

PRESS RELEASE



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Eurotunnel organizes 20th major safety exercise In Channel Tunnel

Overnight from Saturday 13 to Sunday 14 March 2010, Eurotunnel and the national authorities conducted an extensive safety exercise, BINAT 20 (Bi-national), with the participation of the emergency services from both the UK and France, in particular the Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance services.

This year France was the lead nation for the purposes of the exercise, which therefore took place under the authority of the sous-préfet de Calais, M Gérard Gavory.

BINAT is a regular exercise, this instance being the 20th since the creation of Eurotunnel. It tests the response and coordination of the emergency services in the event of a major incident in the Channel Tunnel.

The 2010 BINAT simulated a problem on board a Truck Shuttle. In principle the scenario used is based on an extreme situation with particularly challenging developments. It therefore led to the mobilisation of significant resources: this year it involved more than 80 members of the British and French emergency services, 20 actors, 20 judges and observers, a Eurotunnel Shuttle, 10 trucks, 15 STTS (Service Tunnel Transportation System) vehicles.....

There is no comparable exercise anywhere else across European infrastructure organisations. Eurotunnel is the only operator to dedicate such resources to this type of exercise.

Eurotunnel estimates that a BINAT exercise costs in the region of €200,000.

According to initial feedback, the 2010 exercise demonstrated the efficiency of Eurotunnel's ICC (Incident Control Centre) and its equipment. Eurotunnel has dedicated ICCs on each of its terminals, in Folkestone and Coquelles, which are activated in the event of an incident. Equipped with specialist information and communications systems, the ICC provides a central location for all of the decision making authorities and, in particular those responsible for the control of any emergency response. The ICC is in permanent contact with the trains in the Tunnel and the rescue teams.

BINAT 20 also allowed the new procedure for intervention by the FLOR (First Line of Response) Fire and Rescue services to be monitored. From now on, once there is no risk to individuals, they will intervene immediately to prevent the propagation of a fire before the arrival of reinforcements.

"The organisation of regular BINAT exercises, stated Henri Rouanet, Chairman of Eurotunnel's Safety, Security and Environment Committee, "underlines the importance that the Group attaches to the Safety of its customers and its staff. This has always been of fundamental importance to us. Since 1994 250 million passengers and 50 million vehicles have crossed the Channel thanks to Eurotunnel.

This exercise also confirmed the need to implement our Salamander project, which relates to the installation of four permanent fire suppression stations in the Tunnel to limit damage caused by fire, once passengers have been evacuated."