

Exports to the EU: Customs/handling Agents

Please see below further advice and guidance relating to the requirement for a customs/import agent in order to export to the EU:

Following several meetings with the French authorities held to identify the key documentation shortfalls Could we please remind you of the requirement that you have a designated customs/import agent in order to send a consignment to the EU. This agent has to be based in the EU and should notify the BCP of the arrival of any consignment you send to the EU. We have been asked by the French in particular to draw your attention to the need for that agent both to be available to be contacted to answer questions on your behalf and in some circumstances to be available to attend the BCP in person. For those of you who are used to exporting product from the UK to 3rd party countries outside the EU this will be familiar

What it does mean is that your agent needs to be relatively local to the BCP by which your consignment is entering, or at least to have an arrangement with an agent who is. We are aware that there is significant pressure on these agents and it may not be easy to find someone to take on this role, but we wanted to draw your attention to this need and to the risk that if there are any issues with your consignment at the BCP of entry then without a suitable agent who is contactable and available if necessary it may be more difficult to address whatever the issue is.

Close working with this agent is critical to a smooth entry as one of the main causes of non-compliance is inconsistency between the details entered on the notification on TRACES and those on the Export Health or Phytosanitary Certificate. Could we also please draw to your attention that when sending consignments into France you must enter the notification number off TRACES into the French smart customs system – this is what helps them determine which lorries enter which lane on arrival in France and without it your consignment is likely to be delayed at best.

Please may we take the opportunity to remind you of the attached Trader Notice which summarises exporting requirements.