

Border Control Posts in Wales

Background Note

December 2021



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

United Kingdom's Border Operating Model:

The [Border Operating Model \(BOM\)](#), published in June 2020 and updated in September 2021, outlines the UK Government's border arrangements for imports and exports following the UK's exit from the European Union and the end of the transition period. The new border arrangements set out in the BOM are a blend of devolved Welsh Government and reserved UK Government functions and involve multiple agencies, new infrastructure and systems, and new capabilities.

Part of the BOM consists of 'additional requirements' for the import of certain goods from the EU. These relate to a number of devolved responsibilities, such as Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) controls. These are measures which protect the UK's biosecurity and include checks on import of animals, plants and products of animal origin. These checks ensure public health, animal welfare and control diseases and invasive species.

The additional requirements for imports are to be implemented according to a phased approach, to allow time to establish the necessary infrastructure, known as Border Control Posts, at points of entry to Great Britain (GB). The measures will be introduced for a variety of goods in distinct stages.

Key Stages for the Introduction of Border Checks

The dates for the introduction of new border checks are outlined below. UK Government has recently announced a delay in the introduction of these stages:

- The requirement for pre-notification of agri-food imports will be introduced on 1 January 2022 as opposed to 1 October 2021.
- The new requirements for Export Health Certificates, which were due to be introduced on 1 October 2021, will now be introduced on 1 July 2022.
- Phytosanitary Certificates and physical checks on SPS goods at Border Control Posts, due to be introduced on 1 January 2022, will now be introduced on 1 July 2022.

What is a Border Control Post?

A Border Control Post (BCP) is an imports inspection post situated on or near to existing ports, which are designated and approved by the competent authority to carry out checks on SPS goods including animals, animal products, plants and plant products arriving at the GB border. These checks are to protect animal and public health, and animal welfare and control disease.

Due to Great Britain leaving the EU customs union where people and goods moved freely, from 1 July 2022 sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) goods will be subject to checks at a BCP. SPS import controls will be introduced in phases by commodity group from 1 July 2022 to November 2022 for animal products, plant, plant products and wood. From 1 July 2022 live animal checks will transfer from point of destination to designated border control posts, as facilities are ready and designated.

Border Control Posts in Wales

Background Note

December 2021



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

In Wales, permanent BCP facilities will not be in place by July 2022 and Welsh Government is focusing on introducing interim facilities which will allow commodities to continue to flow through the ports. This will ensure that the necessary checks are carried out to limit the risk to biosecurity and food safety.

This rule already applies to those animals and goods coming from a country outside the EU, sometimes referred to as Rest of World (ROW) trade.

To be designated by the competent authority to carry out checks and let goods into the country, BCPs must comply with specific requirements on facilities, equipment and staff. For example, a BCP must have:

- sufficient number of suitably qualified staff
- premises and facilities appropriate to the nature and volume of consignments
- equipment to enable checks, including IT equipment
- access to official laboratories
- arrangements in place to prevent risk of cross contamination and comply with biosecurity standards

These requirements are set out according to reserved EU legislation [Article 64\(3\) of Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 on official controls \(OCR\)](#).

To comply with biosecurity standards, a BCP must also meet specific requirements for:

- unloading areas
- inspection rooms/areas
- storage facilities
- changing rooms

These requirements are set out in [Commission Regulation 2019/1014](#).

Why is Welsh Government Developing Border Control Posts?

Without designated BCP facilities, the relevant type of goods cannot be imported at that port which could result in a loss of trade. Not all ports import the full range of SPS goods (for example, few ports enable the import of live animals other than pets). In Wales, Holyhead and ports in South West Wales currently import some type of SPS goods.

The investment in BCP facilities would normally be a commercial investment decision for ports with the Government's responsibility (UK Government in England and Welsh Ministers in Wales) limited to designating the facilities (ensuring their compliance with the OCR).

The BOM sets out the UK Government's approach to introducing a checking regime for SPS goods which have come from the EU, including the commitment that, where

Border Control Posts in Wales

Background Note

December 2021



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

facilities could not be accommodated within the boundary of the port, inland facilities would be provided by the Government. This applied to Eurotunnel, the port of Dover, Holyhead, Pembroke Dock, Fishguard and the Scottish port of Cairnryan.

What is Checked at a BCP?

Checks will be conducted on a proportion of the SPS goods entering Great Britain from the EU. SPS goods include live animals, products of animal origin, plants, plant products and wood.

Documentary Checks: these will be a combination of physical and remote checks including elements such as importers details, consignment information, purpose of movement, port information, supporting information (e.g. Export Health Certification), whether or not import is permitted, and any known markers to suggest ID / physical inspection is necessary.

Identity Checks: these include verifying the contents of vehicle match paperwork, customs seal check or more in depth check requirements, and checking the stamps, official marks, official labelling, and / or health / ID marks on the product or its packaging.

Physical Checks: these include checking whether the cold chain has been maintained during transport, wrapping / packing is intact, transport conditions suitable, and, labelling is correct. Organoleptic inspection (smell, colour). Simple physical or chemical tests (e.g cutting, thawing, cooking). Laboratory tests – microbiology etc. offsite.

Although documentary checks can generally be carried out remotely, some physical checks will be required, and these need to take place at a BCP to comply with regulations. These physical checks are expected to cover only a small sample of SPS goods (and vehicles carrying non-SPS goods will not be subject to checks at a BCP).

Standards are agreed and set at a UK level in collaboration with the various Government administrations and agencies, such as the four Chief Veterinary Officers and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (England and Wales).

Inspection Staff Include:

- Animal and Plant Health Agency (an England and Wales body) check live animals and plants and enforcement of checks within the BCP.
- Local Authority check fish, Products of Animal Origin and High Risk Food and Feed Not of Animal Origin

Border Control Posts in Wales

Background Note

December 2021



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

- Local Authority also undertake supportive work outside of the BCP (e.g. taking enforcement action)
- Forestry Commission check wood and forestry products
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) checks ornamental fish.