

## **Preparing for Brexit**

### **What can operators do (and when)?**

**9 January 2018**

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1. “What can operators do to prepare for Brexit?” has been a question asked by many members in the last several months, especially those dealing with international movements.
2. It is prudent to plan for Brexit. This may seem obvious, but so far many businesses have taken the wait and see approach. This paper highlights a few actions that operators can take now to start the preparation process. As issues come to light we will provide updates.
3. There are two dates we should probably work to. The Brexit date, 23:00, 29 March 2019 (UK and Irish time), and the transition or implementation period date (31 December 2020 or 29 March 2021). It is possible that no material changes will happen on the ground until transition is complete. BUT whether the date it is 2019 or 2021 - action needs to start NOW.

### **Assumptions**

4. With what we know we believe the following assumptions should be made:-
  - existing EU labour can stay and a visa system for the movement of labour will be put in place,
  - A form of customs control will be introduced between the UK and the EU (this may be away from the physical border),
  - an arrangement will be put in place that allows the international movement of freight vehicles (either permits or mutual recognition of operator licenses).

### **Labour (for all operators)**

5. **ACTION - Dealing with the shortage of drivers in the context of Brexit operators need to:-**
  - Reassure staff from the EU that they are wanted, valued, and will not have to leave the UK (most have done this already – but it is worth repeating the message),
  - Encourage EU staff to obtain full passports (many who drive internationally within the EU use an ID card to cross borders – after Brexit this MAY not be possible). It is prudent for them to apply early given potential for backlogs and slow processing times,
  - Seek to train more staff, in particular drivers.

## Customs (for international operators)

6. As things stand, customs controls WILL be introduced as the UK will leave the EU internal market - this has been stated by the UK Government. Customs may be managed through systems of pre arrival or post arrival clearance for road haulage, but the methods to be used are unclear for the moment - we do not have information on how the Government plans to manage this. What should be assumed is that every commercial shipment will be subject to customs clearance of some description.
7. Customs will require paperwork for all shipments that is far more precise than is currently the case for European road haulage.
8. **ACTION - Operators MUST encourage shippers and consignees to start improving paperwork now - the aim is to get international road haulage paperwork up to a standard that would be used to ship to or receive goods from the Far East. Actions include:-**
  - Start to insist that complete CMR notes are used for all shipments,
  - CMR notes must have full and accurate shipper/consignee information,
  - Shippers and consignees must start to prepare commercial invoices that are complete and accurate,
  - All descriptions of goods must be to a standard that allows a customs commodity code to be identified,
  - Shippers and Consignees who only trade within the EU should review the following sites: <https://www.gov.uk/starting-to-import> and <https://www.gov.uk/starting-to-export>,
  - Operators should consider joining the Civil Penalty Accreditation Scheme so that you start to establish a relationship with Border Force (if not done so already).
9. For operators working internationally some form of recognition system may be needed to facilitate rapid uninterrupted clearance processes. Some form of recognition system is also likely to be required for shippers and consignees, this may be based on Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) rules, but this is so uncertain at this time that significant action in this area now should be approached with caution.

## Market Access (International operators to and from the EU)

10. At this time there is no information available on future arrangements so there is no concrete action that can be taken by UK operators to prepare for Brexit. Arrangements for permits systems or alternatives this will come to light during 2018.