



# Import of Live Animals returned to Great Britain

## Import Information Note (IIN) RATC/2

September 2023

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# 1. Important Information

Import Information Notes (IINs) are technical documents containing import requirements and are for use by importers and border officials.

Please be aware that import conditions may be updated due to changes in policy or legislation. Please ensure that you check the current version of the IIN as well as the IIN specific to your commodity [online](#).

Importers should note that the information given relates only to animal health and public health conditions of import. It does not give guidance on other conditions that may need to be met.

References to European Union legislation within this document are references to direct EU legislation which has been retained in Great Britain (retained EU law as defined in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018) and can be viewed on the UK legislation website ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)).

Please note that any links to legislation provided in this document are for information purposes only and may not be the most recent version.

References to imports into Great Britain any Import Information Note also includes imports into the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

References to trading partners includes non-EU, EU and EFTA countries.

The Border **Target Operating Model** (TOM) is the new approach to importing into Great Britain that will be progressively introduced from the end of January 2024. Guidance on the TOM can be found here:

[The Border Target Operating Model: August 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023)

## 2. Scope

All animals exported from Great Britain to a trading partner which are returning to Great Britain following a refusal of entry by a trading partner.

## 3. Country of dispatch

Any trading partner.

**Please note** that for the duration of the transitional import arrangements, the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (as amended) require notification to be given to the Secretary of State for the return of GB origin products or live animals, that are **rejected by the Authorities, at an EU Border Control Post**. Re-entry must be authorised in writing by the Secretary of State for products and live animals that are

assessed to be high risk. High risk means the products or live animals that are suspected of constituting a serious risk to human or animal health or animal welfare. For the duration of the transitional import arrangements, this risk assessment will be undertaken by APHA CIT. In practice, the GB exporter will need to contact APHA CIT (See section 13) who, subject to the completion of a risk assessment, will issue a written authorisation if deemed appropriate. For more information please see HMRC's website, cross-government guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/returning-goods-to-the-uk>

## 4. Documentation to accompany returned animal(s)

Any person who presents returned animals to an Official Veterinary Surgeon (OVS) shall in addition to the written authorisation also present the following documents:

- the export certificate relating to the returned animal(s), or a copy authenticated as true by the authority which issued it;
- a statement from the authorities in the trading partner of the reasons why the returned animal(s) was/were refused by the trading partner;
- details from the authorities in the trading partner of the premises in which the animal(s) was/were kept since leaving GB e.g. in quarantine/isolation etc;
- a declaration by the person responsible for the returned animal(s) that the import conditions relating to transport have been complied with in relation to the returned animal(s);
- a declaration by the person responsible for the animal(s) that the animal(s) has not been in contact with any other animal of a lesser health status since leaving GB.
- a copy of APHA's written authorisation that the animal(s) may re-enter Great Britain.

## 5. Veterinary checks

Currently, imports from the EU and certain imports from Greenland, Faroe Islands and EFTA countries do not need to enter Great Britain via a BCP and are not subject to veterinary checks at the border. APHA will continue to carry out identity and physical checks on EU imports of live animals and germplasm at their destination based on assessments of biosecurity and public health risks until further notice.

- Consignments from trading partners (other than the EU, and some imports from Greenland and EFTA countries) may only be imported through an approved Border Control Post (BCP).

- The person responsible for the consignment must give notice of the proposed entry of the consignment at least one working day before arrival (with a derogation to 4 hours before arrival if there are logistical constraints).
- The notification shall be made to the inspection staff at the BCP using the import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS). Further information regarding IPAFFS can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).
- Any other electronic means agreed with the BCP to inform about the intended arrival of a consignment in advance are not to be considered as an official pre-notification.

Following satisfactory checks at the BCP (for which a charge is levied), consignments may then circulate freely within Great Britain. If the consignment does not meet the import requirements, the consignment may be rejected and either re-exported or destroyed.

- [Further guidance on veterinary checks on live animals](#)
- [Border Control Posts](#)

The [Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011](#) (TARP 2011) (applicable in England) and EU Exit amendments to TARP 2011 can be found [here](#).

## 6. Movement of returned animal(s)

Returned animal(s) should not be removed from a BCP of arrival without the written authorisation of the duty Official Veterinary Surgeon.

The owner of the animal/person responsible shall give immediate written notification of the arrival at destination of the returned animal to the [local APHA office](#).

## 7. Welfare of animals during transport

Importers are reminded that they must comply with rules on the welfare of animals during transport. For information on the rules see GOV.UK.

- [Welfare of animals during transport](#)

## 8. Deaths of Animals in transit

If an imported animal dies in transit to, or at a port or airport in Great Britain, the person in charge of the animal must report the death to the local Regional Operations Director/Field Team Leader/Director of Operations (Scotland). The carcase of the animal can only be disposed of in accordance with any directions given by a veterinary inspector.

## 9. Rabies risks

This section is only applicable to imports of rabies susceptible species, which is all mammals.

Importers and owners of imported animals are warned of rabies risks and are asked to pay special attention to the health of any imported animal during its first six months in Great Britain. Symptoms of the disease in horses and other equidae are as follows:

- Itching of site of infected wound, the irritation often causing rubbing and biting of the parts, often tearing the flesh.
- Animal becomes alert, ears erect, and moving backwards as if listening intently in all directions.
- Efforts made to break halter and attack manger with teeth, which may become broken (may also attack handler and is capable of inflicting massive wounds). Refuses food and may swallow wood, straw and manure. Genital excitement is common.
- Paralysis first appears in the throat, unable to drink water. Paralysis of the legs soon follows.

If importers see these symptoms, details should be reported immediately to the [local APHA office](#). Rabies is, in any case, compulsorily notifiable to the authorities by law.

## 10. Safeguard measures

Emergency safeguard action can be taken at very short notice to prohibit or restrict the importation of certain animals from certain countries following an outbreak of disease or a public health issue. Information on the latest updates concerning disease outbreaks which may affect imports into the UK can be found on our Topical Issues page on the website.

Further information on the International and UK monitoring of animal diseases may be found on the animal disease monitoring website.

Importers can get the latest news about exotic notifiable disease outbreaks from the APHA subscription service.

- [Topical issues](#)
- [Animal diseases: international and UK monitoring](#)
- [Exotic notifiable disease outbreak subscription service](#)

## 11. Great Britain and Crown Dependencies

Trade movements between Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are treated as national movements and, as such, no animal health conditions are applicable. However, we recommend checking the Isle of Man, Jersey or Guernsey websites if additional import rules apply for imports into these respective regions:

- Isle of Man: <https://www.gov.im/categories/business-and-industries/agriculture/>
- Island of Jersey: <https://www.gov.je/Industry/FarmingFishing/FarmingLivestock/Pages/default.aspx>
- Island of Guernsey: <https://gov.gg/article/119655/Imports--Exports>

## 12. Legislation.gov.uk

Consolidated legal texts, which integrate the basic instruments of retained EU legislation with their amendments and corrections in a single, non-official document, are available. Each consolidated text contains a list of all legal documents taken into account for its construction.

You can search for consolidated texts by inputting the 'document number' and 'year' and then clicking the option 'All UK Legislation (including originating from the EU)' on [legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk).

Once you press 'search', you can find the relevant legislation listed with the full title of the legislation. Once you have selected the legislation, you may see the following message at the top of the page:

"Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made to XXX. Those changes will be listed when you open the content using the Table of Contents below. Any changes that have already been made to the legislation appear in the content and are referenced with annotations."

Please note that the consolidated text may not contain the latest amendment to the legislation, as it takes several weeks for this to be updated. EU Exit amendments to legislation may take several months too. We advise to read the legislation alongside the EU Exit amendments made in the below UK laws:

- [The Import of, and Trade in, Animals and Animal Products \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Official Controls \(Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)

- [The Official Controls \(Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Aquatic Animal Health and Alien Species in Aquaculture, Animals, and Marketing of Seed, Plant and Propagating Material \(Legislative Functions and Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Animals, Aquatic Animal Health, Invasive Alien Species, Plant Propagating Material and Seeds \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Trade in Animals and Animal Products \(Legislative Functions\) and Veterinary Surgeons \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019](#)

Texts provided in this section are intended for information only. Please note that these texts have no legal value. For legal purposes please refer to the texts published in [legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk).

Further information on changes in relation to EU legislation and UK law can be found on [legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk). Please continue to use legislation.gov.uk to find EU retained law applicable to Great Britain. Please avoid using the EU Commission website for information on imports into Great Britain.

## 13. Contact for further information

For further information regarding import requirements, contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Imports team:

Centre for International Trade - Carlisle  
Eden Bridge House  
Lowther Street  
Carlisle  
CA3 8DX

Email: [Imports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:Imports@apha.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 200 301



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The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government.