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Subject: Brexit Update

Talks are due to start next month on a UK-EU Free trade Agreement (FTA) which the UK Government wants concluded by the end of the year, leading to speculation that there will be a very limited FTA agreed by December, with multiple aspects of the future relationship still to be negotiated in the years to come.

In the meantime the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Michael Gove) confirmed that the Government will introduce [full import controls](#) for goods moving from the EU to Great Britain (but not Northern Ireland) after the transition period ends on 31 December 2020. The concessions put in place to mitigate against the damage of a “no-deal” scenario will **not** be reintroduced.

HMRC has extended the deadline for businesses to [apply for customs support funding](#) to 31 January 2021.

AMDEA joined last week’s Business Readiness Forum webinar, where BEIS reiterated that the Government sees the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) as a desirable model. They are still insisting that regulatory alignment is not an option and that the European Court of Justice cannot be the arbiter of any future trade disputes. The areas for discussion were listed as:

- National Treatment and Market Access for Goods
- Trade Remedies
- Technical Barriers to Trade
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Customs and Trade Facilitation
- Cross-Border Trade in Services and Investment
- Temporary Entry for Business Purposes (Mode 4)
- Regulatory Framework
- Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications
- Financial Services
- Road Transport
- Competition Policy, Subsidies, Environment and Climate, Labour, Tax

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The Government is to begin a review of 43 EU trade remedy measures, which last year's Call for Evidence deemed important to UK industries and concluded should be maintained.

The Government has also announced that up to 10 Freeports will be introduced across the UK - there is a [consultation](#) running until 20 April 2020. Goods entering a Freeport are not subject to duty until they leave to enter the domestic market, allowing raw materials to be imported tariff free for subsequent export as finished goods. Freeports can also offer simplified customs administrative processes, tax incentives for investment, and "flexible regulation".

Coincidentally the European Commission has been reviewing the EU's rules for Freeports because of growing concerns about the level of illegal activity that they facilitate.

We have already circulated a link to the [consultation](#) on a new UK tariff regime to replace the EU External Tariff from 1 January 2021. This will apply to trade with all countries with which we do not have a free trade agreement at that point. The consultation is asking for

- views on changes to the Common External Tariff to create a bespoke UK tariff regime;
- specific feedback on individual products or commodity codes of importance to you, including on the corresponding tariff rate; and
- information on your interactions with MFN tariffs and the importance of tariffs to our sector.

The consultation will close on 5 March 2020 and there will be an announcement shortly afterwards.

The Department for International Trade has launched a digital [tool](#) called 'Check How to Export Goods'. They have also published a [Notice to exporters 2020/03: exporting and trading items subject to strategic controls during the transition period](#).

Companies House has produced [guidance](#) on whether businesses will need to change their company registration from 1 January 2021, and how to do this.

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