

Top queries about SPIRE

The SPIRE website address is: <https://www.spire.bis.gov.uk> (or access via the Businesslink website at: <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk>)

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1. Processing Cases and Targets Times

If you want to enquire how your export licence application is progressing on SPIRE, please be aware that the Export Control Organisation (ECO) has the following processing targets in which to provide a substantive response:

- **Rating enquiries** - 10 working days, unless we have to consult other Government Advisors, in which case the target is 20 working days.
- **SIEL applications** - 20 working days in 70% of cases. We currently achieve this target in over 80% of cases. Unfortunately some take longer than that due to the sensitivity of goods and/or destination.
- **OIEL applications** - we normally recommend that you allow 6 months for the issue of the licence.

If your application is within the target times set out above, a further update will not be provided.

Online tracking for exporters is available. See the guidance document on the SPIRE website about **How to check progress on application made via SPIRE**.

Please also note that the above target times do not include any time taken to receive additional information that the ECO have requested from an applicant or

documents that have been sent by the applicant by post that the ECO are still waiting to receive.

For any **OGL registrations** that you have submitted, you will receive an acknowledgement from the ECO in due course. This is a formality and you can use the OGL from the moment you submit the registration. However you need to remember to keep all the required records and ensure you meet all the terms and conditions.

For further information see the ECO's commitment to customer service which is published in our **Service and Performance Code**. This is published on the [export control pages on the Department for Business website](#). Information is also available in the guide **About the Export Control Organisation** (on the [export control pages of the Businesslink website](#))

2. Providing additional information

Any information relating to an application needs to be provided on SPIRE. In response to a request for further information that the ECO sends to you via SPIRE, the contact for the application needs to click on the '**Acknowledge Notification**' link for the relevant case, provide the information required and then click on the submit response button at the bottom of the screen. If it is additional information you wish to provide, you should click on the '**Update Application**' link, provide the information and then submit that to the ECO.

You **should not** send additional information to the SPIRE inbox as this will not allow us to progress the case.

If you speak to a Case Officer over the phone and provide the required information that way, you will still need to click the '**Acknowledge Notification**' link and submit a response so that SPIRE knows this request is completed and we can then progress the case. Whilst a request is outstanding with you, we cannot continue processing.

You will know that a response has been submitted to us as **the 'Acknowledge Notification'** option will not appear next to a case in the application contacts workbasket.

3. Registration

If you have created a logon account but have not yet received a temporary password, it is likely that the e-mail is being blocked by your e-mail account. Please contact your IT support team and ask them to check that automatic e-mails from SPIRE are not being blocked.

4. If you have submitted a company registration but other nominated users have yet to receive a password

Anyone who wants to use SPIRE needs to have an individual account.

Users should click on '**New Account Registration**' link on the SPIRE homepage and then complete the requested information and click on '**Register**'. A temporary password will be sent to the e-mail address entered. When you go back into SPIRE, enter this information and you will then be prompted to change the password. Once you have done this, you will be taken to your workbasket and will have access to applications made on behalf of your company up to the level of access awarded to you.

You will also need to make sure that anyone nominated as a contact in an application has that level of access specifically allocated in your registration.

5. Updating my details

If there is a change to any of your details (including your e-mail address), please **do not create another account** on SPIRE, but instead go to '**Update My Details**' option on the left hand side.

6. How to view applications and licences that have been submitted by or issued to your company

Anyone who is added as a user to a registration will be able to access the applications made on behalf of the company up to the level of access awarded to them.

If you are having difficulty seeing shared applications, you should make sure that the details you entered when you created your account match those entered by the person who initiated the registration.

If there is a discrepancy, please let us know.

If the details are correct, you may have to alter the filters on your workbasket to view the applications.

You can view requests for further information and any letters/licences issued to you by using the '**Search Applications**' screen.

Anything that ECO send to you via SPIRE can be found in the '**Notifications**' link for a particular case.

7. Licences issued to formal registered address

Under SPIRE, all licences will be issued to the company's formal name and address (as recorded at Companies House).

This is due to the fact that the licence should be issued to the legal entity responsible for ensuring that all terms and conditions are met and this is as per the details at Companies House. 'Trading as' names will not be included unless

they are part of the formal company name and the site from which the goods may be exported is also not going to be noted on the licence.

All companies should therefore ensure that any commercial documentation adequately makes clear the link between the entity on the licence and that which may appear on invoices etc. For your information, HMRC are aware of 'trading as' names.

8. Goods description is as described on licence application

The goods description which appears on the licence is that which is entered onto the application into the goods description field. If your goods description needs to contain a part number, this needs to be included in this field. The part number can also be put into the part number field for reference purposes, but any information entered in this field will not appear on the licence.

9. How to deal with electronic licences

If you are exporting goods to a country outside the European Union (EU), you should reference your licence number on the SAD declaration made (either by you or on your behalf).

SPIRE will have sent the licence details to CHIEF at the time of issue.

All HMRC officers have access to SPIRE and can look at the licence to ensure the proposed export is covered by that licence.

The licence is automatically decremented if necessary. Exporters need to keep their own records and if necessary can request a transaction report from CHIEF. CHIEF will automatically keep track of the shipments made under a certain licence and will prevent shipments which would go beyond the value or quantity permitted by the licence as issued.

If you are exporting goods to an EU Member State, you should not that one of the conditions of export licences issued via SPIRE is that the exporter keeps records of intra-EU movements and has to present these records whenever the licence copy is presented to HMRC. HMRC have access to SPIRE and can check the legal version of the licence (this is also how they check the licence if they require an original).

Once the licence is exhausted, you have to notify ECO that this has happened. At the moment, the functionality to do this is not implemented. As soon as it is, we will notify you on how to do this, but in the meantime, please keep a note of the licence numbers as you exhaust them.

You should read the conditions on licences very carefully.

10. Pop-ups and Viewing Documents

If you cannot open a document, it is likely that pop-ups are blocked on your internet browser. Please see additional guidance about **Advice on Using Pop-ups** on the SPIRE homepage on how to change this or ask your IT support team to assist.

If you are having trouble opening any PDF documents that ECO have sent to you and have made sure that pop-ups are enabled, please check that you are running an up to date version of Adobe Acrobat. If you are still having problems, you should contact your IT support team who should be able to provide further assistance.

11. EC3 Forms

EC3 documents are required if you are exporting firearms to an EC Member State.

Query not answered here? Where to find more information

If you cannot find the advice that you are looking for that you should also look at the other guidance available on using SPIRE. This includes the following documents available from the SPIRE homepage:

- **Frequently Asked Questions about SPIRE**
- **How to validate a signature on a digitally signed document**
- **Advice on using Pop-ups**
- **Creating a SPIRE logon account and company registration**
- **How to register and de-register to use Open General Licences (OGLs)**
- **Contact Details for Export Licence Application Enquiries made to the Export Control Organisation via SPIRE**

If you are looking for further practical guidance about licensing issues, types of licences, details of sanctions and embargoes or information about legislation you should check the [export control pages on the Businesslink website](#).

If your questions are still not answered you can contact the ECO as follows:

Export Control Organisation
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
3rd Floor, 1 Victoria Street, London. SW1H 0ET

Tel: 020 7215 4594

E-mail: eco.spire@bis.gsi.gov.uk

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/exportcontrol>

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/exportcontrol>

Export Control Organisation
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