



Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

06 January 2022

Dear Huw,

The Official Controls (Temporary Measures) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2021

The above titled SI amended Retained Regulation (EU) 2020/466, which expired on 31 December 2021, and is required to allow the continuation of certain temporary measures to the system of official controls implemented as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic to be in place until 1 July 2022.

In relation to Wales, the amendment provides competent authorities with the continued ability to introduce temporary measures to help prevent disruptions to the food supply chain, ensuring that official controls can still be conducted in compliance with wider social distancing guidelines and procedures put in place to deal with staff shortages as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The SI is subject to the negative procedure, and was laid before Parliament on 04 January 2022 with a commencement date of 30 December 2021. UK Government explained the reasons for backdating it coming into force to be due to procedural issues with obtaining consent over recess, and due to the need to ensure continuity in the legality of temporary measures.

I am writing to let you know as these amendments are temporary emergency easements, I have given my consent, pursuant to Article 3(2B)(b)(i) of the retained Regulation (EU) 2017/625, to the Secretary of State to make this SI in relation to Wales. I have laid a Written Statement, which can be found at

<https://senedd.wales/media/psrdpd3t/ws-ld14807-e.pdf>

It is normally the policy of the Welsh Government to legislate in matters of devolved competence; however, in this instance I am giving consent owing to the urgent need to make these changes before 31 December 2021. I have previously consented to equivalent extensions to these regulations in January and May this year.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

These measures are temporary and do not amend existing Welsh legislation. There are functioning Common UK Frameworks in the policy areas of Animal Health and Welfare, Food and Feed Safety, and Plant Health that provide robust governance arrangements. There is consensus between policy officials of each government in Great Britain that these measures are beneficial, in the context of growing concerns in relation to Covid-19 and wider pressures on authorities conducting official controls. These measures will help protect these authorities and their staff from further disruption.

Not proceeding with or delaying this legislation could mean that competent authorities in Wales would not benefit from temporary official control measures when required. This could potentially, compromise their ability to deliver official controls those while minimising risks to staff from Covid-19 at a time where there are wider pressures on access to labour as a result of EU Exit, particularly in the veterinary workforce within the meat industry.

I am copying this letter to the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing and the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd