

Update on our Brexit Preparations – September 2020

Whilst the outcome of a potential trade deal with the EU remains unclear it is now confirmed that from 1st January 2021 goods arriving from the EU will require customs clearance to be allowed into the UK and goods going to the EU from the UK will require the same. Premier Paper continues to prepare for new customs procedures as we enter the last quarter of 2020, and we are finalising our plans with all relevant parties in our supply chain.

To mitigate any issues that may arise through new post Brexit customs procedures discussions are ongoing with suppliers to ensure they are well aware of known requirements for customs clearance, such as clarifying their Incoterms and commodity codes. We are also seeking to fully understand what actions they are taking to reduce any customs delays, such as signing up for AEO (Authorised Economic Operator) status and arranging clearance of goods themselves, both of which should help reduce delays at UK customs.

In addition Premier Paper will be working with a specialist customs clearance agent to ensure the smooth flow of goods through ports where our suppliers are asking Premier to arrange goods clearance. It is most likely that European suppliers operating a “roll on roll off” distribution model through the Channel ports are most likely to see potential delays as even small delays to the flow of goods traffic could see an accumulation of traffic flowing through these ports in both directions. This is where Premier sees the greatest potential for customs delays even though HMRC and Border control have stated that they will not be stopping goods for customs inspection until July 2021.

Premier has analysed which products are delivered by this method through Channel ports and will be taking steps to build stocks prior to 1st January 2021 to negate the potential negative effects of unreliable delivery times.


Much of Premier’s supply of paper comes from long-distance suppliers by sea which should be at far less risk of delays as none of these suppliers use any of the channel ports.

Premier will be generally increasing stock levels to cushion the effects of any early post Brexit delivery disruption but customers using deliveries direct from our supplying mills should consider the effect delays may have upon production schedules as it will be difficult to guarantee precise delivery dates around the start of 2021 especially goods coming roll on roll off through Channel ports.

With regard to the commercial effects of Brexit it is still too early to know what these may be as we need to consider the possibility of a deal being struck with the EU or indeed a no deal. It is of some comfort that in the event of no deal then standard WTO tariff schedules on standard Paper and Paperboard are zero. However in the event of a no deal some specialist products may be subject to tariffs. We expect news on any tariffs that need to be applied to specialist products to become clearer and communicated in the weeks ahead.

Premier Paper are now part of OVOL, a \$5 Billion international paper distributor, giving us additional financial security to reassure our customers that we can help them through these volatile and challenging times. We continue to hold around 25,000 tonnes of stock across our 16 UK warehouses, as well as additional stock at UK ports

We believe we are well on course in terms of our preparation and will therefore be well placed to ensure we minimise any impact of Brexit.



Dave Allen
Managing Director