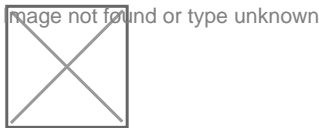


## Bristol Port resolved to keep the nation moving

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The Bristol Port Company said today it is “resolved and ready” with an action plan for the Coronavirus outbreak.



David Brown, Chief Executive Officer of The Bristol Port Company, said: “Keeping our global gateways open for trade is a national priority, and Bristol Port is running efficiently and effectively as always. We see it as our responsibility and duty in these unprecedented times to keep Bristol, the region and the nation moving. We handle millions of tonnes of cargo critical to how this country functions; everything from maintaining the food supply chain through handling animal feed for almost all livestock in southern England, to the containers that bring in thousands of different commodities, to the wood pulp that makes millions of rolls of toilet paper.”

“Bristol Port has weathered many storms over many centuries, and we are prepared and resolved to overcome this current threat, and to ensure the needs are met of all our customers, from shops, retailers, and public services, to manufacturers and farmers.”

Plans to mitigate the potential for disruption were drawn up several weeks ago and the Port said it is “highly confident” the measures put in place will maintain an effective service.

Mr Brown said: “Bristol Port is fortunate that we have flexible, efficient teams of staff who deal with freight that is moved principally by machinery, in an outdoor environment with little human-to-human contact. Meanwhile, office-based staff who are able to work from home are doing so. First and foremost in our considerations is the safety of our staff and those in the dock estate and surrounding area. We are in daily contact with the UK Government and other stakeholders to keep ahead of the developing situation.”

Kevin Elson, representative for the Unite union at the Port, said the workforce was engaged in a combined effort.

“As always when faced with a challenging period, we have seen our workforce pull even closer together. This team effort and resilience will maintain business as usual in our operations around the Port. Messages around self-isolation and washing hands to keep our teams fit and well have been heard loud and clear, and communication from managers to keep the workforce informed have been excellent.”

“Our workers recognise something of a sense of responsibility that comes with working at the Port, which plays such an important part of the supply chain to keep the city, the region and the nation moving in these unprecedented times.”

Meanwhile, the Port’s police force continues to work closely with Avon & Somerset Police in preparing for any emergency services response required.

Jeff Foreman, Chief Officer of Port of Bristol police, said: “Policing is all about balancing resources and responding to risk, and our officers are, as ever, planning ahead and working around the clock to protect the Port estate and community.

“Emergency services have a well-rehearsed approach in how we coordinate and join-up our response with Avon & Somerset Police, local and national government and agencies. We are in continuous contact to keep on top of this rapidly changing picture, to ensure we are ready and positive in our response, and critically to ensure trade continues seamlessly at the Port.”

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