

TSS User Guides

Live Animal Movements to Northern Ireland

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HM Revenue
& Customs



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If there are any words or acronyms in this document that are unfamiliar, visit the [Jargon Buster](#) or use the search tool on the [Northern Ireland Customs & Trade Academy \(NICTA\) website](#) to find a definition.

Throughout this document there will be words highlighted in a **bold, blue colour**. This indicates a TSS Portal field name that will support you in completing the actions required.

1 Introduction

Goods are controlled if they are subject to special health, licensing or environmental controls, and as such must be placed under customs control when crossing the external European Union (EU) border to Northern Ireland (NI).

Controlled goods must be presented at the external EU border for specific pre-clearance or control at a Point of Entry (POE).

Goods shown as restricted in the [Northern Ireland Online Tariff](#) on GOV.UK must be entered as controlled goods and be accompanied by full supporting documentation such as Home Office licences, veterinary certificates and phytosanitary certificates.

If you are moving controlled goods, you are required to provide information at consignment (header) and item level when completing an Entry Summary Declaration (ENS).

See [Guidance on controlled goods and the Online Tariff Tool](#) on NICTA for further details.

This guide focuses specifically on the movement of live animals as controlled goods using Trader Support Service (TSS) supported declarations.

Imports of live animals and products of animal origin are controlled to prevent the spread of disease into Northern Ireland.

Note: Northern Ireland is in the same Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) zone as the EU, therefore any consignments of live animals entering NI are treated as entering the EU SPS zone from a Third Country.

2 Requirements for moving live animals

2.1 Export Health Certificates (EHCs)

Export Health Certificates (EHCs) and import licences are required when moving live animals.

The EHCs and licences state what health and import conditions must be met so that animals or animal products can be imported.



You will need an EHC for each animal product you're moving to NI and/or each product type. To apply for an EHC, depending on the type of journey, visit the links in the following sections of this guide:

- [End-to-end journey for live animal movements from GB to NI](#)
- [End-to-end journey for live animal movement from the EU to NI via the GB land-bridge](#)
- [End-to-end journey for live animal movement into NI from Rest of the World \(RoW\) countries](#)

See [Moving licensed goods into or out of Northern Ireland](#) on GOV.UK for further information.

2.2 Pre-notification on TRACES NT and Import of Products, Animal, Food and Feed (IPAFFS)

In addition to EHCs and licences, you are required to declare movements of live animals into NI prior to shipment using the EU's TRACES NT system. To register, visit [TRACES NT](#).

Movements of live animals from the EU via the Great Britain (GB) land-bridge require pre-notification on the **Import of products, animals, food and feed system** (IPAFFS). Detailed requirements for the EU-GB-NI journey are outlined in the [End-to-end journey for live animal movement from the EU to NI via the GB land-bridge](#) section of this guide. To register, visit [IPAFFS](#) on GOV.UK.

If you have not pre-notified the Health Authorities Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs / Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA/DAERA) before your live animal movement commences, your goods may be held at port until an inspection can take place. This applies for all movements to NI including movements from EU via the GB land-bridge and Rest of the World (RoW).

2.3 Documentary and physical inspections

Get your goods checked at a NI POE.

You must route via a POE in NI if you are moving live animals. This is a legal requirement.

Points of Entry for moving live animals in NI include:

- Belfast Port – designated for Equine (E) animals, Ungulates (U) animals (excluding bovine, ovine, caprine or porcine species) and Other (O) live animals
- Larne Port – designated for Equine (E) animals, Ungulates (U) and Other (O) live animals

As part of your TRACES NT / IPAFFS entry you need to specify at which port your goods will enter NI. Ensure you route via the POE specified on your pre-notification.



Document and physical inspections of live animals are conducted by enforcement authorities at the POE. These checks are made to protect animal health and welfare as well as protecting public health.

If your animal fails inspection because of risks to animal or public health, it may be returned to its place of origin, sent to a designated facility for treatment or quarantine, or in serious cases the animal will be put down.

If your consignment is rejected at a POE in NI, you should email the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). You can find [contact numbers and email addresses for the Animal and Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#) on GOV.UK.

If your animal is rejected at a POE in NI and includes cattle from NI, you must submit a notification on IPAFFS. You must make sure you meet animal welfare standards when transporting animals.

2.4 Endangered animals

You must follow additional rules when moving endangered species.

You must apply for a permit or certificate to move any living or dead animal (or any of its parts) that is listed in the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#).

- Use [Species+](#) to find out if your specimen comes from a species on the CITES list
- If Species+ states the animal is banned, you cannot export it
- If the species is listed, you will need a CITES permit to export the animal from the UK
- If you regularly take endangered animals abroad, you could use a [Travelling Exhibition Certificate](#) instead of a permit

3 End-to-end journey for live animal movements from GB to NI

3.1 Pre arrival

Ensure you are registered on TRACES NT before your live animal movement commences. To register visit [TRACES NT](#).

Notify TRACES NT of your movement at least 24 hours in advance of arrival. This notification includes raising the relevant Common Health Entry Document (CHED-A) form on TRACES NT and uploading the EHC. For guidance on how to obtain an EHC for movements from GB to NI visit [Get an export health certificate](#) on GOV.UK.

For TSS to generate your Simplified Frontier Declaration (SFD) when using the TSS Simplified Procedure (RoRo movement from GB to NI), you will be required to submit and upload the



CHED-A and any other licences (for example, CITES) on your Entry Summary Declarations declaration at goods line level. For more information, see the [Data guide: TSS declaration data requirements](#) and the [ENS Step-by-step guide: Standard Process and Consignment First Process](#) on NICTA.

TSS will then generate a Simplified Frontier Declaration and provide you with a Movement Reference Number (MRN) number for your Entry Summary Declarations and Simplified Frontier Declaration. The MRN is required by the haulier when the journey commences to register the consignment movement onto the Goods Vehicle Movement Service (GVMS) and obtain a Goods Movement Reference (GMR). There is guidance on [Creating a Goods Movement Reference](#) on NICTA.

3.2 Arrival in NI

On arrival to an NI Port of Entry, the haulier must route to a POE for inspection – either Belfast or Larne Port as specified on your pre-notification CHED-A document raised in TRACES NT.

At the appointed POE, a document and a physical inspection of the live animal movement is completed by health authorities (DAERA officers).

If all the checks are successful, the consignment is cleared and the decision is entered in Part 2 of the CHED-A, which is provided to you in electronic form. Your consignment is then free to move to its destination.

When the consignment clears, TSS will contact you and request that you complete a Supplementary Declaration in the TSS Portal by the tenth calendar day of the month following the goods movement. Find out more about how to complete your Supplementary Declaration in the [Supplementary declarations: Step-by-step guide](#) on NICTA.

If the consignment does not meet the requirements, it will be rejected entry and may be returned to its place of origin, sent to a designated facility for treatment or quarantine, or in serious cases the animal will be put down.

When a consignment is rejected at a POE in NI, you should email APHA's Centre for International Trade (CIT) (see [Contact APHA](#) on GOV.UK). You must state in your email that you wish to return your animal to GB.

If your consignment is rejected at a POE in NI and includes cattle from NI, you must submit a notification on IPAFFS.



4 End-to-end journey for live animal movement from the EU to NI via the GB land-bridge

You do not need a GB transit EHC for this journey; however, you must attach a copy of the Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) created in TRACES NT to your IPAFFS pre-notification.

The IPAFFS pre-notification will not replace your intra EU movement on TRACES NT.

The pre-notification step is essential, so the health authorities are aware your consignment of live animals originates from the EU and does not require full SPS Third Country requirements as regards to certification.

Live animals transiting through GB must:

- Be pre-notified on the Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS)
- Have an Intra ITAHC created in TRACES NT

Note: You do not need a GB transit health certificate.

4.1 Pre arrival

Ensure you are registered on [TRACES NT](#).

Obtain an EU ITAHC via TRACES NT. This will serve as advance notification to the GB authorities that these animals are entering GB from the EU. Ensure the ITAHC is stamped '**only for transit...**' at the EU point of exit.

Register for [IPAFFS](#) on GOV.UK to notify the enforcement authorities about your movement.

Notify IPAFFS of your movement at least 24 hours in advance of arrival and attach a copy of the ITAHC to the IPAFFS notification. Step-by-step [Video Guidance](#) for IPAFFS pre-notification is also available on YouTube.

Ensure the consignment of Live Animals is accompanied throughout the journey by a hard copy of the ITAHC issued by the exporting EU Member State.

All live animals will need:

- Transporter authorisation, which is issued by the APHA – for more information contact APHA in GB: CITCarlisle@apha.gov.uk and [DAERA](#) in NI.
- Certificates of competence – for more information visit [Transporting animals in Great Britain](#) on GOV.UK.
- Vehicle approval certificates from the relevant bodies in GB and NI.

You need an EU and UK journey log if you're moving cattle, sheep, pigs, goats or unregistered horses for trade and your journey is more than 8 hours.



The maximum permitted journey time varies by species and life stage. A consignment of animals may need to be rested for 24 hours. There are approved control posts where animals can be unloaded.

You must follow the [animal welfare](#) requirements on GOV.UK for animals transiting GB.

4.2 Arrival in NI

The person in NI responsible receiving the goods must email APHA at ImportsRiskManagement@apha.gov.uk to confirm that the consignment has left GB territory. Use the subject line 'Confirmation that a consignment has left GB territory'.

The email needs to include the following information:

- IPAFFS notification reference number
- Details of means of transport
- Date the consignment has left Great Britain territory
- Copy of commercial documents (bill of lading or airway bill)

Ensure the consignment arrives at the correct approved POE in NI and is presented for inspection together with hard copies of all relevant documentation. On arrival, DAERA officers will conduct veterinary checks on all live animals at the POE in NI – Belfast and Larne port.

If all the checks are successful, the consignment is cleared and the decision is entered in Part 2 of the CHED-A, which is provided to you in electronic form and the consignment is free to move to its destination.

You or your customs agent also need to complete a Full Frontier Declaration (FFD) or a Supplementary declaration (SDI) if using the TSS Simplified Procedure (RoRo movement from GB to NI) using the TSS Portal.

See the [Data guide: TSS declaration data requirements](#) on NICTA for the data requirements on Full Frontier Declarations. Ensure the IPAFFS pre-notification document CHED-A is entered in the **Document Reference** section preceded by the country code and licence type CHD.

5 End-to-end journey for live animal movement to NI from Rest of the World (RoW) countries

Third Country import requirements apply to all live animal consignments entering NI which originate from ROW (excluding EU).



Live animals from ROW (excluding EU) must be imported via an approved POE, where they must undergo veterinary checks before they are allowed to enter NI.

The following locations must be used for live animal consignments:

- Belfast Port – Designated for Equine (E) animals, Ungulates (U) animals (excluding bovine, ovine, caprine or porcine species) and Other (O) live animals
- Larne Port – Designated for Equine (E) animals, Ungulates (U) and Other (O) live animals

Live animals can usually only be imported from countries which are on the approved third country [import list for animal species](#).

5.1 Pre arrival

Ensure you are registered on TRACES NT. To register visit [TRACES NT](#).

Notify TRACES NT of your movement at least 24 hours in advance of arrival. This notification includes raising the relevant CHED-A form on TRACES NT and uploading the EHC issued at the country of dispatch.

The pre-notification step is essential, so DAERA knows that the consignment of live animals originates from the ROW (excluding EU) and full SPS Third Country requirements will apply as regards to certification.

5.2 Arrival in NI

Ensure your live animal consignment arrives at the correct approved POE in NI, which is declared in your TRACES NT pre-notification. On arrival enforcement authorities will conduct full documentary and veterinary checks of your consignment.

If all the checks are successful, the consignment is cleared and the decision is entered in Part 2 of the CHED, which is sent to you in electronic form and the consignment is free to move to its destination.

You or your customs agent also need to complete a Full Frontier Declaration (FFD) using the TSS Portal.

See the [Data guide: TSS declaration data requirements](#) for the data requirements on Full Frontier Declarations and ensure the TRACES NT pre-notification document CHED-A is entered in the **Document Reference** section preceded by the country code and licence type CHD.

6 I need to know more

For queries on live animal movements, you can consult the [TSS Contact Centre](#) for support on 0800 060 8888.



There is a comprehensive set of guides available on NICTA for you to download and read:

- [Guidance on controlled goods and the Online Tariff Tool](#)
- [ENS Step-by-step guide: Standard Process and Consignment First Process](#)
- [Data guide: TSS declaration data requirements](#)
- [How to create and submit a consignment with controlled goods \(video\)](#)
- [How to use the TSS Portal](#)
- [Goods Description guide](#)

See also:

- [Moving livestock](#) on DAERA.NI.GOV.UK

7 Changes to guidance and policy

Last updated September 2025.

September 2025: Hyperlink added for government guidance on moving licensed goods into or out of Northern Ireland, and CERTEX introduction.

June 2025: Guide updated and aligned for Windsor Framework.

December 2024: Update to hyperlinks.

July 2022: Addition of section on changes to guidance and policy.

January 2022: Updates to section on live animal movements from Rest of World excluding the EU.

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