

FAQs – EU exit and moving equines

Background

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal in place, there will be changes to the way that equines are moved from the UK to the EU.

Equine owners will need to take steps to prepare for a potential no deal and should consult a vet at least six weeks ahead of when they are intending to move their equine to the EU.

This is because if the UK leaves the EU without a deal, the UK will become a third country. Third countries are required to be 'listed' by the relevant EU committee in order to export equines to the EU.

In the event that the UK had left the EU without a deal on April 12th, the EU had agreed to list the UK and place us in Sanitary Group A. Following the extension to Article 50, the appropriate committee of the European Commission would need to vote to list the UK again prior to a potential no deal EU Exit in the future. We are confident the UK will continue to meet the requirements for listing should that be required.

As a listed third country, UK equines would need to undertake blood tests for certain diseases within 30 days before travel to the EU. There would also be changes to the documentation required to move equines from the UK to the EU.

For the latest guidance visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-horses-and-ponies-special-rules>

FAQ's

Article 50 Extension

1) What processes apply during the extension to Article 50 that has been agreed by the Government?

The processes for moving equines between the UK and the EU remain the same as they are now during the extension. This means that equines that previously travelled on an Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) will continue to do so.

2) What about the Tri-partite Agreement?

The UK remains a part of the TPA during this period. Equines will continue to be able to travel between the UK and Ireland with only an equine ID document. Commercial documents (DOCOMS) will continue to be applicable for the movement of high health status horses between the UK and France.

3) Will equines need to enter the EU via Border Inspection Posts?

No. Equines will continue to be able to travel to the EU as they do now.

4) Will import processes also remain the same?

Yes, the processes for importing equines into the UK from the EU will also remain the same as they are now during the extension.

5) The EU provided the UK with listed status ahead of an April 12th exit. Would this apply for a later no deal exit?

In the event of a no deal exit, without listed status exports of equines could not take place. The UK has previously been granted listed status, but the appropriate committee of the European Commission would need to vote to list the UK again, in advance of a future no deal exit, following the extension to Article 50. We are confident the UK will continue to meet the requirements for listing should that be required.

6) Do owners still need to prepare for No Deal?

The UK could still leave the EU without a deal. The agreement reached between the EU and UK means that this would happen on October 31st if a deal is not agreed before that point.

7) Will you reimburse businesses and citizens for any no deal planning that turns out to be unnecessary?

It is the responsibility of businesses and citizens to decide what preparatory action they need to take to prepare for no deal.

We have taken extensive steps to provide businesses and citizens with advice and guidance aimed at helping to mitigate the potential impacts of no deal in good time. Our objective is to minimise disruption by taking unilateral action to prioritise continuity and stability, wherever possible and appropriate to do so.

This includes publishing 106 Technical Notices between August and October and specific supplementary guidance since then.

No Deal Planning

8) What will I need to do differently following a no deal exit to move my equine from the UK to the EU (incl. horses, ponies and donkeys)?

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, then equine owners will be required to make sure that their animal meets the requirements for travelling to the EU from a third country, as we will no longer be a part of the EU.

This means that owners will need to make sure all equines being moved to the EU from the UK;

- are tested for the absence of certain diseases within 30 days or less of their travel date;
- meet the residency and isolation requirements of movements to the EU from a listed third country;
- have the right documentation for travel, which will be an Export Health Certificate and in some cases a Government issued ID document
- enter the EU via a Border Inspection Post (BIP)

9) Will this mean increased costs for owners?

The testing requirements and additional veterinary time needed to prepare an equine for travel are likely to result in additional costs for owners. Exact costs will vary between vet practices.

There will be no cost for the identification document, where this is needed.

There is no charge for the Export Health Certificate, but you'll need to pay for your vet's services.

10) What will the blood testing requirements be?

The Commission listed the UK in Sanitary Group A in preparation for a no deal exit on April 12th. Although the UK's listed status would need to be voted on again the event of a future no deal, placement in Sanitary Group A would mean equines would need tests for:

- equine infectious anaemia within 30 days of travel for permanent moves
- equine infectious anaemia within 90 days of travel for temporary moves under 90 days of equines registered with a national branch of an international body for sporting and competition purposes
- equine viral arteritis within 21 days of travel for uncastrated male equines older than 180 days, unless they meet other specific vaccination requirements specified in the Model Health Certificate. These can be found in [EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2018/659](#).

11) How often will a blood test be required? Every time a horse moves, annually etc.?

This will depend upon the blood test. Tests must be taken within a certain number of days of travel, dependent on the type of move being undertaken. If an equine travels from the UK to the EU again within this time period, tests will not need to be re-taken.

12) When should I consult my vet to start preparations?

It is advised that you contact a vet at least six weeks before you intend to move your equine to the EU to allow sufficient time to prepare.

13) Do I need to book an Official Vet to carry out the blood tests?

No. Sampling can be carried out by any qualified veterinarian. But blood samples must be sent to the APHA laboratory in Weybridge for analysis.

However, only an Official Vet can authorise your equine for travel and issue the documentation needed for travel.

14) Will equines that had previously been moved under the TPA need to enter via a Border Inspection Post?

Yes. The requirement would apply to all equines entering the EU, including movements to Ireland and France previously made under the TPA. This is because this is a current EU requirement for all equines entering the EU from a third country.

15) Will I need to go through a BIP to come back in to the UK?

Equines originating in the EU travelling directly to the UK (or returning to the UK directly from the EU) will not need to enter the UK via a border inspection post.

16) How will I know which Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) will accept equines? Will a BIP be built at Calais?

The EU lists all BIPs and the products they are approved to handle on [its website](#). This list will be updated prior to EU exit, so you should check regularly for new information

In preparation for a no deal exit on April 12th, the EU approved [a number of new equine BIPs](#). These included Calais, Eurotunnel and Dublin Port. These approvals only applied in a scenario where the UK left the EU on April 12th. A further vote of the relevant EU committee would be needed in a future no deal scenario and it is likely the list of approved BIPs would differ.

17) Do the isolation requirements outlined on Gov.uk mean that my horse shouldn't compete ahead of a move to the EU?

In order to comply with pre-export isolation requirements for permanent exports or the temporary export of unregistered horses, owners will need to ensure that their equine is kept apart from other equines not of an equivalent health status for 30 days before export.

Owners are unlikely to be able to know with any certainty whether other equines attending a competition are of equivalent health status or not. You should therefore avoid these situations to ensure that isolation requirements are met and an export health certificate can be issued.

These requirements do not need to be met to temporarily export a registered horse for less than 90 days.

18) What will happen if the UK agrees a deal with the EU?

If the UK agrees a deal with the EU, then the process for moving equines from the UK to the EU will continue in the same way as now, including movements made under the TPA during any agreed implementation period.

19) Will I need to pay any additional tariffs? What about VAT?

The Department for International Trade has published draft information on the tariffs that will be levied on imports from the EU in the event of no deal. This information confirms that it is not the Government's intention to levy any tariffs on equines entering the UK from the EU.

You should consult the [HMRC guidance for exporters](#) for information on other changes to process such as VAT.

20) What about customs procedures in the EU?

You will need to follow all relevant EU customs procedures in the event of no deal. The [HMRC guidance for exporters](#) provides links to the relevant EU information on these systems.

21) What other HMRC/customs processes do I need to be aware of?

Before exporting, businesses must:

- register for an [Economic Operator Register and Identification \(EORI\) number](#)
- be aware of potential [EU trade tariff changes](#)
- find out the [commodity code for your goods](#)
- choose the correct [customs procedure code](#) (CPC) for your goods
- check the wider [HMRC guidance for exporters](#)

22) How do I get an Export Health Certificate?

The EHC will replace the Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) for exports to EU countries.

Before an EHC can be issued, equines will need to have been tested and found free of certain disease (see above).

For full details on Export Health Certificates and how to get one visit [gov.uk](#).

23) What documentation do I need for onward travel in the EU?

For each journey the Export Health Certificate should clearly show the equine's country of destination if this is different to the country of entry.

24) What is an Official Veterinarian and why my I use their services?

Official Veterinarian (OV) is the term used to describe veterinarians who perform work on behalf of the governments. In Great Britain they are also private practice vets. EU law requires that they sign export health certificates to authorise that the relevant animal health requirements have been met ahead of export. OVs are authorised by the Government for the specific work they undertake on its behalf.

If you need to find an OV you can:

- Check the [list of professionals who can certify export health certificates](#)
- ask at your local veterinary practice or vet
- email csconehealthovteam@apha.gov.uk (if you're in Northern Ireland contact [DAERA](#))

25) Will I need a Government issued equine ID document and, if so, how do I get this Government ID document?

Equines registered with a national branch of an international body for sporting or competition purposes will be able to travel using existing industry issued ID documents. All other equines will require a Government issued ID each time they move from the UK to the EU. This will change if the EU recognises the UK's studbooks and breed societies.

You will apply for your Government issued ID from APHA at the same time as your export health certificate. Details of this process are available on [Gov.uk](#).

26) Will the Government ID document replace existing equine passports?

No. All equines in the UK will still be required to have the equine passport, as now for domestic identification purposes.

Most equines will also need a Government ID document in order to travel to the EU. Those equines requiring Government issued ID will be required to travel to the EU with both this document and their equine passport.

27) Has the EU recognised the UK's studbooks? Does this change which equines need a Government issued ID?

The UK has applied to the EU for recognition of the UK's studbooks. The EU is yet to formally respond to this application.

If UK studbooks are recognised, equines in those studbooks will no longer require Government issued ID documents in order to travel from the UK to the EU.

28) What about export health certificates?

The EU has specific export health certificates for 'registered horses.' These health certificates have less onerous requirements than those for unregistered equines.

At the moment, only horses registered with a national branch of an international body for sporting and competition purposes are eligible for these certificates. If the EU recognises the UK's studbooks, horses in these studbooks would become eligible to use the EHCs for 'registered horses' and benefit from the less onerous requirements.

29) I'm authorised to transport livestock – what do I need to do to continue to transport equines to the EU following a no deal exit?

The EU would no longer recognise specific transport authorisations issued in the UK that may be required for transporting live animals. Transporters wishing to move live animals from the UK to the EU would need to appoint a representative within an EU country and apply to their relevant government department to obtain a valid Transporter Authorisation, Certificate of Competence, Vehicle Approval Certificate and, where necessary, a Journey Log.

Journey logs would need to be obtained from the EU country that is the initial point of entry into the EU for export. Exporters would need to present their transport documentation at a Border Inspection Post in the EU.

UK-issued transport documentation would remain valid for transport within the UK only.

30) What are the different elements of welfare documentation and how long are they valid for?

Currently, when transporting equines within the EU, transporters are required to hold the following documentation:

- Valid Transporter Authorisation (Renewed every 5 years)
- Valid Certificate of Competence (Valid for life)
- Valid Vehicle Authorisation (Renewed every 5 years)
- Have logged a 'Journey log' (Required for every international movement but not for registered horses)

Vehicle Authorisations and Driver Certificates of Competence need to be obtained before a transporter is issued with an Authorisation.

In January 2018, the European Commission confirmed that in the event of a no deal scenario when the UK exits the EU, they will no longer accept Transporter Authorisation, Certificates of Competence or Vehicle Approval Certificates issued by the UK authority.

Any transporter wishing to transport live animals into the EU will need to obtain new transport documentation issued by one of the EU27 Members States, which will then be valid in all Member States' territories. The length of time it will take to obtain authorisations will vary between Member States though in the UK a fully completed application is processed within 10 days.

- UK transporters wishing to transport live animals in the EU would need to appoint a representative within an EU country and apply to their relevant government department to obtain a valid Transporter Authorisation, Certificate of Competence, Vehicle Approval Certificate and, where necessary, a Journey Log;
- If Journey logs are required, they would need to be obtained from both APHA and the EU country that is the initial point of entry into the EU for export. Exporters would need to present their transport documentation at a Border Inspection Post in the EU;
- UK-issued transport documentation would remain valid for transport within the UK only.

31) Will I need an ECMT permit?

ECMT permits are required by third country hauliers to operate within the EU. DfT's expectation is that hauliers should not need an ECMT permit to continue doing a range of business in all, or much of the EU, even in the event of no deal. The Government has put in place a scheme to allocate these permits, as detailed under the Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Act 2018. UK hauliers have been applying for ECMT permits and the Government announced the initial results of the allocation to UK hauliers on 8 February.

As DfT expects UK hauliers to have other means of ensuing market access to the EU, hauliers will be allowed a period of time before these permits need to be formally taken and paid for. This approach has been agreed with road haulage stakeholders. The 2018 Act provides appropriate arrangements for distributing any new permits which may be required under any future bilateral arrangements, if these are needed.

32) Are permits required for non-commercial movements?

No, but commercial movements are broadly defined. If the activity being undertaken involves any direct or indirect financial activity then a permit is likely to be required.

33) What other arrangements do we need to have in place for staff to accompany horses to the EU or in transit?

You should consult the latest information [published by HMRC](#) for detail on the changes to travel for individuals in the event of no deal

34) Will my current UK issued transport documentation still be valid for transport within the UK?

Yes. UK issued transport documentation will still be valid for transport within the UK.

35) So do I need two sets of documentation?

Yes – UK issued documentation will be valid for transport within the UK only. For exporting live animals to the EU, you will need to obtain additional documentation which is valid for transport within the EU.

36) Should I travel through the major ports with my horses in a ‘No Deal’ scenario? What provisions will be in place to ensure horses aren’t stuck in queues

Defra are working on contingency plans to minimise disruption to animal transit in the event that we leave the EU without a deal. They are working with APHA to ensure transporters have robust contingency plans in place ahead of travel. These should include avoiding high risk routes and identifying contingency premises for resting the animals in the event that delays are encountered. However, anyone transporting animals must ensure that they are transported in conditions suitable for the species concerned. Regulations include a duty of care obligation for the person acting as transporter, which states: “No person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them”.

37) What changes will there be for importing equines to the UK from the EU?

The rules relating to the import of equines from the EU to the UK will not change in principle as a result of no deal. Horses which currently enter the UK from France using a Commercial Document (DOCOM), or travel from Ireland without any animal health documentation, there would be no immediate change to the current entry documentation. Registered horses travelling from the EU will also continue to be able to do so using health attestations.

Equines originating in the EU will not have to enter the UK via a Border Inspection Post

As part of the process of securing the UK’s listed status ahead of a potential April 12th no deal exit, it was agreed that the UK would have retained certain accesses to the EU’s Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES). This would have ensured that EU exporters were able to notify the UK authorities of incoming consignments. UK importers would still be required to notify UK authorities of incoming consignments in certain circumstances. You can find out more about this [here](#).

38) What about customs processes for imports?

Importers will also need to comply with UK customs procedures. In some cases importers may want to register for [simplified import procedures](#). Information from HMRC on customs procedures in the event of a no deal exit from the EU are available [here](#).

Owners regularly moving the same equine between the UK and EU may wish to consider applying for an ATA Carnet to further streamline customs procedures. More information is available [here](#).

39) What will happen to the Tripartite Agreement (TPA) when the UK leaves the EU?

The UK will no longer be a party to the Tripartite Agreement (TPA) when we leave the EU. If the UK leaves the EU without a deal then all equines being moved to the EU will need to meet the same requirements in order to travel.

40) How will the UK be able to negotiate a replacement for the TPA once we leave the EU?

Government are working closely with the equine industry to develop a proposition for a longer term replacement for the TPA, which would need to be agreed by the European Commission and the Member States as part of ongoing negotiations to refresh EU animal health legislation.

41) Does the High Health Status proposal not mean that these processes – blood tests, residency and isolation etc. – will not apply to horses that currently move under the TPA?

No. HHS is an industry led proposal of which Government is supportive. It's for the EU to decide whether to accept the proposal or not but in any event it will not come in on day one. Once we leave the EU, all equines will have follow the same processes, regardless of which EU country they are travelling to.