



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
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Our reference: MC2020/09933

*Des Zolmerie,*

30th July 2020

**To all businesses moving goods between the UK and the EU and between GB and NI**

I write today to emphasise the need for businesses to prepare for the new arrangements for trading with the EU in January 2021, and the steps they need to take to help them to continue to prosper next year.

As you know, the United Kingdom left the European Union on 31 January of this year, delivering on the result of the largest single vote in the country's history. On 12 June, this Government formally confirmed to our negotiating partners that we would not seek an extension to the transition period and emphasised our desire to intensify negotiations in order to reach a deal. The transition period ends on 31 December 2020, and on 1 January new trading arrangements with the EU will come into force.

On 13 July, I announced the publication of a new Border Operating Model in which I laid out plans for the operation of a full external border as a sovereign nation. I want to impress upon you the importance of using the next 6-month period to prepare for leaving the customs union and for the application of the United Kingdom Global Tariff. If you have not done so already, now is the time to *Check, Change and Go*.

All businesses must take the following steps to ensure they are prepared:

1. Speak to your local chamber of commerce, they are experienced in International trade and can help guide you
2. Register here for an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number, you need this to Import and Export
3. Check the terms of your existing contracts with your customers and suppliers
4. Plan how your business will deal with customs declarations
5. Appoint a customs broker/intermediary to make customs declarations on your behalf
6. Check if customs guarantees and simplified procedures will be helpful for your business and complete the application processes
7. Identify the staff that can be trained on customs and apply for HMRC grant funding
8. Use the guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/transition>

As we committed in the Command Paper, we will be issuing further guidance to Northern Ireland traders in the coming weeks, including detail of the extensive end-to-end support we will offer to those engaging in new administrative processes.

My colleagues across government, at both ministerial and official level, will continue to work with industry leaders such as the British Chambers of Commerce over the coming months to make sure that you have the right information to prepare in a timely manner.

Many of you have worked hard to weather the impacts of COVID-19 on your businesses, and I would like to thank you for the efforts you have gone to to mitigate the impact of the virus on your sectors. As we recover and rebuild, now is the time to take these steps to prepare your business, and the country as a whole, so that we are ready to seize the opportunities available as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union.

**With every good wish,**

Yours,  
Michael

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