



The Centre for  
Cross Border Studies

## MEDIA WATCH

---

**6 July 2018 – 13 July 2018**

**10 July 2018**

**Irish Air Corps helicopters deployed in Northern Ireland;  
The craft were sent to help battle a gorse fire.**

The Irish Air Corps has been deployed in Northern Ireland for its first operation assisting the fire service.

An Agusta Westland and a Eurocopter have been deployed a short distance across the border in the Slieve Gullion area of south Armagh where a "deep seated" gorse fire is raging.

A spokeswoman for the Irish Defence Forces said the helicopters are equipped with a "Bambi" bucket aerial firefighting system capable of dropping 1,200 litres of water per pass.

She said this amount of water, concentrated in a small areas, makes an immediate impact on wildfires, adding that facility has been used extensively during the past 10 days in the Irish Republic to support the Irish Fire Service in fighting gorse fires.

The move comes following a request made by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

She said that the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is in contact with the UK Authorities to "ensure all necessary permissions are in place for the Air Corps to cross the border".

A spokeswoman for the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) Spokesperson said this is the first time the Irish Air Corps had assisted them.

This is the first time Irish Air Corps helicopters have been used for firefighting by NIFRS  
spokeswoman

"Due to the deep-seated nature of the gorse fire at Slieve Gullion Mountain and the challenging conditions, NIFRS can confirm that it requested assistance from the Air Rescue Co-ordination Centre (ARCC)," she said.

"They have deployed two Irish Air Corps helicopters which are currently at the scene, one is involved in aerial firefighting and one is being used as an observation point.

[Irish Air Corps helicopters deployed in Northern Ireland twitter 3](#)

"This is the first time Irish Air Corps helicopters have been used for firefighting by NIFRS."

A spokeswoman for the Irish Defence Force confirmed the Air Corps had not participated in fire-fighting operations in Northern Ireland before, but said it had assisted in cross-border operations.

"The Air Corps has not participated in fire-fighting operations in Northern Ireland previously, but has assisted in cross-border operations during severe weather occurrences, providing helicopter cargo slinging operations to drop fodder to livestock in isolated areas and has also conducted helicopter search and rescue operations," she said.

**Source: The Belfast Telegraph**

**13 July 2018**

## Business bodies offer cautious welcome to UK's Brexit proposals

BUSINESS groups in Northern Ireland have given a guarded welcome to the publication of the Government's long-awaited White Paper on Brexit.

Released after a tumultuous week for Prime Minister Theresa May, ▼ the document finally sets out the UK's proposals for its future relationship with the EU when it comes to trade and the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The White Paper seeks a scenario where goods crossing the border would not have to be checked for customs or compliance standards.

Aspiring to promises for a 'frictionless' border and acknowledging the DUP's demand for no border in the Irish Sea, the paper proposes a free trade area between the UK and EU.

If accepted, it will see the UK continuing to harmonise with EU rules and, crucially for major companies like Bombardier, which makes wings for the A220 aircraft in Belfast, it would see the continued participation in agencies overseeing sectors such as aerospace parts, medicines and chemicals.

The White Paper also appears to safeguard the continuation of the all-island Single Electricity Market.

Glyn Roberts, the chief executive of Retail NI, said that while it was "far from perfect, it was a step forward and does represent a more realistic basis for the forthcoming Brexit negotiations".

Mr Roberts added: "In our meetings with British and Irish government ministers and with Michel Barnier ▼ a few months ago, we made it clear that any Brexit solution must ensure no border in

Ireland or between these islands in the interest of our economy and the hundreds of thousands of people across Northern Ireland who work in our businesses."

Director-general of the British Irish Chamber of Commerce John McGrane described the paper as "a set of serious constructive proposals which deserve detailed consideration by the EU in the negotiations ahead".

He added: "Clearly there are many elements which will need refinement, but the basis for a workable outcome are now on the table. The proposed free trade in goods is vital for all, especially our shared agri-food sector. But we cannot afford to end free trade in all services simply because some sectors might reject the EU's rules."

It represents a more realistic basis for the Brexit negotiations

**Source: Belfast Telegraph**