



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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**TITLE**            **Update on Border Controls**

**DATE**            **05 April 2023**

**BY**                **Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Economy**

I am making this statement on behalf of a number of colleagues with responsibility for different areas of biosecurity.

On 28 April 2022 I informed the Senedd that the UK Government was suspending the introduction of further border controls and conducting a review, intended to conclude in autumn 2023.

Although biosecurity is a devolved responsibility, the Welsh Government has been clear throughout about the advantages of a coherent approach across the United Kingdom. We have therefore worked with the other governments to develop proposals for a risk-based border regime for imports of goods from countries inside and outside the EU.

I am therefore pleased to announce that the UK Government published a [draft Border Target Operating Model](#) today which the Welsh Government supports.

The first implementation milestone proposed is the introduction of health certification on imports of medium risk animal products, plants, plant products and high risk food and feed of non-animal origin from the EU from 31 October 2023. At the same time, in Wales we will also introduce the requirement to pre-notify some additional categories of SPS goods imported from the Republic of Ireland, a requirement already in place elsewhere in GB since January 2022.

The second implementation milestone will see the introduction of documentary and risk-based identity and physical checks on medium risk animal products, plants, plant products and high risk food and feed of non-animal origin from the EU. In England these will begin from end January 2024.

The introduction of border controls for goods arriving in Wales from Ireland interacts with the new rules around imports from the island of Ireland following the Windsor Framework. The Welsh Government has therefore not yet agreed an implementation date for the physical checks. Instead the timeline for all west coast ports will be confirmed when the final Border

Target Operating Model is published. We are committed to giving traders, ports and delivery partners plenty of notice of the changes, so the draft Target Operating Model confirms that the physical checks will not be introduced until at least six months after pre-notification is introduced, to ensure smooth operations from the outset at these crucial entry points.

I realise that this means that Wales will be introducing these checks shortly after most English ports do so on 31 January 2024. Biosecurity remains important to us, so we will explore maintaining some of the existing checks of highest-risk plants and animals in the meantime. However, the risk from Irish imports in this short period is relatively low in the short-term.

I hope that stakeholders everywhere will take time over the next few weeks to engage with these proposals. I will of course provide a further update when the final version of the new Border Target Operating Model is published.

The Welsh Government will continue to press for the effective management of biosecurity, public health and food safety risks and I am determined that businesses and others are given sufficient time to prepare.

I will be making announcements about the new Border Control Posts required to serve Welsh ferry ports shortly, and I can confirm that work has begun to prepare for a BCP at Holyhead.

The Welsh Government continues to press the UK Government for funding to cover the set up costs of border controls in full. Where the Target Operating Model refers to UK investment of £1bn over the Spending Review period, I understand that this includes a range of related areas but it does not include the costs of BCPs in Wales.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.

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