

Brexit taskforce meets to ensure businesses get the support they need

- Brexit Business Taskforce meets to identify challenges facing traders and find solutions to outstanding issues;
- Government will “pull out all the stops” to help businesses adjust to new rules;
- Compliance with border rules remains high and there are still no queues at ports as flows approach normal levels.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, will chair a meeting of the Brexit Business Taskforce today with leaders of the UK business community from the CBI, FSB, IoD, BCC and Make UK. He will reaffirm the government’s commitment to help companies adjust to new trading rules with the EU that have been in effect for nearly a month.

Overall businesses have adapted well to the changes. The latest data shows that border traffic is increasing day by day and there is no disruption at UK ports. The level of compliance is also very high with turnbacks stable at less than 5% of total traffic – either for failing to meet customs requirements or lack of a negative COVID test. Over the past week (19-25 January) there have been 371 enforcement notices issued either for failure to have a KAP or to comply with traffic management requirements.

While traders on the whole are managing the changes well, the government knows that some businesses are facing challenges with some of the new rules that are now in place. That’s why the government is:

- Meeting businesses from specific sectors across all parts of the UK weekly through the Brexit Business Taskforce chaired by Michael Gove;
- Managing dedicated HMRC exporting telephone and online helplines. The number is 0300 322 9434 and businesses can also speak to an adviser online at tax.service.gov.uk.
- Running regular webinars with policy specialists;
- Providing the [Brexit Checker Tool](#) on gov.uk which gives businesses a personalised list of actions that they need to take;
- Offering face-to-face support for exporters in delivered via a network of around 300 International Trade Advisers (ITAs);
- Setting up a taskforce with businesses and the devolved administration in Scotland to understand and address any practical issues facing Scottish businesses, including the seafood sector; and
- Offering support to businesses moving goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland through its Trader Support Service.

The above is in addition to a range of other support schemes available to businesses which include a guarantee scheme aimed at SMEs which means the government can provide an 80% guarantee on financial support from lenders to help with general exporting costs, up to the value of £25 million.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, said:

I would like to thank traders and hauliers for the preparations they made for the changes that came into force at the beginning of the year. There is currently no disruption at UK ports and goods continue to flow effectively.

However, some businesses are facing challenges with specific aspects of our new trading relationship with the EU, and I want to let them know that we will pull out all the stops to help them adjust. To this end, we have set up export helplines, invested millions in the customs intermediaries market, and continue to direct them to the [Brexit Checker Tool](#) to see exactly what actions they need to take.

We will continue to work hand in hand with the businesses community through the Brexit Business Taskforce to get them the tailored support to tackle any outstanding issues. Together we will seize new opportunities open to a fully independent global trading United Kingdom.

Ahead of the Brexit Business Taskforce meeting, BCC Director General Adam Marshall said:

As firms navigate new trading arrangements, Accredited Chambers of Commerce – through our network of trade experts – are uniquely positioned to feed in to government the on the ground challenges businesses in every region of the UK are facing.

Supporting and encouraging businesses to trade with Europe, and indeed the rest of the world, must be at the heart of our economic recovery. This taskforce represents an important opportunity to engage constructively with business to help develop solutions to keep trade flowing smoothly and ensure Britain remains truly global.