

## **Contingency Plans for Brexit Withdrawal Agreement and Transportation of Horses**

**1 February 2019, UK, The British Racing and Breeding industries, represented by the Thoroughbred Industries Brexit Steering Group, hope that a Withdrawal Agreement between the United Kingdom and European Union can be reached in the coming weeks. Any implementation period following a withdrawal agreement would, for example, see a continuation of the current free movement of thoroughbreds between Britain, Ireland and France until at least December 2020 with work proceeding on longer-term arrangements beyond any such period. However, we are making no assumptions and therefore ruling out no scenarios.**

As such, we are increasing our preparations for the event of the UK's departure from the EU on 29 March 2019 without a deal. We will be communicating further and formally with our stakeholders and participants over the next month with practical guidance and advice, and continue our regular contact with UK Government, colleagues elsewhere in the horse sector, and the Irish and French thoroughbred industries, in particular.

We have had productive discussions with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in the last two weeks and are encouraged by the level of 'no deal' planning in place.

An online hub to provide guidance to industry participants on what to do as the UK leaves the EU has been set up on the BHA website (<https://www.britishhorseracing.com/regulation/brexit/>), collating industry relevant information which is regularly updated as further advice from government departments becomes available.

Julian Richmond-Watson, Chairman of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (TBA) and of the British Thoroughbred Industries Brexit Steering Group, said:

“With continuing uncertainty around the outcome of the Brexit negotiations, it is only right that the thoroughbred industries prepare for all scenarios, including a No Deal which we hope can be avoided. We have been very encouraged by our engagement with Government around preparations for a No Deal, and endorse its stance that current systems for horse movement into the UK will continue in these circumstances.”

## **Thoroughbred movement**

We would reiterate that the UK Government has made clear that in the event of no deal, thoroughbreds will still be able travel freely into the UK from Ireland and France, as current systems will be replicated. These current systems under the pre-existing Tripartite Agreement work well and have evolved over decades. They facilitate and foster growing international competition and allow for smooth and efficient trade, most importantly prioritising the welfare of our horses and reflecting their high health, high welfare status.

We fully support and lobbied for this position adopted by the UK Government as the pragmatic and right thing to do and to minimise unnecessary disruption.

## **The UK's third country status post-Brexit**

We have recently had confirmation from the Government that **if the UK does leave the EU without a deal then it will be treated as a third country**, and in order to be prepared for all possible outcomes, the UK Government has submitted its application for listing as a third country to continue exporting live animals and animal products to the EU after Brexit. The Commission's recently published Contingency Action Plan states that: *"On the basis of the EU veterinary legislation, the Commission will – if justified – swiftly list the United Kingdom [as a third country], if all applicable conditions are fulfilled, so as to allow the entry of live animals and animal products from the United Kingdom into the European Union"*.

We understand that the technical discussions between Defra officials and the European Commission are currently ongoing and are hopeful that they will reach a positive and timely conclusion. Upon the UK achieving such listing the process for thoroughbreds returning or traveling to, for instance, Ireland or France, will become clearer, and the relevant guidance will be provided.

## **Transport**

The Government's priority continues to be to secure a deal which maintains the current, liberalized access arrangements for transporters, and in the meantime is working to ensure the UK is ready for all exit scenarios.

There was a significant concern within the industry that the administrative barriers that the EU could apply for transporters as the UK becomes a third country would add to the challenges with the movement of horses in the event of a no deal. The European Commission however has recently published proposals that would allow UK haulers to continue carrying goods into the EU until the end of 2019 if there is no deal, without the need for an ECMT permit. The UK Government has welcomed the proposal as a positive step forward for UK haulers and intends to reciprocate.

Additional requirements for road travel within the EU for UK citizens and registered companies

remains likely, whether in the short or medium term, and seeking clarity on the practicalities for companies and individuals transporting thoroughbreds continues to be a priority area for the Steering Group. We will provide a further update in this area as soon as there is greater clarity.

## **Stud Book Recognition**

**As of 1 November 2018, a new EU regulation came into place for horses coming from Non-EU countries.** This legislation states that, if a Stud Book or Breed Society from a third country is not listed as being permitted to trade with the EU, horses of that country are not allowed to enter any EU country or to be registered in that country.

**Weatherbys has lodged an application with Defra for submission to the EU Commission for the General Stud Book** to be recognized by the EU Commission and to be added to its list of breeding bodies. In requesting a listing, we agree to respect the legal right of entry in the General Stud Book of Thoroughbreds from stud books in EU Member States.

## **European Union citizens working in the British thoroughbred industry**

**The UK Government has launched a website outlining details of the EU Settlement Scheme for European Union citizens, and their families, to continue living in the UK after 30 June 2021 with either settled or pre-settled status. The application process opens in full on 30 March 2019 and further guidance will be provided in advance of that date.**

The Steering Group has been making representations, with the support of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), to the ongoing Migration Advisory Committee process to ensure as far as possible that the requirements of our industry of the future UK immigration system are satisfied. This includes a submission to the recently closed consultation on the composition of the Shortage Occupation List to apply for the Racing industry to be returned to the list. If that were to happen, it would mean that those wishing to come to the UK to work in the racing industry could be processed far more quickly.

### Useful links

Racing industry guidance – [The UK leaving the EU: Racing Industry Guidance](#)

UK Government Guidance – [Taking Horses Abroad if there's no Brexit deal](#)

European Commission – [Contingency Action Plan](#)

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