



Take your car from KSA to the UK

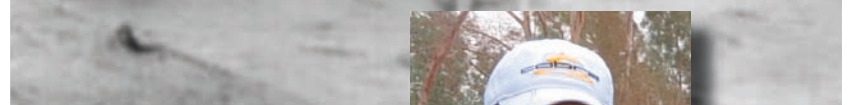
Thinking of taking your car back to the UK or possibly buying a car in Saudi to take back to the UK, then here are some of my experiences. First of all I need to make a small admission. My ultimate objective was to take a car to Spain, since we have a villa there, and as my wife retired mid way through 2009, she now spends much more time in Spain and needed some wheels to get around. However after consulting some English car import agents in Spain, they fervently recommended taking the car through the UK before taking it to Spain. Their view was that the English importation system was much easier to comprehend and less bureaucratic than the Spanish equivalent, especially when the car was coming from Saudi.

So I began by researching the import requirements for the UK trawling through all the UK Customs and DVLI web sites to understand what I needed to do, what documents were required and how to go about taking a LHD car into the UK. Now I can hear you ask why would I even want to take a car bought in KSA in the first place. Quite simple really, it was considerably cheaper to do so, even after all the import and transport costs were included.

It helped that VAG were giving substantial discounts in KSA on the car my wife wanted and the exchange rate at the end of 2008 meant further savings were to be had as well. It was also impossible to buy a LHD car in the UK, so the only alternative was to try in Germany, where the car was manufactured or Spain where new car prices are extortionate.

So having completed the research I then made certain when buying the car I obtained the relevant type approval certificate from the dealer in KSA, stating the car was to European type approval specifications, since this is what I understood was the magic ingredient to get the car into the UK without having it subjected to type approval testing.

So in January 2009 I purchased the car and drove it sparingly for six months. Well it's difficult when you are a two car family with only one driver and the car was really



for my wife. Imagine if some hooligan had decided to put a dent in it, then whose fault would that have been! Why six months? Because that is the time the UK customs require the car to be owned to be eligible for import free of UK taxes.

by Martin Dickinson

Six months later I contacted Four Winds and delivered the car to them to ship to the UK. It went into a container and a couple of weeks later turned up in Tilbury. Four Winds took care of all the KSA export requirements and car de-registration as well as customs clearance in the UK. Having got the car there, it was then the problems started. The requirements described in the web sites 6 months earlier had all changed, and what we thought was a simple matter of completing the paperwork to tax and insure the car for the UK had turned into something more complex.

I discovered that the car now had to go through UK type approval before it could be taxed & registered and the magic type approval certificate was a total waste of space. So now I was left with a car on the docks which couldn't be registered in the UK, and we were due to fly there in three weeks to pick it up. Neither Four Winds nor their UK import agents were of any use, nor were their suggestions. So it was back to the internet to see who could help sort out the mess.

After several calls, even more emails and several quotations I opted for a local company, Specialised Shipping Services (SSS) based in Woking who offered a good price as well as an itemised breakdown, and appeared to have good credentials. Their web site also provided a wealth of information all in one place. In addition they could take care of absolutely everything necessary to have the car on the road and ready to drive away. They advised

