



Brexit: RYA's main concerns still unresolved

The transition agreement is good news for Britain's boaters, but unanswered questions about the final deal remain

The RYA has been lobbying hard as the EU Withdrawal Bill passes through the House of Lords for more clarity on three key issues for boaters:

- Maintaining Union Goods status for craft placed on the market before exit day after Brexit.
- Reassurances around the form of the new border-control regime for both craft and RYA-qualification holders who work on a seasonal basis in other member states.

■ Clarifying uncertainty around the post-Brexit immigration policy, now expected in the autumn.

The RYA has worked to move an amendment to the Bill, seeking greater clarity from the Government on its intentions in these areas. This amendment, which was debated on 19 March, asked the Government to publish a report before exit day outlining the steps it was planning to

take to address the customs and border-control issues facing the recreational boating sector.

Responding to the debate, Government Minister Lord Duncan recognised the substantial financial and employment contribution that the recreational boating and marine sectors make to the British economy, adding, 'The wider boating question is one which the UK Government takes very seriously indeed and we will not lose sight of it as the negotiations unfold.'

However, despite recent progress, the question of how

these issues will be addressed beyond the transition period remains unresolved. While the Prime Minister set out in her recent Mansion House speech more detail on the UK's desired end-state relationship with the EU, including options for possible customs arrangements outside of the Customs Union, we still await UK-EU agreement on the status of goods placed on the market before exit day, despite position papers from both sides issued last year indicating broad agreement on this issue.

MPs welcome the RYA and Basi's call for seasonal workers

Government recognises contribution made by recreational boating

The RYA has joined forces with the British Association of Snowsport Instructors (BASI) to lobby for seasonal workers' rights.

An article in *The Telegraph* written by James Rothwell, Brexit Correspondent, and Asa Bennett, reported the RYA's lobbying efforts to engage with ministers and officials to minimise any impact on UK citizens holding RYA qualifications who work in the EU.

It says, 'For decades, British youngsters have plied their trade in Europe as ski instructors and yachtmasters. But snowsport and yachting associations have warned their seasonal fun could be put in jeopardy by Brexit, as they called on Theresa May to protect free access to seasonal work in Europe.'

'In a joint letter to the Government seen by *The Telegraph*, the RYA and BASI said they feared that "many jobs previously held by

UK personnel would instead be filled by foreign nationals after Brexit".

'The letter urged Theresa May to grant ski and yachting instructors the right to work in Europe without a visa and with "as little administrative burden as possible".

'British instructors' qualifications should continue to be recognised by EU member states.'

The RYA represents 45,000 qualified instructors and commercially endorsed certificate of competence holders, with up to 7,000 of these working in the EU each year. Around 500 BASI ski instructors live in Europe permanently, with a further 1,500 heading over to work during the winter season.

Reciprocal arrangements

The request was welcomed by senior Conservative MPs, such as the former International

Trade Minister, Mark Garnier. He said the offer could be reciprocated with visa-free travel for EU workers in seasonal industries key to the British economy, such as agriculture. 'For as long as I can remember, British holidaymakers have been welcomed by British instructors, resort reps and others in exactly the same way that EU citizens take advantage of similar opportunities in the UK,' he said.

Mr Garnier, the commodore of the House of Commons Yacht Club, added, 'Given the UK demand for seasonal workers, and the request from the RYA and BASI, I would hope that these requests would be an easy win for our negotiators.'

However, Brexit secretary David Davis conceded that securing mutual recognition of qualifications after Brexit was proving to be a difficult issue.

As the Government has recognised, the recreational boating sector already makes a significant contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of communities up and down the country. In the coming months, the RYA will continue its work to ensure that the final Brexit deal reflects the needs and priorities of the recreational boating community.

We are also keen to involve our members in this process, so keep an eye out in the magazine and future RYA newsletters for additional information on how you can get more involved in our work on this issue.

If you have any questions about RYA's Brexit activity, please email legal@rya.org.uk