Measures taken by the General Directorate of Customs of the Czech Republic regarding the COVID-19 outbreak

Since the beginning of the declared COVID-19 state of emergency on 12 March, the General Directorate of Customs of the Czech Republic follows closely the Government decisions, instructions from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior and other institutions.

Special attention is paid regarding legal instruments, instructions, notes and recommendations from the European Commission which apply in the whole European Union.

Internally, the General Directorate of Customs informs all staff about relevant decisions and instructs about necessary procedure to be followed. All instructions are regularly updated and published on the internal website of the Customs administration.

Externally, the General Directorate of Customs publishes information on its website www.celnisprava.cz and deals individually with relevant stakeholders (government and other state and institutions, transport operators, companies...).

In order to prevent the further expansion of the COVID-19 epidemic and, on the other hand, to remain operational and continue performance of customs activities, the General Directorate of Customs adopted the following measures in connection with the state of emergency which apply for all customs procedures:

- Health protection and safety – use of personal protective equipment, hygiene and disinfection measures;
- Restriction on movement of persons within the public areas of Customs offices (entry to the building upon demand, body temperature checks);
- Limitation of direct contact with declarants and drivers (isolated rooms for storage and distribution of mail and other documents, where possible, documents are sent electronically);
- Protection based on the social distancing principle (change of shifts for customs officers, teleworking where possible);
- Flexibility towards extension of time-limits, deadlines and validity of documents, certificates and declarations;
- Temporary export restrictions on certain categories of critical medical supplies (such as medicines, disinfection and protective equipment);
- Reliefs from customs duty and taxes for the import or temporary admission of medical, surgical and laboratory equipment in line with the current legal provisions;
- Facilitation of customs procedures and customs formalities in line with the current legal provisions;
- Recommendation to use simplifications.

Remarks from the International Road Transport Union

On 29 April, the Czech government has prolonged the state of emergency until 17 May 2020. Exemptions from driving restrictions have been extended accordingly.

Source: CESMAD

The Czech government granted relaxations on driving and rest times rules.

Relaxations apply from 15 April until 31 May to all drivers involved in national and international transport of goods being performed within Czech territory and are as follows:

- Art. 6.1: increase of the maximum daily driving limit from 9 hours to 11 hours
- Art. 6.2: increase of the maximum weekly driving limit from 56 hours to 60 hours
- Art. 6.3: increase of the fortnightly driving limit from 90 hours to 100 hours
- Art. 8.1: reduction of the daily rest requirement from 11 hours to 9 hours
- Art. 8.6: postponement of a weekly rest period beyond six-24 hours period
- Art. 8.8: possibility for the driver to take the regular weekly rest in the vehicle, provided that the vehicle is stationary and it has suitable sleeping facilities.

Source: CESMAD

The applicable driving restrictions on Sundays and Public Holidays are lifted during the period of state emergency.

Prohibition to overtake on some sections of the CZ road network

From 19 March 2020 for a period of 60 days, the border sections of the D1, D2, D5, D6 and D11 motorways are affected by the following restriction:

In the direction of the border crossing points, lorries over 3.5 tonnes are prohibited from overtaking.

Exceptions to this prohibition are vehicles used in:

a) The carriage of perishable goods, at least half the volume of the cargo space of a vehicle or combination of vehicles.

b) The transport of live animals.

c) Carriage of fuel intended for petrol stations.

d) Carriage of postal items.

e) The transport of medical and biological material, medicines and material for their manufacture.
Practical implementation of the measures and further facilitation depends on the facilities and overall situation at each Customs office.

Until today, the General Directorate of Customs has not identified any serious problem or obstacles affecting the proper functioning of all customs procedures. At this moment of time, there are on-going efforts to manage the current difficult situation while ensuring compliance with the legal obligations.

**Introduction of priority lanes for priority transfer for the carriage of goods (20.03.2020)**

The Czech Republic has introduced so called “priority lanes” for priority transfers for carriage of medical, sanitary materials and devices, live animals, perishable goods, mail and fuel designated for the continuous supply of fuel stations on border sections of its main motorways D1, D2, D5, D8 and D11 between the Czech Republic and its neighbouring states Germany, Poland and Slovakia.

Start date: 19.03.2020

End date: not available

Further information: https://www.mdcr.cz/Media/Media-a-tiskove-zpravy/Od-soboty-plati-mimorad...

**Entry restriction to non-Czech nationals and travel restriction from the Czech Republic (15.03.2020)**

From midnight from Sunday 15/03 to Monday 16/03, the ban to entry is extended to all foreigners, not only from high risk epidemic countries. Foreigners residing in the Czech Republic with temporary residence over 90 days or permanent residence are excluded from this measure.

Further, the ban to travel from the Czech Republic will apply on citizens of the Czech Republic and persons with permanent or temporary residence over 90 days. In addition a number exceptions are valid to these travel restrictions (Government Resolution No. 203 of 13 March 2020)

Start date: 16.03.2020

End date: not available

Further information: https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/traveling-during-the-state-of-emergen...