make a final decision for or against this project.