



Press Release

For immediate release

04.09.2019

Statement by ETRC to the Duty Free trade media on Brexit and implications for the duty & tax free industry

ETRC has held a number of meetings in Brussels today to discuss the potential for a hard Brexit and the implications for our industry. The following has been confirmed to us by the European Commission;

- In the event of a hard Brexit, duty & tax free sales to UK-bound passengers will be permissible from November 1st, and that our members should plan accordingly. It remains the position of the EU that they will try to reach an agreement with the UK but a hard Brexit is a strong possibility.
- Furthermore the European Commission also strongly advised us that to take particular care to order and deliver shipments of goods to/from the UK before 31 October, as there will be considerable difficulties in clearing such products due to the immediate change in customs procedures and rules.
- What must be avoided in particular is that shipments are caught in transit over the October 31st/November 1st period as they could get caught up in lengthy delays due to immediate changes in procedures in rules.
- Also there will be significant difficulties with excisable goods and with fresh food which will be subject to significant changes on how they are handled by Customs authorities and other government departments. We therefore advise that this be factored into your Hard Brexit planning and that sufficient stocks be built up to cover the immediate period post-Brexit.
- The emergency legislation guaranteeing slots for airlines for flights to the UK will be extended until October 2020 so there will be one year to find a longer term solution for airline market access.
- The situation for duty & tax free sales for passengers leaving the UK is still not clear and the UKTRF is still seeking clear guidance from the UK Government

ETRC President Nigel Keal said; “Today in Brussels, the European Commission reiterated its earlier position that duty & tax free sales will be allowed for all passengers to the UK from November 1st in the event of a hard Brexit. Furthermore the European Commission strongly advised us to prepare for lengthy delays and holdups for the delivery of stock in the immediate post Brexit period and we must therefore plan accordingly.

We still do not know what the situation will be for duty & tax free sales from the UK but UKTRF is engaging with the relevant government departments. Given the time it takes to prepare for this, we urge the UK government to give us clarity as soon as possible”

ENDS



Note to the editor:

For more information, please contact

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About the European Travel Retail Confederation

The European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC) is an industry association for the duty free and travel retail industry in Europe, serving the industry and its members to help create the right environment to allow the industry to achieve its potential and protect it when challenges arise.

ETRC is composed of national and regional affiliated trade associations representing over 200 European companies, Tax Free World Association (TFWA) representing 500 brand companies, and direct corporate membership from individual companies working in the duty free and travel retail trade across Europe and beyond. The European Travel Retail Confederation's operations are directed by its Supervisory and Managing Boards and carried out by a full-time secretariat. For more information about the organisation, please see our website – www.etrc.org