

Network Rail supports army to deliver vital medical face masks to NHS frontline

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Railway workers have driven hundreds of miles through the night to deliver two lorry loads of protective medical face masks for frontline workers in the NHS.

Network Rail lent its staff and vehicles for the special delivery from Merseyside to army barracks in Hampshire.

The 230-mile journey was part of an army logistics operation to provide protective equipment to hospitals during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The railway vehicles carried 22 pallets of face masks from a storage warehouse in St Helen's to 101 Logistic Brigade at St Omer Barracks Aldershot, ready to be distributed to medical staff treating patients with coronavirus.

Peter Mitchell, logistics co-ordinator at Network Rail, said: "We're doing everything we can to help during the coronavirus pandemic, and the team dropped everything to help the Army and the NHS with this special delivery operation.

"Network Rail will continue to lend its support wherever and whenever it's needed over the coming weeks in the fight against the spread of Covid-19."

Martin Frobisher, Network Rail group director of safety, technical and engineering, said: “Network Rail is determined to keep key workers and goods moving safely around during these unprecedented times.

“Freight services are an integral part of our work to keep food and medicines in shops, but I am very grateful to the team going the extra mile, or 230 miles to be exact, to help the army support our frontline NHS staff in this way.”

Lt Gen Tyrone Urch CBE, standing joint commander in the British Army, said: “It is brilliant to witness how strongly the UK is pulling together regarding Covid-19; the Armed Forces will continue to play any part necessary in support of the Government and this National crisis. Every civilian and military person takes great pride in the contribution we are making.”

Meanwhile, people are reminded that with only essential travel being recommended during the coronavirus pandemic, a reduced timetable is operating on the rail network.

This will ensure that critical supplies and key workers are able to keep moving over the coming months to help tackle spread of Covid-19.

Photo credit: Network Rail