

NEW BORDER CONTROLS TO PROTECT UK AGAINST SECURITY AND BIOSECURITY THREATS AND ENSURE SMOOTH FLOW OF GOODS

- The Border Target Operating Model sets out new controls to better protect the UK against security and biosecurity threats and create a world-class border system for trade in goods
- The new security and biosecurity controls will help keep the UK safe from threats such as African Swine Fever, protecting citizens from diseases and tackling illegal imports
- New model makes smarter use of data and technology to increase efficiency for traders
- Following consultation, further savings will be made for businesses with costs decreasing by an estimated £520m per year compared to the previous model.

The Border Target Operating Model for trade in goods, published today, 29th August 2023, sets out when new controls will be introduced to better protect the UK against biosecurity threats and create a world-class border system.

Delivering on the [2025 Border Strategy](#) to create the most effective border in the world, the model introduces a new global regime for security and biosecurity controls, including bringing in controls on imports from the EU for the first time and using Brexit freedoms to simplify import controls on goods from across the globe. Many businesses will already be familiar with similar requirements already in place for exporting to the EU.

These controls will keep the UK safe by defending against plant and animal diseases from abroad, protecting our vital agricultural industry and food supply chains, and assuring our trade partners of the quality of our exports. It will also protect against illegal imports, including firearms and drugs.

The Border Target Operating Model makes smarter use of data and technology to ensure a more efficient trading experience for businesses. By taking an intelligent, risk-based approach, it removes duplication and reduces the volume of data and paperwork required from businesses when importing goods. This will save businesses around £520m per year compared to the original import model that would have been introduced in 2022. The model has been developed following extensive engagement with the border industry and businesses across the UK, and in collaboration with the Scottish and Welsh Devolved Administrations. Having listened to the views of industry, the Government has agreed to a delay of three months for the introduction of remaining sanitary and phytosanitary controls, as well as full customs controls for non-qualifying Northern Ireland goods, which will now be introduced from January 2024. To give stakeholders additional time to prepare for the new checks, further controls have a revised timetable. These include checks on medium risk animal products, plants, plant products and high risk food (and feed) of non-animal origin from the EU, implemented in April 2024, and safety and Security declarations for EU imports, implemented in October 2024.

The Government has also worked with industry to test new technologies in a border setting, including distributed ledgers for sharing data, smart seals and GPS trackers. Pilot testing found these technologies could simplify processes across the supply chain, transforming the UK border through reduced costs and administrative burdens, making importing and exporting easier and cheaper for businesses.

In addition to the Border Target Operating Model, the Single Trade Window is another flagship border development which makes smarter use of data and technology. It will simplify and streamline import and export trade processes and provide a single gateway through which businesses can supply trade data to the government. Under this system, information

will only need to be submitted by traders once and in one place, removing complexity and duplication from the system.

Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG, Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, said:

“Our Border Target Operating Model will ensure more efficient trading for businesses, protect against biosecurity threats and further crack down on illegal imports such as firearms and drugs.”

“By making maximum use of data and new technologies, our innovative yet risk-based approach is key to delivering a world-class border system. Once fully implemented, these important post-Brexit measures will, I believe, bring considerable benefits to the UK economy and to UK trade, and the Government stands ready to support businesses through this transition.”

Lord Benyon, Minister for Biosecurity at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, said:

“Protecting UK biosecurity through effective border controls on the goods that we import is so important. These border controls safeguard the food that we eat and protect animal and plant health across the UK.

“The Border Target Operating Model sets out our innovative system of border controls, which will continue to uphold UK biosecurity and support trade with other countries.”

Christine Middlemiss, Chief Veterinary Officer, said:

“The Border Target Operating Model will deliver a new trade regime that provides a risk-based, proportionate and technologically advanced approach to border controls, built upon the foundations of safeguarding UK biosecurity. The threat from imported animal and plant diseases, such as African Swine Fever & Xylella fastidiosa, continues to grow. Our new regime of border controls will protect the UK and our trading partners from the economic, health and environmental harms caused by the outbreak of these diseases, whilst balancing the needs of vitally important trade.”

William Bain, Head of Trade Policy at the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

“Businesses will be pleased with this clarity as they prepare for the challenging shift to a digital trade system. The focus must now be on delivering the Single Trade Window to the timescales set out. The new approach to digitalising borders for goods movements could bring real benefits to the SMEs we represent, to trade, and to the economy.

“The critical thing is preparedness. Businesses are making investment and supply chain decisions for the long term and need to be confident that the physical and digital infrastructure around the GB border is going to be in place on time.”

Nigel Jenney, CEO of the Fresh Produce Consortium, said:

“FPC welcomes the publication of the final Border Target Operating Model. It’s clear, Government has acted upon our concerns and will now implement a unique border approach for the benefit of consumers and industry. This focussed risk-based approach will reinforce UK biosecurity and promote self-regulation to minimise supply chain disruption.

“Let’s be clear, challenges remain. However, this is a bold step forward to achieve our ambition to become a world-leading destination of choice promoting imports and exports of fantastic fresh produce, and flowers and plants.”

Marco Forgione, Director General of The Institute of Export & International Trade said:

“The Institute of Export & International Trade (IOE&IT) welcomes the innovative approach set out in the Border Target Operating Model. The shift to risk based, digital insights and targeting will ensure the smooth flow of goods and maintain strong security and biosecurity controls.

“The Border Target Operating Model should not be looked at in isolation. There are several other key initiatives taking place as part of the Border 2025 strategy aimed at making the UK border one of the most effective and efficient. This approach has the potential to convert our borders into engines which support economic growth. In addition we encourage Government to move as fast as possible to implement the findings of the customs initiatives announced at the Spring Budget.

“What’s really important is that UK businesses and those trading into UK markets prepare for these changes. The Border Target Operating Model helps to redress some of the commercial disadvantages that UK businesses have been facing.

“The Institute’s focus is on supporting businesses trading with the UK from the EU and the Rest of the World to understand the requirements of Border Target Operating Model and provide practical assistance in complying with the new system. The UK can reap the benefits of this world-class new digital border if businesses of all sizes are equipped and armed with the right knowledge. Now is the time to prioritise educating businesses on trading sustainably, safely and securely.”

Ends

Notes to editors:

- The Border Target Operating Model incorporates feedback from the Draft Border Target Operating Model which was published in April 2023.
- The Border Target Operating Model confirms implementation of controls through three major milestones:
 - **31 January 2024** - The introduction of health certification on imports of medium risk animal products, plants, plant products and high risk food (and feed) of non-animal origin from the EU.
 - **30 April 2024** - The introduction of 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 the EU. At this point Imports of Sanitary and Phytosanitary goods from the rest of the world will begin to benefit from the new risk based model.
 - **31 October 2024** - Safety and Security declarations for EU imports will come into force from 31 October 2024. Alongside this, we will introduce a reduced dataset for imports.
- Importers and their supply should already be preparing for the first milestone which we confirmed would go ahead in April. They should now begin to prepare for the following milestones. HMG will continue to work with them, ports, and the wider border industry to prepare for these.
- The final Border Target Operating Model also confirms that new checks and controls will be introduced for Irish goods moving from Ireland directly to Great Britain. In accordance with the Windsor Framework, Northern Ireland businesses will retain unfettered access to their most important market in Great Britain, whether moving qualifying NI goods directly from Northern Ireland or indirectly through Irish ports. A full timeline for introduction of these controls is set out within the Border Target Operating Model.
- In developing the Border Target Operating Model the Government has been mindful of the small potential impact on inflation and has taken into account its firm

commitment to bring the rate down. The estimated impact of the Border Target Operating Model on headline inflation is expected to be minor, standing at less than 0.2% across three years.