



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

7 February 2025

Dear Valued Partners

Thank you for your continued engagement on the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM). This letter sets out the UK Government, Welsh Government and Scottish Governments' plans to lay further legislation to:

1. Extend the Transitional Staging Period (TSP) from 1 July 2025 to 31 January 2027.

and

2. Extend the easement for plants and plant products imported from the EU to GB via west coast ports to 31 January 2027, in line with proposed end of the TSP.

Further information on each proposed measure is below.

1. Extending the Transitional Staging Period to 31 January 2027

The Transitional Staging Period (TSP) was introduced as part of a phased approach to import controls on goods from certain countries including EU member states. The TSP is a period during which the requirements for certain official documents, and for the performance of official controls in relation to some categories of animals, plants and other goods imported into Great Britain ('GB') have been temporarily eased, to allow for the phased introduction of new import controls under the BTOM. Following the publication of the BTOM on 29 August 2023, the January and April 2024 milestones of the new risk-based approach to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) controls for goods imported into Great Britain have been delivered.

BTOM controls on EU goods are supported, in part, by the TSP and a permanent legislative basis is required before the TSP can end. We therefore laid the Official Controls (Amendment) Regulations 2025 on 19 November 2024, which provides the legislative

framework for BTOM delivery to continue and begin the transition away from the TSP. However, further instruments will need to be laid to complete this transition.

We are now proposing to amend the TSP end date from 1 July 2025 to 31 January 2027, to allow sufficient time for Government to transition to a **permanent** legislative basis for the BTOM. This is necessary to prevent controls taking effect by default from 1 July 2025, and to allow the continued introduction of controls between now and this new deadline.

2. Extending the easement for plants and plant products imported from the EU to GB via west coast ports to 31 January 2027.

We propose to delay the implementation of checks on goods from the EU, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, entering GB via a listed West Coast Port, to align this with the proposed end of the TSP.

In addition, we are proposing to re-introduce an easement which allowed operators importing goods from the EU, Switzerland, or Liechtenstein, into a listed west coast port, to not pay fees. This is proposed to be included as part of separate legislation, which is being consulted on separately from 27 January to 21 March. A link to this consultation can be found [here](#).

We will provide a further update on the timeline for implementation by summer 2025.

Next Steps

The UK Government is committed to tackling barriers to trade, including through seeking to negotiate an SPS Agreement with the EU. However, it is too early to speculate on the scope and outcome of any such agreement, and we must continue to meet our international obligations and protect the UK's biosecurity and public health throughout this process. Traders should continue to follow the published guidance setting out import requirements under the BTOM.

We plan to communicate timelines for the implementation of remaining BTOM policies by summer 2025 and will engage with you on any proposed legislation to implement controls to ensure your businesses have sufficient time to prepare.

Please reply to this email with your collated responses by **4pm on 28 February 2025**. Thank you in advance for your thoughts and insights on the proposed legislation.