



# Department of Health & Social Care

**Steve Oldfield**

Chief Commercial Officer

Second Floor South, 39 Victoria Street, SW1H 0EU

E Steve.Oldfield@dhsc.gov.uk

By email

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Dear Colleagues,

Following my letter of 12th April, I wanted to clarify the date on which we must now plan for a potential no deal exit. The Government has reached agreement with the EU on an extension of Article 50 until 31st October at the latest, with the option to leave earlier as soon as a deal has been ratified. Although Parliament has rejected leaving without a deal multiple times, doing so remains the legal default at the end of the extension period. The Cabinet Office has confirmed that if we have not ratified the Withdrawal Agreement by 22nd May, then we are legally obliged to hold European Parliamentary Elections, and **so 31st October is the only date on which a no deal exit could happen.**

We are continuing to work with trade bodies and other stakeholders to review the position carefully before sharing further guidance at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime, all no deal measures (such as stockpiles, additional buffer stocks etc) should remain in place but on hold until further guidance is available. I am, as ever, grateful for your ongoing cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Oldfield

**Steve Oldfield**  
Chief Commercial Officer