

Crossing the border into France – problems and solutions

The RHA has been advised that there are several issues causing problems for UK operators exporting goods via France that are creating delays and causing trucks to be moved to “orange” lanes.

Drivers directed to the green route will travel onwards out of Calais without interruption, but those sent to the orange lane will be sent into an on-site holding area for further checks.

There are five main issues that we have been made aware of that can be addressed by operators and others to help smooth the flow of goods.

1. **Common Transit Convention – Box 51 (office of transit into EU) is often being left blank in the departure declaration. That results in the lorry being given an “orange” lane on arrival.**

***Solution:** Enter the correct Office of Transit in the departure declaration.*

2. **Common Transit Convention – Box 51 (office of transit into EU) is incorrect in the departure declaration as a result of a change in the place of arrival.**

(Generally, this is where a lorry changes ferry at last moment between Calais and Dunkirk). The original box 51 is then wrong, so the truck will always be given an “orange” lane. Currently, even changing it on the system results in the lorry being given an “orange” lane.

***Solution:** Put correct Office of Transit in the departure declaration and avoid changing destination if at all possible, between Calais/Channel Tunnel and Dunkirk.*

3. **SPS Goods – Many shipments are arriving in France without pre-notification in TRACES, or with insufficient pre-notification having been given. (Some SPS goods can be given a “green” lane on arrival if appropriate pre-notification is given)**

***Solution:** Ensure TRACES notifications are done in accordance with the pre-notification rules for the goods being shipped,*

4. **SPS Goods – Exporters do not always give the driver the original paper Export Health Certificates to travel with the goods. It is best practice to have the originals as these can be demanded by Customs officials on arrival in the EU. If originals are required, the truck will not move until originals are provided. Delays can be days, or lorries may be returned to the UK. Until a digital system is put in place the paper certificates must be in the position of the driver.**

***Solution:** Provide original Export Health Certificates to the driver when goods are collected.*

5. **SPS Goods – A designated agent is needed at the arrival place (port or tunnel) to handle the SPS paperwork on arrival in France. Many trucks are moving without this being arranged by the traders/logistics providers in advance. It will avoid long delays if the agent is in place in advance. (Note that there is a shortage of agents).**

***Solution:** The haulage operator should ensure that a known agent is in place, complete with contact details, before the lorry attempts to cross into France.*

This is a rapidly changing picture and further advice will be provided as soon as possible.

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