

Details of the work of the Ports Imports Compliance Team

1. Overview of the Team

The Team of 6 is based in Dover and covers Dover, Eurotunnel, and Dartford fast parcel hub.

The Trading Standards role at the border is to act as the market surveillance authority and has a responsibility to prevent unsafe and non-compliant consumer goods from entering the UK/EU.

The work can be by document checks as goods require testing certificates to show they are safe. Failing to produce the documents or producing fake documents will result in physical examination and, where necessary using powers to prevent the entry of the goods before they are cleared by Border force.

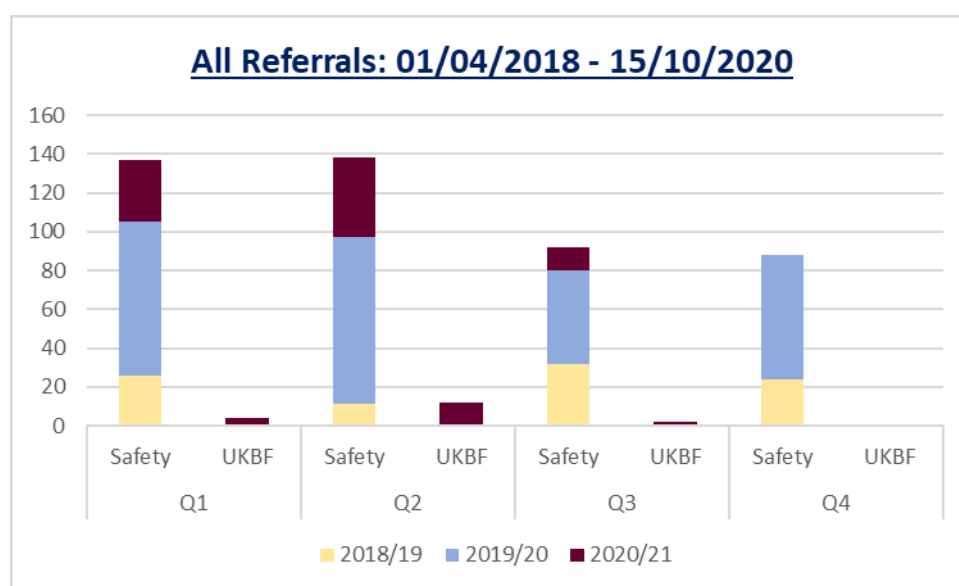
Non-complaint goods may be made compliant with correct documentation or by reworking, or they may be re-exported, whereas unsafe goods are required to be destroyed. As the goods have not been allowed to enter the UK all of this happens at the importers expense.

2. Referrals to the Team

Referrals to the team of loads of consumer goods requiring their attention come from 2 sources -

Firstly, The Office of Products Safety and Standards SPOC who receive notifications from HMRC as part of the national profiles set up on import notifications made by third country importers to HMRC

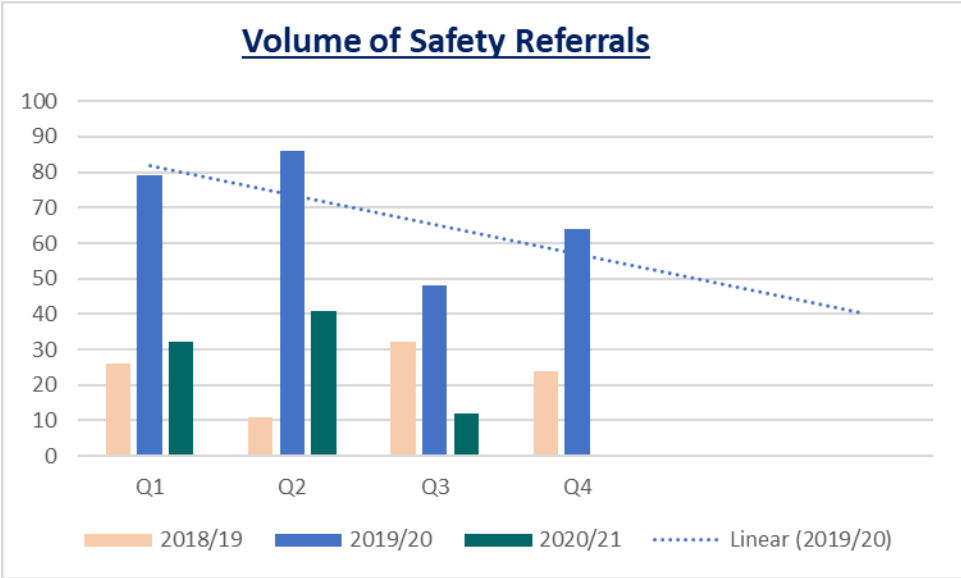
Secondly Border Force refer loads that they have examined and found to contain goods of interest to Trading Standards.



At the present time Border Force referrals are increasing (this data was not previously fully collected). Most of these cases involve clothing products originating from Bulgaria.

The Summer period was quiet, most Q2 referrals were received in September, which was an increase Q2 increase in referral numbers from Q1.

Most safety referrals from the SPOC originate from China (34) or Turkey (34), although others include Switzerland (9), India (7) and US (5).



The impact of Covid-19 can be seen in the above graph where there is a linear trend in referrals at this time with a forecast of fewer normal 3rd country referrals by the end of Q4 compared to 2019/20.

This trend is opposite to that witnessed between 2018/19 and 2019/20. Referrals for Q1 in 2020/21 showed a 59.4% reduction on the volume of safety referrals compared to the same Quarter in the previous year.

We are still unsure of the potential of an increase in “transit goods”. Under the current EU system, goods from countries outside the EU can clear at any border point in the EU. Once cleared the goods have free movement throughout the EU including entry through Dover and Eurotunnel. After Transition ends this will not happen, and goods destined for the UK from outside the EU will be clearing at the UK ports including Dover and Eurotunnel. Currently, we do not know the potential volume increase.

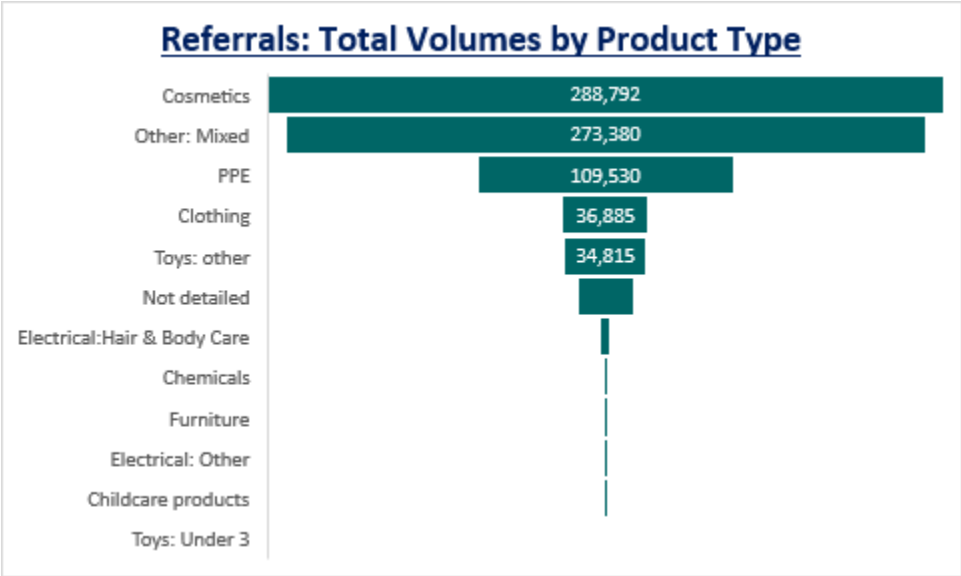
3. Product Type and Volumes

The chart below illustrates the volume of goods checked by Trading Standards so far this year

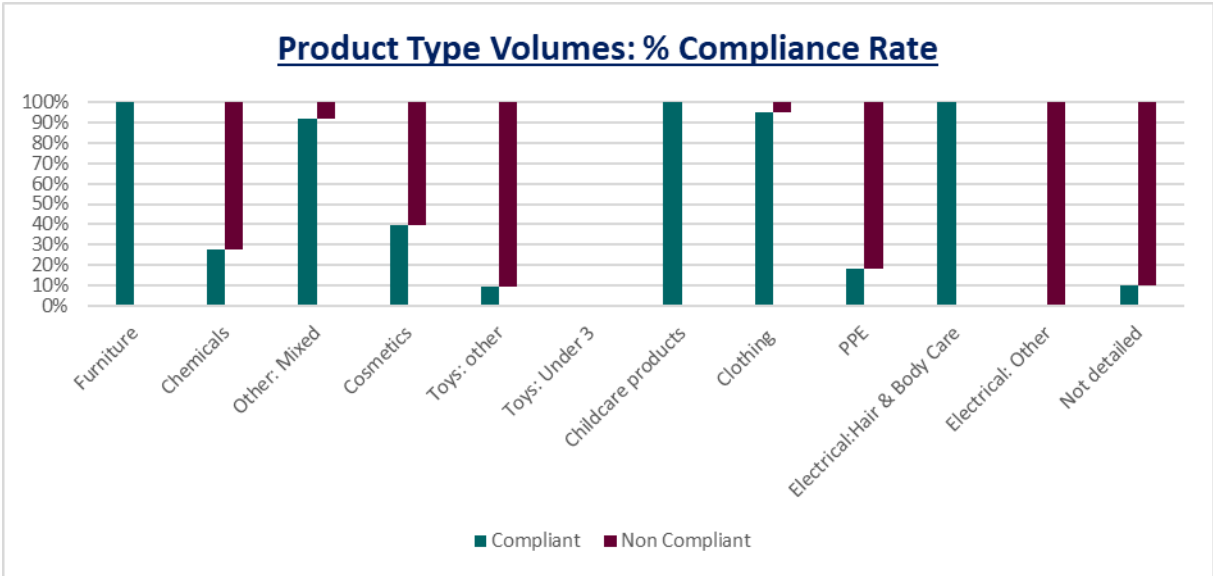
Referral Goods Checked 2020/21					
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Totals
Compliant	121,851	350,265	101,476	0	573,592
Non-Compliant	99,785	63,786	39,378	0	202,949
Total	221,636	414,051	140,854	0	776,541

The table below illustrates overall the types of product referred for inspection. The top three referrals are cosmetics, mixed loads (which may consist of several different product types), and PPE.

With PPE, this was specifically targeted as part of Operation Stop, an International Customs project, where the team worked with Border Force to stop unsafe and counterfeit PPE entering the country and putting users and patients at risk. These included illegal surgical masks (36,000), respirators (1,000) and protective suits (3,000). They also worked on an operation with the National Crime Agency following the successful detention of over 130,000 illegal facemasks concealing £1 million pounds worth of cocaine



The table below illustrates where product is examined, the level of non-compliance by type



Clearly electrical goods and toys have highest percentage of non-compliance rates as a percentage of the volume of goods.