

Phased approach to CDS export migration announced

A new phased approach for businesses moving export declarations to the Customs Declaration Service (CDS) has been announced by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) today.

After listening to feedback from industry, HMRC is implementing a phased approach for businesses moving to CDS for exports.

During the first phase, HMRC and its software developers will support selected high-volume declarants to move to CDS for exports by Thursday 30 November 2023.

The second stage of this approach will see all other businesses move to CDS for exports by Saturday 30 March 2024.

This new approach will enable HMRC and delivery partners to build on the existing IT testing as well as undertake additional performance analysis while businesses with the existing IT functionality start to migrate. It will also enable HMRC and their delivery partners to better support export declarants to make a smooth migration to CDS.

CDS is replacing the Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight (CHIEF) service and provides businesses with a more user-friendly, streamlined system which offers greater functionality. CDS has been running since 2018 and is already being used for making import declarations when moving goods into the UK.

Sarah Hartley, Director of Border Change Delivery at HMRC said:

“Having worked closely with our industry partners, we’re introducing a phased approach for moving export declarations to CDS. Those businesses who have the IT functionality in place are still able to move across to CDS by Thursday 30 November 2023, ahead of the majority who will now migrate at the beginning of 2024.

“Full guidance, resources and support will be available for all declarants to ensure the transition across to CDS is as smooth as possible for every business.”

Steve Bartlett, Chairman of Association of Freight Software Suppliers (AFSS) said:

“The AFSS and our members fully support the revised timescales for the transition of Export declarations from CHIEF to CDS. This moves away from the seasonal peak and also allows more focus to help customers migrate to NCTS5 in November.

“We thank HMRC for the continued collaboration and consultation with us, to ensure a successful completion of the CDS journey for everyone by the end of March 2024”

Robert Windsor, Member Policy & Compliance Director at the British International Freight Association (BIFA) said:

“On behalf of BIFA Members, we are looking forward to the final stage of the implementation of CDS and bringing export transitioning to its successful conclusion.”

Amanda Francis, Chief Executive of Association of International Courier & Express Services (AICES) said:

“AICES supports HMRC’s pragmatic decision to revise the timetable for CDS exports migration.

“We also welcome the level of stakeholder engagement and the recognition that express operators need sufficient notice and time to ensure a smooth transition from CHIEF to CDS.”

Declarants who are able to move to CDS by Thursday 30 November 2023 will be contacted by HMRC or their software developer in September.

There is more information about using the [Customs Declaration Service](#) on GOV.UK.