Ips typographus (eight-toothed spruce bark beetle):

Stakeholder background briefing and Q+A

Updated: 11/06/2020

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Background – Ips typographus:

- The UK Chief Plant Health Officer confirmed a finding of the larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle Ips typographus in woodland in Kent in December 2018. This was the first wider environment finding of Ips typographus in the UK and was recorded through routine Forestry Commission plant health surveillance activity.
- Local movement restrictions on host material from the woodland were put in place and the Forestry Commission, Forest Research and Animal and Plant Health Agency conducted additional surveillance work in a 1km zone around the initial finding to identify any signs of infested trees.
- This surveillance work revealed further findings of the beetle in windblown trees on an adjacent woodland site.
- Evidence of breeding galleries were also recorded. Local movement restrictions were placed on this second site. As a precaution, a further local movement restriction was placed on a local wood yard adjacent to the infested sites.
- To prevent spread, the Plant Health (Ips typographus) (England) Order 2019 came into force on 16th January 2019 and introduced emergency measures in response to outbreaks of Ips typographus (larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle).
- The policy objective is to eradicate the outbreak. An eradication programme is in place, involving annual surveillance to detect beetle presence and trapping to capture any residual beetles at the outbreak site.
- The beetle poses no threat to human health but can be a serious and destructive pest of spruce tree species.

Plant Health (Ips typographus) (England) Order 2019

- The Plant Health (Ips typographus) (England) Order 2019 came into force on the 16th January 2019 and introduced emergency measures in response to outbreaks of Ips typographus (larger eight-toothed spruce bark beetle).
- This legislation is a precaution to prevent the spread of the pest to other areas. This Order ensures that the Forestry Commissioners are able, by notice, to demarcate appropriate areas around the outbreak sites and impose appropriate movement restrictions on conifer material which is capable of spreading the pest.
- The first Notice to be issued by the Forestry Commissioners was published on 16th January 2019.
A revised Notice (PDF, 395KB, 5 pages) of the Order came into force on 29 January 2019. This applies to the movement of spruce (Picea) material with bark (i.e. wood with bark, isolated bark, live trees over 3 metres) that has originated within the demarcated area.

- In this notice there is a single ‘demarcated area’. Spruce material with bark originating in the demarcated area can only be moved out of and within the demarcated area under a licence authorised by an inspector.
- Bark-free spruce material can continue to be moved out of or within the demarcated area in Kent and East Sussex.
- Through this Order, (published on the legislation.gov.uk website), the Forestry Commission can demarcate further areas if the presence of *Ips typographus* is confirmed. The notices under this Order will be published on the GOV.UK website.
- The demarcated areas will be reviewed by 2023.

**Q+A**

**What has been found?**

Adult *Ips typographus* beetles were captured in Kent in December 2018 using pheromone traps as part of Forestry Commission’s annual survey for the pest. The site was last surveyed in 2017 and no beetles were found at this time. Further surveillance by the Forestry Commission (FC) has identified breeding galleries in an adjacent area of woodland. An eradication programme is underway to deal with the outbreak.

**Is it endemic?**

This beetle is not endemic to the UK. The UK currently has Protected Zone status against this pest, with import and movement restrictions in place for susceptible host material. FC is obliged to act against the current findings and eradicate this pest to support maintaining this status. Further information about the beetle can be found at [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus).

**What surveillance work is FC conducting?**

Work is continuing as part of the ongoing eradication programme. This includes ground and aerial surveillance to look for beetles at the outbreak sites and in the surrounding area. Monitoring activities are also continuing at wood processing facilities/merchants and nurseries trading in large conifer trees.

**Is there a risk of ongoing spread?**

An eradication programme is underway. Swift action was taken as soon as the finding was confirmed to minimise the risk of spread, including local movement restrictions in the area where the infestation was identified. In addition, the Plant Health (*Ips typographus*) (England) Order 2019 came into force in January 2019 to help limit spread.

Ongoing surveillance is being done to detected pest presence and inform decisions about management action. As part of the eradication programme, pheromone trapping lures have
also been placed around the outbreak site and in woodlands, as well as at processing sites and ports to monitor for any adult *Ips typographus* beetles.

**What does the beetle look like? What symptoms should I be looking out for?**

The beetle prefers stressed or weakened trees e.g. windblown, damaged and recently felled spruce trees, where, under the right environmental conditions, beetle numbers can increase. Adult females lay eggs along a linear gallery system from which larval galleries radiate, becoming wider as the larvae grow. The pattern shows in the bark and in the surface of the wood and is unique to *Ips typographus*. This symptom should be looked for in any dead trees, whether standing or fallen. Also look for standing individual and groups of dead trees. Tree death occurs when the beetles "mass attack" trees, following build-up of beetle numbers on stressed or weakened material, overcoming the trees' usual defences by a combination of large numbers and a blue stain fungus (*Endoconidiophora polonica*) carried by the beetles.

![Image of Ips typographus beetle](image)

**What precautions can/should landowners /timber processors take?**

All landowners and timber processors should remain vigilant for this pest, particularly in areas where spruce species may be stressed e.g. through windblown, drought or other poor site conditions. Active management will help reduce the risk of infestation. All suspected symptoms of the bark beetle must be reported to the Forestry Commission via the Tree Alert portal under EU Plant Health Regulation and to your local APHA Plant Health Inspector.

**What should I do if I find this beetle?**

Suspected symptoms of the bark beetle must be reported to the Forestry Commission on the Tree Alert portal and to your local APHA Plant Health Inspector.

**What is the Plant Health (*Ips typographus*) (England) Order 2019?**

To protect the country against this pest, the Plant Health (*Ips typographus*) (England) Order 2019 came into force on 16 January 2019. The Order allows the Forestry Commission to demarcate areas around confirmed outbreak sites and imposes movement restrictions on conifer material capable of spreading the pest using a Notice. The demarcated area will be reviewed by 2023.

A revised Notice (PDF, 395KB, 5 pages) of the Order came into force on 29 January 2019. This applies to the movement of spruce (Picea) material with bark (e.g. wood with bark, isolated bark and live trees over 3 metres) that has originated within the demarcated area.
Provision is made within the Order to enable plant health inspectors to authorise movements of spruce material with bark where this can be achieved without risking the spread of *Ips typographus*.

The demarcated area covers parts of Kent and East Sussex and the boundaries of are shown in the *Ips typographus* notice map and within the Notice (PDF, 395KB, 5 pages), which also contains a description of the boundary. This Notice replaces the Notice originally issued on 16 January 2019.

Movement authorisation and timber plant passporting

What are the changes?

On 16 January 2019 controls were introduced restricting the movement of all spruce material (including trees and wood with bark, isolated bark and wood chip with bark) which has originated within 50 km of the *Ips typographus* outbreak site. This 50km area is known as the demarcated area and can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus.

Temporary measures were introduced during 2019 to control the movement of spruce material both within and out of the demarcated area. During the transition period the UK is operating under the EU Plant Health Regulation. There is now a general obligation under the EU Plant Health Regulation that susceptible conifer material should not be moved from the demarcated area. By way of derogation from this obligation, any movement of this material must be authorised by a Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector. The material will be subject to inspection by Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspectors before dispatch and its movement will be subject to conditions set out in an authorisation letter provided by a Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector.

Conifer timber that is bark-free is not subject to the same movement restrictions so can be moved without inspection or a timber plant passport.

The controls will remain in place until further notice.

Why are you introducing these changes?

Continued survey and inspection has found no evidence of any further pest infestation out of the 50 km outbreak site so this is both a precautionary measure and a legal requirement to prevent the pest spreading further afield.

What are the new movement requirements for conifer timber?

On 14th December 2019 Plant Health Regulation (PHR) and Official Control Regulation (OCR) were also introduced to modernise protections against tree pests, as part of the EU’s Smarter Rules for Safer Food (SRSF) package.

Under the PHR plant passports are required for the following regulated wood, wood products and isolated bark. **However, please note that plant passports cannot be used for the movement of spruce wood and wood products with bark and spruce isolated bark from the area demarcated for *Ips typographus***.

- Conifer species with bark
- Christmas trees and foliage/tops taken from conifer trees over 3 metres tall
- Sweet chestnut with bark
Plane, walnut or wingnut (with or without bark)

Professional operators commissioning the movement of regulated material must be registered and authorised by the Forestry Commission to issue plant passports.

For all these species, the wood products that require a plant passport include roundwood, wood chipped at a felling site or points of aggregation, brash and isolated bark.

Registration takes around 20 minutes. To start the process, [click this link].

Introducing plant passports for timber movement within GB will enable the UK to retain its recognition by the European Union as a Protected Zone for conifer bark beetles and other known and emerging pests, protecting our commercial and conservation interests in forests and woodlands, and enabling the forestry sector to maintain high standards of biosecurity.

What is a plant passport?

A plant passport is an official document described by EU legislation which is issued by a Forestry Commission-authorised and registered Professional Operator. It is used to manage the traceability of each load of timber. The format of a protected zone plant passport can be seen in this example:

Can I move spruce timber with bark that has originated in the demarcated area within this area?

Yes, but not with a timber plant passport. The movement can be authorised if it is controlled under an authorisation letter, has been inspected by a Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector and is destined for a Forestry Commission authorised processor.
Can I move spruce timber with bark that has originated in the demarcated area to another area?

Yes, but not with a timber plant passport. The movement can be authorised if it is controlled under an authorisation letter, has been inspected by a Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector and is destined for a Forestry Commission authorised processor.

Can I move spruce timber that is bark-free?

Yes, conifer timber that is bark-free can be moved without the requirement for a plant passport and without any further control. However, please note that ‘bark-free’ has a very clear definition:

“Wood from which all bark, except ingrown bark around knots and bark pockets between rings of annual growth, has been removed [ISPM 15, 2002; revised CPM, 2008].”

This is a higher standard than de-barking which is a process that removes most of the bark but not necessarily all of it.

What is the process for movement of spruce timber with bark originating within the demarcated area?

Early notice of an intention to move spruce wood with bark should be provided to the Forestry Commission and arrangements made for an inspection. A Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector will survey the felling site and inspect the material to be moved (i.e., any timber with bark, isolated bark, or trees over 3m). An Authorisation letter will be issued for material which is free of the pest *Ips typographus*, detailing the conditions for movement.

The material may only be moved to a processor authorised by the Forestry Commission to receive and process spruce from the demarcated area.

Notice of intention to move spruce wood and requests for inspections should be made to plant.health@forestrycommission.gov.uk or via 0300 067 5155.

What is the process for movement of other non-spruce conifer timber with bark?

To ensure traceability, each load of timber must be accompanied by plant passport. The plant passport needs to be issued by someone who is a Forestry Commission registered and authorised Professional Operator.


How do I become an authorised registered Professional Operator?

You can register to become a Professional Operator by visiting this link. You will be required to complete a short e-learning module. Registration takes around 20 minutes.

Do I need to become an authorised registered Professional Operator?
If you wish to move any of the following material within the UK and to the EU, you are legally required to register and be authorised with the Forestry Commission under the new PHR:

- Conifer species with bark
- Christmas trees and foliage/tops taken from conifer trees over 3 metres tall
- Sweet chestnut with bark

For all these species, the wood products that require a plant passport include roundwood, wood chipped at a felling site or points of aggregation, brash and isolated bark.

For conifer material with bark and isolated bark to be moved to Northern Ireland, pest freedom is required for 6 bark beetles. Within GB, only the Pest Free Area in west Scotland has pest freedom for the six bark beetles. The Forestry Commission complete inspections in the Pest Free Area and then authorise professional operators to issue plant passports for this trade.

**How does a processor become authorised to accept spruce material with bark?**

All processors and end users can apply to the Forestry Commission to become authorised to receive spruce material which originated in the demarcated area and has been authorised by an inspector under an Authorisation letter. Start the application process [here](#).

Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have the appropriate facilities to receive and utilise the material, and the appropriate systems in place to record the receipt, process or utilisation and subsequent dispatch the material.

For more information, contact [plant.health@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:plant.health@forestrycommission.gov.uk). Or 0300 067 5155

A Forestry Commission Plant Health inspector will then arrange to visit the site and confirm that the appropriate processes and facilities are in place.