Published on *Adam Smith Institute* (http://www.adamsmith.org)

Christmas is cancelled [1]

Written by **Dr Eamonn Butler** [2] | Monday 24 December 2007

As Santa Claus sets off to drop presents down the chimneys of innumerable households on Monday night, let's hope that he has got the right paperwork.

Claus, of course, is just an alias. He's really Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, on the southern cost of Turkey. The EU (foolishly) isn't admitting Turkey to the Union, so Claus needs a visa and a work permit to run his Christmas delivery service in the UK.

His elves, of course, would be bound by the child labour regulations. Working at midnight on 24 December would be right out. And Claus would have to be vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau in order to work with young people. Since that can take up to three months, he's way too late for this year anyway. The education authorities might wonder why the elves aren't in school. And if the elves are paid, then they need to be registered under Pay as You Earn, and for stakeholder pensions.

Because he drops presents (and himself) down chimneys, he is covered by the Working at Heights regulations. He would need training on how to use a ladder, or would have to hire a cherry-picker (with professionally qualified operator).

The fact that Claus uses reindeer to draw his sleigh would of course bring him under animal welfare regulations. The sleigh itself must qualify as an aircraft, and as such has to be licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority.

If the presents that Claus drops off have their origin outside he EU ? Lapland, say ? then VAT forms have to be filled out. If Claus claims that his purposes are purely charitable, he would of course have to register with the Charities Commission.

Of course, like other successful and innovative businesspeople, he might decide not to bother coming to Britain at all.

blog comments powered by Disqus [4]

Source URL: http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/miscellaneous/christmas-is-cancelled

Links:
[1] http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/miscellaneous/christmas-is-cancelled
[2] http://www.adamsmith.org/authors/dr-eamonn-butler
[3] http://disqus.com/?ref_noscript
[4] http://disqus.com