

## UK Border Target Operating Model (TOM) – Updated 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023

### Background:

- The TOM is the Government plan for introducing full border checks for imports from the EU. The TOM attempts to simplify imports, particularly of food, to speed up controls and link them to existing and emerging technology. The TOM also is linked to the wider work on the Single Trade Window, the Government's approach to simplifying imports which will apply globally and expected to be in place by 2025.
- A full copy of the draft TOM is available [here](#). The Government has taken comments on it from stakeholders, to refine its implementation and been completing a programme of engagement to explain the TOM and provide opportunities to comment.

### Key Dates for Delivery of the TOM and Information Received so Far (more information can also be seen below):

- **April 2023** – Government publishes risk categorisations (high, medium, low) for EU SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) imports – see here:
  - For Plants and Plant Product TOM Risk Categories: click [here](#).
  - For Animals and Animal Products TOM Risk Categories: click [here](#).
- **April 2023** – Government publishes simplified EHCs for use for POAO imports from EU – see [here](#).
- **May 2023** – Government will begin rolling out e-phytocertificates for imports of plants and plant products.
- **July 2023** – Risk categorisation for imports of POAO from RoW. *Note: the BRC has not seen anything yet on this).*
- **October 2023** – Introduction of EHCs for all high and medium risk POAO imports, plant and plant products from EU.
- **January 2024** – Introduction of physical and documentary checks of POAO, plant imports from the EU. Also, RoW imports subject to same regime as EU for imports.
- **October 2024** – Safety and Security declarations required for imports from the EU.

### More on the Risk Categorisation for EU SPS Imports:

- The categories of high, medium, and low risk give the details of how the new SPS regime will be applied. If you import food products, live animals, animal products, plants or plant products from the EU into Great Britain (GB), you need to check the TOM risk-level of your commodity to be ready for upcoming changes to border processes.
- As a reminder, there are 3 components of the SPS regime:
  1. **Pre-notification** - supports action at points of entry and targets activity for shipments posing biggest biosecurity risk. The detail allows traceability and allows authorities to identify and respond to an outbreak or emerging threat.
  2. **Export Health Certification (EHC)** - requires exporting countries to certify that goods have been produced to safe standards and have a process to monitor this via documentary checks.
  3. **Identity and physical checks** - usually at Border Control Post (BCP), allows health officials to check goods match the health certification, identify any trends of concern in non-compliance and to sample goods for pests and disease.
- With regards to the checks of low and medium risk animal products:

- Low risk animal products – will not require a EHC and not subject to regular border checks.
- Medium risk animal products - will require an a EHC to enter GB but still have less checks at the border.
- There will be a phased approach, through 3 milestones:
  1. **October 2023** - introduction of Export Health Certificates (EHCs) for medium risk animal products.
  2. **January 2024** - introduction of documentary and risk-based identity and physical checks on medium risk animal products. Medium and low risk animal products will benefit from reduced checks. Pilots for animal products trusted trader schemes will begin.
  3. **October 2024** - introduction of safety and security declarations for EU imports from 31 October 2024.

#### More on EHCs (Export Health Certificates):

- The health certificates that accompany certain goods on import to GB have been streamlined to make them more straightforward to complete, while maintaining existing food safety standards and ensuring information required for risk management and traceability in an incident continues to be provided.
- The new EHCs for certain products have now been published on gov.uk [here](#).
- These new EHCs will need to be used for affected goods from 31 October 2023.
- Once adopted for EU imports they will be available for RoW imports.
- There will also be e-certificates available in the future. There has been a project, with the aim of developing a fully digital certification system. The exercise programme closed on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and they are moving to the next phase of development.

#### More on E-Phytocertificates:

The government will be replacing manual paper-based phytosanitary certificates with digitalised certificates (ePhytos). Digitising the process will reduce the potential for error and fraud and allow data to be used to target risk-based checks. More information can be seen [here](#).

#### More on the Trusted Trader Scheme:

The TOM is considering 2 approaches by which importers could reduce the need for physical checks at the border for medium risk products. The first is the Accredited Trusted Trader Scheme. This would apply to UK based businesses, with good record of compliance and able to demonstrate excellent end to end controls of their supply chain. The Government will run pilots in the coming months to understand how these could work, the information required for entry and any risks from its operation. The pilots are set to run for 6-12 months before evaluation and a decision on whether to introduce them, likely to be mid 2024 at the earliest.

The second approach is a Technology Assurance Scheme (TAS). This will build on the work the Government has been piloting with importers on the Ecosystem of Trust. It will be more accessible than the Accredited Scheme but only offer a reduced rate of physical inspection at the borders rather than the wider delegated powers.