



To: All IPPC contact points

Date: 4 April 2024

Dear Colleague,

Update on the publication of the Common User Charge Rate

The introduction of new Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) import controls as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) are fundamental to protecting the UK's food supply chain, our food and farming industries, and our natural environment from biosecurity risks including the costly outbreaks of diseases. Therefore, charges on eligible imports coming into GB are necessary to fund the operation of planned government-run Border Control Post (BCP) facilities serving Port of Dover and Eurotunnel Le Shuttle to make sure physical checks on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) imports can be undertaken safely and securely.

From 30 April 2024, in line with the introduction of risk-based identity and physical checks BCPs set out in the BTOM, we can confirm that the UK Government will administer a Common User Charge (CUC) on SPS imports from all countries entering the UK through the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel Le Shuttle in Kent and which are eligible for checks at government run BCPs.

The Common User Charge is:

- a charge for SPS imports including plants and plant products entering GB through the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel Le Shuttle which are eligible for checks at a government-run BCP. The charge will apply to all eligible imports whether or not the import is selected for a physical check at planned government-run BCP facilities.
- is intended to recover the full costs of operating the planned government-run BCP facilities serving Port of Dover and Eurotunnel Le Shuttle. Operating costs include all expenses required to run the facility e.g., the operator contract, utilities, maintenance, business rates and waste management in line with legislation ([Article 79](#) and [81](#) of the retained Official Controls Regulations 2017).

I would like to inform you that the final CUC rates and approach to charging for plants and plant products (P&PP) has now been confirmed taking into account all industry views and responses to the consultation the UK government ran in July 2023.

The Confirmed Common User Charge Rate

The Common User Charge (CUC) rate will be a standard flat rate applied to *each* commodity line within a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) dependent on its SPS risk

categorisation – high, medium, or low. A Common Health Entry Document with multiple and differing risk commodity lines, will incur the Common User Charge rate that applies to the highest risk SPS commodity on the CHED. The charge will apply up to a maximum of five commodity lines. Any additional commodity lines (in excess of the maximum of five commodity lines subject to the charge), will be exempt from the Common User Charge, irrespective of their risk categorisation.

The maximum Common User Charge a trader will pay is £145. Businesses will **not** be charged VAT on the Common User Charge rates.

The charge has been calculated by dividing the operational costs of planned government-run BCP facilities by the forecast volume of import commodities eligible for SPS checks. This approach has been adopted because it flattens the Common User Charge rate and spreads the cost to be recovered across the maximum number of imports. This approach distributes the cost across business of all sizes and provides a high level of predictability on costs for all importers. The Common User Charge rates for importers from 30 April 2024 have been provided in Annex I.

I would appreciate it if you could share this letter and the Annex with the traders in your countries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Spence', written in a cursive style.

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Annex I: Common User Charge Rates for Plants

Common Health Entry Document (CHED) type	EU or Rest of World import entering through Port of Dover or Eurotunnel	Transit entering or exiting the UK through Port of Dover or Eurotunnel
Low-risk P&PP	No Common User Charge	
Medium-risk P&PP	£29 per commodity line in a CHED	No Common User Charge
High-risk P&PP		
Maximum 5 Charges per CHED	Maximum Common Use Charge cost to business per CHED: £145	

The charge will not apply to P&PP which will be checked at designated Control Points.

Any questions regarding the Common User Charge should be directed to Spencer Draper, spencer.draper@defra.gov.uk