

It's time to return to the landbridge

HOW TRANSITS ARE BECOMING A MORE POPULAR OPTION FOR MOVEMENTS ACROSS THE CONTINENT

January 2021 saw a reduction in the volumes of traffic using the UK landbridge. As new Brexit Regulations were a major concern for traders, warehouses were stockpiled to allow for any potential bottlenecks and with the increasing number of COVID infections across Europe, the feeling among businesses in Ireland was that direct routes were safer with less disruption than travelling via the UK.

Three months on and a steady flow of traffic back to the landbridge is becoming more evident. Warehouse stockpiles have been depleted, COVID infection rates are slowing and customs officials, businesses and brokers have a better understanding of the new world of Brexit requirements and customs paperwork.

The landbridge is again a very accessible option for hauliers and businesses wanting to access the EU from Ireland through the UK. According to EU statistics almost 15,000 transit declarations were registered in and out of Ireland during the month of March. This is a significant increase from January and February's volumes which totalled 18,000 collectively. Indications are that transiting across the UK is a more efficient and cost-effective means of accessing the EU.

At SGS, we are fast establishing ourselves as the trusted partner for facilitating transit movements for Irish businesses. We have been operating in Ireland for over 40 years and as the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company, are recognized as the global benchmark for quality and integrity. With more than 89,000 employees worldwide, we operate a network of more than 2,600 offices and laboratories across the globe.

In 2005, SGS developed a unique multimodal full e-service for transit called TransitNet. This solution allows users to easily manage their customs transit requirements without having to buy software, apply for a customs guarantee or have an in-house customs expert. Transit declarations can be created from both NCTS and EEA/EU countries. Covering 25 countries and with over 14,000 satisfied clients, over 950,000 transit declarations have been processed globally and over 100,000 export and import declarations have been processed in the Netherlands, Belgium and UK using TransitNet each year up to 2020. Brexit is already accelerating these volumes even further.

SGS Ireland launched TransitNet for Irish customers on January 1st 2021 to help them meet their Brexit requirements. To submit a transit declaration, companies need a comprehensive customs guarantee along with customs-adapted software.

These can be difficult and expensive to obtain and maintain. In Ireland, SGS TransitNet provides a unique package that offers Irish companies a cheaper, more efficient, e-customs transit service – without the need to have your own guarantee or software. The service is supported by SGS teams located in Ireland and across Europe. For trucks that carry goods via the UK landbridge from Ireland and Northern Ireland with a destination in Europe, a T2 transit declaration is required.

Approved clients of SGS TransitNet can open T2 declarations from Ireland under the simplified procedure from ports including Dublin and Rosslare. TransitNet clients can also submit transit declarations from Northern Ireland from the ports of Belfast, Larne and Warrenpoint.

In addition, clients can also use TransitNet for return journeys creating transits out of the EU returning across the UK landbridge where they can then terminate using the Revenue PBN system at the port of entry in Ireland.

Tom Ferris, consultant economist, has written widely on Brexit and transport. He is of the view that the "pendulum will swing back to the use of the landbridge by Irish traders, but not to the same extent as was evident up to 31st December 2020. It is a matter of traders adapting to the changed circumstances and ensuring that they are fully conversant with the customs and administrative requirements of a post-Brexit world".

One of the benefits offered by the landbridge is superior transit times. According to the IMDO Report "The Implications of Brexit on the Use of the Landbridge", 12th November 2018 "The landbridge is the quickest way to transport freight to and from the continent each year; it takes less than 20 hours, compared to the 40-hour roll-on roll-off direct sea route and the 60-hour load-on load-off direct sea route. These times have changed with the advent of new routes however, transiting from Ireland to Rotterdam or Calais across the landbridge is still a much quicker option than using the direct ferries. When preparation times and delivery locations are taken into consideration the landbridge can also be a much more economical option".

While direct ferries have provided hauliers and businesses with alternative options to access the EU, the unknown of Brexit-related customs processes has not been as stressful as many had feared. The landbridge is as accessible as ever in both directions allowing businesses to keep their cargo moving faster and more regularly without the fear of weather delays, cancellations or waiting for available slots. This position is supported by many of our clients:

Post Brexit, transiting the UK landbridge is still the quickest and most efficient way for us to travel to and from mainland Europe. The new customs procedures were simplified with the help of SGS.

JOHN JORDAN
TRANSZONE



We are using SGS TransitNet for our UK landbridge movements from and to Ireland. We have had a seamless experience from the start with minimal delays if any. It took a few days to adjust to the new customs procedures but this is part of the norm now.

MARY MULLINS
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
BAKU GLS



With some preparation and support from the SGS TransitNet team, each stage of the journey can be made smoother by using TransitNet. Our customs experts will ensure that you are supported from the preparation of your journey right through to termination. We will advise on what the requirements are depending on the nature of the goods you are moving and will ensure that these requirements are met prior to departure.

Some additional benefits of TransitNet include:

ABILITY TO CLOSE T2 TRANSITS IN FRANCE:

Transport companies who have trucks entering France via the landbridge will want to have the transit closed as quickly as possible. T2 declarations which enter the EU via France are not automatically discharged on arrival and the driver must either present the goods at a customs office of destination or at an authorized consignee's premises. When presenting the goods at a customs office of destination in France an agent or broker is needed to assist in closing the declaration.

NO NEED TO IMPORT THE GOODS

As goods are of EU origin, there is no need for the EU importer to lodge an import declaration. Once the T2 is closed, the goods are in free circulation.

SGS AND CALAIS TRUCKSTOP – CLOSING T2

SGS TransitNet and Calais Truckstop have joined forces to offer TransitNet clients the perfect location to close T2 transit declarations on entry to France. Calais Truckstop is an authorized consignee which means SGS transits, which have the customs office of termination code FR000740, can be closed by Calais Truckstop staff once the driver is at the location of the Calais Truckstop with the truck and the goods.

The process is quick and efficient and makes the time and cost advantage of using the landbridge much more attractive.

CLOSING T2s – SPS GOODS

For transits of goods which are subject to Sanitary or Phytosanitary controls, Calais Truckstop can also close these transits as authorized consignee. One additional requirement is that the driver must have a validated copy of the CHED. A CHED is usually validated once the truck has entered the EU.

CHEDs are issued via Traces NT and SGS can perform the entry into Traces NT to generate the necessary CHED on our clients behalf.

ABILITY TO OPEN TRANSITS AT CALAIS TRUCKSTOP

As well as closing transits, approved clients of TransitNet can also open transits from the Calais Truckstop under the simplified procedure. Once the truck is at the location, the driver can present the TSN to Calais Truckstop who will process the transit in TransitNet. Once the transit is Released for Transit, Calais Truckstop staff will print the copy of the TAD and any other necessary copies.

With the summer fast approaching and an expected ramp up in transportation activity, businesses can avoid longer journey times and added costs by transiting via the UK instead and TransitNet is the perfect solution for getting you there.

If you are interested in TransitNet and would like to speak to a member of our team, please reach out today by emailing transitnet.ireland@sgs.com or logging on to www.sgs.ie/transitnet and you can avail of a special introductory offer of a free transit, subject to terms and conditions*.

*Note: Maximum value €100. Full T&C's available at www.sgs.ie/en-gb/terms-and-conditions

WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

SGS