Publication

UK Import Controls: The Border Target Operating Model (TOM)

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The UK Government announced in August 2023 its new approach to controlling imports of goods to Great Britain from the EU (including Ireland) in the Border Target Operating Model (TOM) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023) which will apply from January 2024. All Irish traders exporting to Great Britain must take action to prepare for the changes.

New Requirements

The new UK controls will have implications for all Irish exporters to Great Britain, particularly agri-food exporters, including those using the UK Landbridge. The UK TOM includes provisions related to customs and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) requirements for imports of goods from the EU, including Ireland.

In particular exports from the agri-food sector will subject to pre-notification and accompanied, in some cases, by export health and phyto-sanitary certificates. There will be no changes to moving goods between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Timelines for Implementation

31 January 2024

- Export health certificates and phytosanitary certificates will be required for medium risk animal products, plants and plant products imported to Great Britain from the EU, including from Ireland.

- Prenotification of imports of SPS goods from Ireland on the UK's SPS import system (IPAFFS) will be required (this requirement already applies to imports of such goods from the rest of the EU since 1 January 2022).

30 April 2024

- Documentary checks and physical and identity checks at the border will be introduced for medium risk animal products, plant and plant products imported to Great Britain from the EU, excluding those goods being imported from Ireland.

- Existing inspections of high-risk plants/plant products from the EU will move from point of destination in Great Britain to UK Border Control Posts.

31 October 2024

- Safety and Security declarations for EU imports will come into force.

- Documentary and risk-based identity and physical checks on medium risk animal products, plants, plant products and high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin from Ireland will be introduced at ports on the west coast of Great Britain (the date for the commencement of physical checks for non-qualifying goods moving from the island of Ireland will be confirmed in autumn 2023).

- This will apply to a wider range of agri-food goods than is currently the case, including products of animal origin and all regulated plants and plant products. It will be based on a risk categorisation of high, medium, and low risk as defined by UK Government, depending on country of origin and product definition.

Risk Categories for Exports to the UK

It is dependent on the product type and its risk level if you will require pre-notification on the UK's Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-of-products-animals-food-and-feed-system) notifying UK authorities before the goods arrive in Great Britain from 31 January 2024.

Further information on which products are considered low, medium and high risk is available on the UK Government website here (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-categories-for-animal-and-animal-product-imports-to-great-britain)

Low Risk

- No pre-notification requirements for low-risk plant and plant products from the EU.

- From 31 January 2024 pre-notification required for low risk products of animal origin.

- Do not need an export health certificate.

- Requires a commercial document from the supplier to allow traceability.

Medium Risk

- From 31 January 2024 the consignment must be pre-notified on UK IPAFFS system.

- From 31 January 2024 the consignment must have an export health certificate issued by the competent authority in the country where the goods originate, or an official importer declaration (where applicable).

- From 31 October 2024 consignments may be subject to risk based physical import checks. A date for application of Border Control Post SPS entry controls (identity and physical inspection controls) for Irish goods moving to GB will be confirmed shortly.

High Risk

- Each consignment must be pre-notified on UK IPAFFS system.

- The consignment must have a health certificate issued by the competent authority in the country where the goods originate.

- Most high-risk consignments are already subject to physical import checks. These will continue after January 2024.

Health Certificates

On the 28 of April 2023, the UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published new/revised UK Export Health Certificates (https://www.gov.uk/environment/producing-distributing-food-import-export) for the EU, including Irish products. These certificates must be used from 31 January 2024 for export of EU agri-food goods to Great Britain. If you have any queries in relation to export certification, please contact BrexitCall@agriculture.gov.ie (mailto:BrexitCall@agriculture.gov.ie)

Irish Exporters: Take Action

It is vital that impacted businesses speak to everyone in their supply chain including transport and logistics providers and customers in Great Britain to examine what adjustments will be needed to comply with the new UK requirements (such as ferry boarding formalities, the end of the delayed lodgement of customs declarations, pre-notification of SPS products, export health certificates etc) and ensure everyone understands their role in this new environment.

Irish exporters of agri-food goods should contact their supervisory competent authority to ensure they will can meet the new UK requirements.

Operators moving goods between Ireland and other EU countries by road through Great Britain (the UK Landbridge) will also be impacted and should familiarise themselves with the relevant new UK government requirements.

Hauliers who move goods through the UK ports that use the Goods Vehicle Movement Service (GVMS) (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-for-the-goods-vehicle-movement-service) need to register for the service. This will help to ensure that goods are processed through customs without delay. Register on gov.uk.

As the TOM will be implemented in several stages, all Irish exporters and those involved in moving goods to the United Kingdom are strongly encouraged to check the UK Government TOM website (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023) regularly.

Key Links and Resources

Gov.ie - Exporting to the UK from Ireland (www.gov.ie) (https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/520f6-how-to-export-to-the-uk/)

UK Government Resources

[Gov.uk official page on the draft UK Border Target Operating Model (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023)

[Gov.uk registration page got Goods Vehicle Movement Service (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-for-the-goods-vehicle-movement-service)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-for-the-goods-vehicle-movement-service)

[Import risk categories for animals and animal products imported from the EU to Great Britain, from 31 January 2024 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-categories-for-animal-and-animal-product-imports-to-great-britain)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-categories-for-animal-and-animal-product-imports-to-great-britain)

Health Certificate Guidelines; [Import, export and distribution of food - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (https://www.gov.uk/environment/producing-distributing-food-import-export)](https://www.gov.uk/environment/producing-distributing-food-import-export)

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