

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT

Ninth Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT IMPORT OF AND TRADE IN ANIMALS  
AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS (AMENDMENT ETC.)  
(EU EXIT) REGULATIONS 2019

DRAFT TRADE IN ANIMALS AND RELATED  
PRODUCTS (AMENDMENT) (EU EXIT)  
REGULATIONS 2019

*Tuesday 19 February 2019*

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**Saturday 23 February 2019**

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:**

*Chair:* MR VIRENDRA SHARMA

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| † Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey ( <i>The Cotswolds</i> ) (Con)  | † Seely, Mr Bob ( <i>Isle of Wight</i> ) (Con)                   |
| † Debonnaire, Thangam ( <i>Bristol West</i> ) (Lab)   | † Stewart, Iain ( <i>Milton Keynes South</i> ) (Con)             |
| † Drew, Dr David ( <i>Stroud</i> ) (Lab/Co-op)  | † Syms, Sir Robert ( <i>Poole</i> ) (Con)                        |
| † Fellows, Marion ( <i>Motherwell and Wishaw</i> ) (SNP)  | † Timms, Stephen ( <i>East Ham</i> ) (Lab)                       |
| † Garnier, Mark ( <i>Wyre Forest</i> ) (Con)  | † Tomlinson, Michael ( <i>Mid Dorset and North Poole</i> ) (Con) |
| † Harper, Mr Mark ( <i>Forest of Dean</i> ) (Con)   | † Western, Matt ( <i>Warwick and Leamington</i> ) (Lab)          |
| † Jones, Darren ( <i>Bristol North West</i> ) (Lab)   | † Whately, Helen ( <i>Faversham and Mid Kent</i> ) (Con)         |
| McMorrin, Anna ( <i>Cardiff North</i> ) (Lab)   |  |
| Nandy, Lisa ( <i>Wigan</i> ) (Lab)  | Medha Bhasin, <i>Committee Clerk</i>                             |
| † Rutley, David ( <i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</i> ) | † <b>attended the Committee</b>                                  |

# Ninth Delegated Legislation Committee

Tuesday 19 February 2019

[MR VIRENDRA SHARMA *in the Chair*]

## Draft Import of and Trade in Animals and Animal Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

2.30 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (David Rutley):** I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft Import of and Trade in Animals and Animal Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to consider the draft Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

**David Rutley:** It is a pleasure to serve with you in the Chair, Mr Sharma. There are two sets of regulations for members of the Committee to consider. These statutory instruments are made under the enabling power in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 to amend provisions related to imports, and transit through the EU, of live animals including horses; animal products including meat; genetic material used for animal breeding, such as semen, ova and embryos; and to the non-commercial movement of pet animals.

I emphasise that the instruments make purely technical changes to animal trade legislation to ensure that it continues to operate effectively when we leave the European Union. They do not introduce new policy, and they preserve the current regime for protecting the UK's biosecurity. The instruments are closely linked and so have been grouped together, with your permission, Mr Sharma, to facilitate a single overarching discussion on animal trade.

The first instrument makes technical amendments to directly applicable EU regulations and decisions. As hon. Members will see, this instrument is substantial.

**Dr David Drew (Stroud) (Lab/Co-op):** I know: I have read every page.

**David Rutley:** I am delighted to hear that. The instrument includes amendments to nearly 50 pieces of EU legislation. Members of the Committee will be pleased to hear that I will not go through every regulation—[HON. MEMBERS: "Go on."] I will, but not today. Now, I will outline the most important aspects of the legislation.

The instrument makes technical amendments to ensure the continued operability of 14 EU instruments concerning imports of live animals or reproductive products; 17 concerning imports of animal products intended for human consumption; six that lay down protective measures against the introduction of particular diseases; two that cover the EU pet travel scheme; and seven that relate more generally to the import regime for animals and

animal products. This instrument also contains minor technical amendments to references to fees in two domestic instruments.

The amendments ensure the continuation of veterinary controls and other import conditions that safeguard animal and public health. They allow for authorisation of businesses to continue and for the maintenance of health certification and transport requirements, and allow appropriate actions to be taken in cases of reported non-compliance or disease outbreaks in other countries. Furthermore, they provide for the continuation of the existing health and documentary requirements for the non-commercial movement of pets into the UK under the EU pet travel scheme.

In addition, the amendments transfer certain powers and functions from the European Commission to our respective UK Ministers. The amendments give Ministers the power to take appropriate action in relation to trade restrictions resulting from disease outbreak. Regulation 3 of and schedule 1 to the instrument provide the power for the appropriate UK Minister and Northern Ireland Department to draw up lists of third countries approved as having equivalent official disease controls for continuing trade with the UK in live animals and animal products.

The Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 make technical amendments to EU-derived domestic legislation. Importantly, this instrument amends our main English animal trade instrument—the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011. That is key legislation for the import of these commodities into England. It establishes a system for trade in live animals and genetic material with other EU member states, and for imports of animals and animal products from outside the European Union.

The measure also amends two related instruments that regulate the non-commercial movement of pet animals into Great Britain: the Non-Commercial Movement of Pet Animals Order 2013, and the Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974. The instrument will allow these laws to continue to work after EU exit, for instance, by removing redundant references to EU bodies, functions or legislation, and replacing them with domestic equivalents. It will also amend phrases that would no longer be correct, such as changing "legislation of the European Union" to "retained EU law".

Taken together, the two instruments that we are considering ensure the continuation of appropriate certification, sufficient pre-notification of imports, checks of certain consignments, and isolation and vaccination facilities. That safeguards our current strong biosecurity standards for imports of animals and related products, and provides for the continuation of the existing legal framework around the movement of those trade commodities and pet animals.

These instruments have different territorial extent and application, and the devolved Administrations were closely engaged in their development. The first instrument applies to the whole of the UK; in the second instrument, part 2 applies to Great Britain and part 3 applies to England only. The devolved Administrations are tabling their own versions of the amendments in the second instrument, which relate to their own "mirror" legislation and are being laid as separate affirmative instruments.

As stated, these instruments make technical amendments to maintain the existing standards, and no impact is anticipated. As they do no more than is necessary to enable domestic legislation to be operable immediately after EU exit, there is no statutory requirement for public consultation. Formal consultation and impact assessments have not been performed, as these amendments will not introduce additional requirements or costs for stakeholders.

**Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown** (The Cotswolds) (Con): I am sorry to interrupt my hon. Friend, particularly as I wholly approve of these instruments, because they are a significant consolidating measure. He has said two or three times that the measures will have no financial impact on users. Would he therefore say what arrangements will be made for consultations on any fee increases?

**David Rutley:** As I said before, there will be no extra costs or fee increases.

**Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:** I am grateful to my hon. Friend for that explanation, but paragraph 6.1 of the explanatory notes says:

“This instrument amends...forty-six directly applicable pieces of EU legislation...It also introduces amendments to the domestic powers to recover fees in relation to activity relating to imports of animals and animal products from the EU.”

That presages the prospect of fee increases, does it not?

**David Rutley:** With my hon. Friend's permission, I will proceed with my speech and then, when I conclude, I will address that point in more detail.

As I was saying, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has engaged with various major stakeholders, including the Food and Drink Federation, the International Meat Trade Association and the National Farmers Union, on the subject of these instruments, and those stakeholders raised no concerns with DEFRA's approach.

In relation to the wider effect of leaving the EU on animal trade and pet travel more generally, DEFRA has of course made extensive engagement. In relation to the equine sector and pet travel, DEFRA has engaged with key stakeholders, who are also content with the proposed approach to equine movements and pet travel.

These instruments are required to ensure that the UK's statute book continues to function correctly after EU exit. Each year, products of animal origin and live animals imported to the UK are valued at over £19.3 billion, of which 80%—about £15 billion—comes from trade with the EU. If these amendments are not made, there would be considerable disruption to the UK's imports system, resulting in a threat to the UK's biosecurity, and a lack of clarity for industry and non-commercial pet travel, which would be likely to lead to additional costs for importers and stakeholders.

Although the UK is under no legal obligation to adhere to EU rules for trade following EU exit, failure to do so could result in the UK being unable to trade in animals and their products with EU member states and third countries. The Government's policy is therefore to maintain current standards, legislation and arrangements relating to such trade on the day the UK leaves the EU.

Regarding the EU's pet travel scheme, the amendments are required to ensure that safe pet travel without quarantine can continue into the UK. Currently, 300,000 pet animals move into the UK each year, through the pet travel scheme. If these amendments were not made, EU pet passports for pet animals travelling from the EU would no longer be valid in the UK, which could cause travel disruption. The UK's ongoing application to become a listed third country for the purposes of pet travel between the UK and EU member states also depends on maintaining EU minimum health standards.

In conclusion, the trade in animals and animal products that do not constitute a risk to human or animal health is of significant importance to the UK's food security and economy. The technical amendments in these instruments are essential for the continuation of the UK's current trade and import regime, and for minimum disruption to pet travel. They will also ensure that our strict biosecurity controls on animal trade are maintained at their current levels when we leave the European Union. I commend the statutory instruments to the Committee.

2.41 pm

**Dr Drew:** I am delighted to serve under your chairmanship again, Mr Sharma. I am also happy that this Committee Room is more suited to the number of Members here than Committee Room 14, where we met the other day. We will be in the Chamber tomorrow. This is one of three days when I will be taking part in the great scrutiny of statutory instruments.

I will put my usual caveat in place: this is not the way to pass legislation—we are doing things in a great hurry. As the Minister himself says, we are expected to scrutinise the legislation. We could go through it page by page; I am sure that the civil servants have done a wonderful job of cutting and pasting the European regulations, but we will know exactly what we will end up with only after we leave in March, or whenever. It is important that the Opposition do their best to find out what the Government are doing, why they are doing it and whether they are doing it in the right way. That, however, is problematic, given the background: we are trying to keep on top of so many SIs that are coming our way.

I will begin with a couple of general points before I ask a number of questions of the Minister, including about the point made by my neighbour, the hon. Member for The Cotswolds. I have argued that for each of the SIs there should have been regulatory impact assessments, which have an impact on business and communities, but we have had none—so we do not know what the cost implications are. If the Minister does not answer the hon. Gentleman's question, I will try to.

We need to keep our finger on the pulse. There will be implications: we are not just taking across a series of regulations in the form of an SI, but we have to make changes and employ people to undertake them. That will cost something. Someone is going to pay; if it is not the Government, it will have to be the people on whom those changes are imposed.

**Darren Jones** (Bristol North West) (Lab): I thank my hon. Friend and neighbour in the south-west for giving way. Does he agree that we need to understand the

[Darren Jones]

implications for our constituents? Many of us receive correspondence asking whether the regulations will prevent the import of lesser-quality animal products from countries such as the United States as part of a trade deal and whether constituents have to do anything to make sure that their pet passports continue to apply so they do not get stuck at the border. The regulations do not give us clear answers about any of that.

**Dr Drew:** That is helpful. My hon. Friend puts his finger on something important. To some, this is a very dry subject—about semen, ova and embryos—but we are also discussing pet passports; some of us, in our previous incarnations, had a bit to do with getting those introduced. With the best will in the world, that issue will not necessarily be plain sailing if and when we leave the EU. Most people who take their pets abroad go somewhere in the EU and it will be problematic, to put it mildly, if they want to move there for work or study. They may find additional difficulties with the pet passport situation.

I want to make four general points. The regulations clearly have a lot to do with post-Brexit agreements and trade relations. We have to do what we can to make sure that there are no unnecessary barriers, otherwise trade will suffer, whatever one's views on what trade there should be and with whom. As a backdrop, there is the key issue of animal welfare. It would be a tragedy if the high standards that we have introduced were threatened in any way, and it would be economic madness if we allowed things like rabies to come in because we did not have enough people to check as a result of having a different process for allowing animals with such diseases to come in. It is frightening to think what diseases might be coming our way, as I said in a previous statutory instrument Committee, so we have to be on our guard.

If we have different standards, it is not just the immediate impact that we need to consider. There will be a longer-term impact on our ability to work with other countries, because they will react against us if we have lower standards, which will have a huge impact on the agricultural sector. One of the questions I want to ask the Minister stems from the debate, which was quite testy, I think it is fair to say, with the Secretary of State about where we are today—this is from the National Farmers Union conference—with regard to the UK becoming a third country in relation to the EU. How are those negotiations going? It appears that they are stuck in transit, as I gather that the Secretary of State did not have the easiest time answering questions at the NFU. One of the key concerns was when we would be able to say that that relationship was properly embedded.

Finally—this point is not to be ignored—this has a huge impact on science, innovation and research, because many materials that come in are used by our research laboratories in tandem with our colleagues in the EU. Clearly, that may not necessarily continue, but we have to look at ways in which we can try to make that as seamless as possible. I suppose that that is an example of frictionless trade.

On the draft Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, the pet passport is something of which we should be very proud. It took

a long time to put it in place. It would be useful to know exactly how the Government intend to make sure that the measure passes into practical operation as seamlessly as possible. A lot depends on what relationship we have with the EU, but as page two of the explanatory memorandum identifies, various highly pathogenic avian influenza strains and Nipah disease in cats and dogs are ever present, and we need to understand how, when pets move around, the passport can be used to make sure that there is proper control and enforcement. It will be useful to know what the Government are doing in relation to that.

That came up in the Lords, which asked for the affirmative procedure. Originally, this was to be dealt with under the negative procedure, but the Lords thought that the issue was important and needed the affirmative procedure route. Following the intervention by the hon. Member for The Cotswolds, I have touched on the need for a regulatory impact assessment—that theme always arises in relation to these SIs.

I have some questions for the Minister. He may not be able to answer them all, but he can write to me later. The NFU's main concern is about shipments from other parts of the world—the example it gives is south American beef arriving in Rotterdam that is found to be not fit for human consumption—and what involvement the UK will have in such a decision. At the moment, that is a pan-European decision, but it cannot be for us if we are not in the EU. Do we put officers alongside those in Rotterdam or must we have our own checks this side of the border?

Food safety and harmonisation have a lot to do with who we sign free trade deals with. Some of us have grave concerns about signing one with the US, for the reasons we know about—chlorinated chicken, antibiotics and the rest of it—but it would be useful to know how many additional staff the Government intend to employ to guarantee that food safety will not be sacrificed. That links to the issue of antimicrobial resistance. Last week, I went to an interesting drop-in about the impact on human beings of AMR; I am sure that other Members went as well. I raised the point that the issue also affects animals. How do the regulations relate to AMR? At the very least, we should be doing more; if nothing else, we should be investing in science and technology to make sure that we are ahead of the game.

NOAH, or the National Office of Animal Health—an organisation well known to the Minister—has asked about animals and derivative products used in biomedical and veterinary research. How can we continue with existing research—again, that is pan-European? That is crucial to continuity in the life sciences sector. What analysis have the Government done about what happens after March—what needs to be rethought and what can carry on, hopefully, seamlessly?

The supply of animals and animal-derived products cannot in any way be delayed, because that would invalidate their use in science and have huge animal welfare implications. Although NOAH welcomes both sets of regulations, we come back to the crucial issue, which I have raised in previous SIs: where are we in relation to the TRACES database? So far, the Government have not been able to answer that. Are they looking for special dispensation? Are they willing to pay to be part of the database or will they have to investigate setting up their own one? Previously, the Government have said

that they are putting money into setting up their own IT system, but with the best will in the world that will not happen before the end of March, when we might have a no-deal scenario.

My last point, about the Balai directive, which we have signed up to as part of our commitment to the convention on international trade in endangered species, has been raised by various organisations. At the moment, we sign up as a member of the EU. What contingencies do the Government have in place to make sure that we do not just drop out but continue with our clear statement of intent on the directive?

Many of these points have been reiterated in the material I received from the European Animal Research Association, which really stresses how important the import of animals and animal materials are to the life sciences sector. Its worry is that no deal will not only add to the time it takes to get the materials in, because of the additional checks that would almost certainly have to be done, but increase transport costs. What analysis have the Government made of potential additional transport costs resulting from the greater time taken because of more checks on what will no longer be an open border? The association clearly stresses its worry about a no-deal scenario and what the Government intend to do about that

The main concern of the British Veterinary Association is about who will do some of the checking. We have a shortage of vets. We will need more vets. Where will they come from? What level of skills will they have? The BVA wants a guarantee that the role of the veterinary professional will remain key to the whole process of trade. It would therefore be useful to know how that will continue at a level at least equal to now, although one would always hope that animal welfare requirements could be improved.

A very specific question to the Minister is on the tripartite agreement between the UK, France and the Republic of Ireland that allows the relaxation of procedures required under Council directive 2009/156/EC. It largely relates to the free movement of horses. My hon. Friend the Member for Bassetlaw (John Mann) was rather concerned, as a devout Brexiteer, about whether racehorses will be racing at Aintree in the grand national if anything gets in the way. Do the Government intend to carry on with that tripartite agreement?

I am sorry that I have asked a number of questions, but they are important and are about seamless trade. The trade is out of sight, and most of us do not know what goes on. When I made a trip to Heathrow when I was a member of the Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, I was shocked by the things that came through illegally. We went to look at the illegal trade in baboons, monkeys and so on—it was quite frightening—and who brought that in. That is one extreme of the trade, and it is illegal. There will clearly be continuity in regulation, one would imagine.

The regulations are about the legal aspects of what animals and animal products are allowed in, and it would be useful to know how the Government are approaching research and how we work on a pan-European basis. We are approaching the end of February and the particular date that we all dread for one reason or another. It is important that we know what contingencies

the Government have in place, and that goes wider than the two SIs that have been put together—I do not demur from that.

There are some detailed undercurrents that we as the Opposition need to know about. The wider agricultural sector certainly needs to know, because it is its stock in trade. It needs to know with some certainty what the impact will be. We dread crashing out, but even if we have a deal or perhaps a realignment of our relationship with the EU, what are the long-term implications? The Government have to be very clear on that. As I go through these different SIs, I am not sure whether we have clarity or more confusion. Perhaps it will all come right on the day.

2.59 pm

**Marion Fellows** (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Sharma. I will be brief. It is a great pleasure to follow the hon. Member for Stroud and his masterful questioning of the Minister. He has a real grasp of the regulations. I would not want for one moment to attempt to emulate that, but the lack of impact assessments is not good. In fact, it is very bad. What will happen is that a separate set of regulations will be created, which could lead to congestion with live animals on board ships or whatever and with their transfer on to lorries. That is not good for animal welfare.

Finally, there is a simpler way to avoid this rush before 29 March, and that is to extend article 50 while we get this sorted out through agreement cross-party and with the EU. It would also be preferable to stay in the single market and the customs union.

3 pm

**David Rutley:** I thank hon. Members who have contributed to the debate. As I said, the draft regulations will ensure that the robust certification, pre-notification and biosecurity standards for imports of animals and related products set out in EU legislation will be maintained. That is an important point, and one not lost on Members who have spoken in the debate.

I am grateful to the hon. Member for Stroud. He showed his characteristically thorough approach, and I will try to answer his many questions briefly. First, however, I will respond to a concern expressed by my hon. Friend the Member for The Cotswolds about fee increases. Fees are set out in other domestic legislation, so would require parliamentary oversight and prior industry consultation before any amendment. That is not part of this legislation; it is separate. The amendments in regulations 4 and 5 are simply enabling powers to allow fees to be charged for imports from the EU in future.

**Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:** I am sorry, I do not want to cause the Minister any additional difficulties, but in the Cotswolds, which my neighbour, the hon. Member for Stroud, and I represent, we have a large sheep industry. Most of that sheepmeat, whether dead-weight or light-weight, goes to the continent. Currently, it is not subject to checks; in future, it will be subject to checks, and the farmers involved will have to pay the charges. That will have quite a severe impact on certain

[*Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown*]

sectors of the economy. I would be grateful if my hon. Friend—if not now, some time—set out in detail the Government's impact assessment of that.

**David Rutley:** I will gladly follow up on that. We are discussing the draft regulations, however, and the points that my hon. Friend has just made, good as they are, are outwith the narrow confines of the legislation—although we have discussed a lot today. Some of the checks that he is concerned about relate to what will happen in the EU, rather than in the UK. Nevertheless, I will give him the specifics and follow up on his points in detail, ensuring that they are fully considered.

Consultation and impact assessments were raised by the hon. Members for Stroud and for Motherwell and Wishaw. Again, notwithstanding the fact that there will be significant changes to how we deal with exports and to some extent imports—we are trying to have a friction-free approach to imports from the EU—those changes and impacts are outwith what we are discussing today. Yes, there have been impact assessments and consultations on other aspects, but the specific draft regulations—

**Mr Mark Harper** (Forest of Dean) (Con): I am listening carefully to the Minister and, I confess, I should really have intervened on my neighbour across the River Severn, the hon. Member for Stroud. Both statutory instruments, as made clear in the explanatory memorandums, include no substantive policy changes. Is that not the reason why there are no impact assessments? We are not changing policy; we are simply tidying up to ensure that the existing law works when we leave the European Union, if we do so without a withdrawal agreement. There is no impact assessment because we are not changing any policy.

**David Rutley:** That is absolutely correct. I thank my right hon. Friend for clarifying the point so well. The draft regulations are about trying to keep things as similar as they can be. The Government's approach is continuity where at all possible and, as a result, there is no need for consultation or an impact assessment.

**Dr Drew:** Page six of the explanatory memorandum of the draft trade in animals and related products regulations states categorically:

“There is no additional impact on small businesses (employing up to 50 people) because this instrument maintains the status quo and does not introduce any policy change.”

Absolutely right, as my neighbour the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean said, but that is for “up to 50 people”. What will happen to businesses that employ more than 50 people? Will there will be an impact, yes or no?

**David Rutley:** That is a way of describing different—*[Interruption.]* Hold on; let me finish my thought. That is a way of describing different types of businesses. If it does not apply to those, it will not apply to bigger ones either. Genuinely, as has been set out by my right hon. Friend the Member for Forest of Dean, these are very small changes. We are just trying to maintain continuity.

On the points raised by the hon. Member for Bristol North West, separate exit SIs will be tabled by the Food Standards Agency to deal with food hygiene and safety measures, which will be debated shortly under the affirmative resolution procedure. That will address some of his concerns about welfare standards, which we do not want to water down. We have talked about this at length in similar debates in the past.

There was discussion about why the Lords Committee suggested that one of the draft instruments should be debated under the affirmative resolution procedure, as opposed to the negative. Its concern was about reciprocity. However, as I have explained, our approach seeks continuity, to minimise the disruption to businesses. Even the Lords Committee observed that reciprocal agreements with the EU covering these issues would be the outcome of future negotiations.

The hon. Member for Stroud discussed our situation regarding third-party status with the EU. The UK will be treated by the EU as a third country if we leave without a deal. In order to be prepared for all possible outcomes, the UK has submitted its application for listing as a third country to continue exporting live animals and animal products to the EU after EU exit. Without listed status, no exports to the EU can take place. Several technical discussions are taking place with the EU Commission on the detail of receiving expedited approval for the export of live animals and animal products. DEFRA officials are currently providing detailed evidence to satisfy the Commission, but we cannot be certain of the timing of such approval. However, those are active discussions.

The hon. Gentleman also raised concerns about food hygiene and unfit meat from South America. The FSA's hygiene regulations will deal with that particular issue. I will gladly talk to him about that after the sitting. He also raised concerns about AMR. The FSA is committed to ensuring that imported food continues to be safe for consumers, including looking at AMR, which will include maintaining a robust and effective regulatory regime for the safety of imported food. We will continue to focus on that.

The hon. Gentleman also raised concerns, as have other Opposition Front-Bench spokespeople, regarding the capacity and capability of vets to cope with the extra work before them. He raises that sincerely, and I fully understand the concerns about vet shortages, which we are working hard to address. As I have said previously in similar Committees, DEFRA has provided evidence to the Migration Advisory Committee strongly supporting the return of veterinary surgeons to the shortage occupation list. The MAC is due to report in spring 2019.

We will work closely with the Home Office to ensure that there is a long-term strategy for the veterinary workforce as part of our future immigration policy. We have created a new role—certification support officer—to provide administrative support to official vets, so that they can more easily process the new export health certificates.

There were concerns about the grand national. *[Interruption.]* Everybody is listening now. There is no question but that those horses will be able to come into the UK. However, because of the timing of the grand national, new processes will be in place for them to leave

the UK. Those arrangements are available on Government websites and so forth, and we will make sure that they are fully available.

The hon. Gentleman also raised the Balai directive. We will continue to trade under the directive because it has been transposed into UK law by our Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011. The final point that he made was on research. Research animals will continue to enter the UK under current controls when the UK leaves the EU. The UK does not currently require research animals entering the UK from third countries to enter via a border inspection post and intends to continue that arrangement.

I think and hope that that answers the detailed questions that were asked. For the reasons set out during the debate, and hopefully through the answers to some of those questions, I trust that hon. Members understand the need for these amendments. They will ensure that the strict import standards currently in place will be maintained after we leave the European Union without

placing additional burdens on importers or barriers to trade. I once again commend the draft instruments to the Committee.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved,*

That the Committee has considered the draft Import of and Trade in Animals and Animal Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

**DRAFT TRADE IN ANIMALS AND RELATED PRODUCTS (AMENDMENT) (EU EXIT) REGULATIONS 2019**

*Resolved,*

That the Committee has considered the draft Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.—  
(*David Rutley.*)

3.11 pm

*Committee rose.*





