



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 04/2021

Guidance updates on Export Health Certificates (EHCs) for exports to the EU and movements to Northern Ireland

Date issued: 20 May 2021. Version 10 (Final)

Purpose

To provide Official Veterinarians (OVs) with information to be aware of in relation to Export Health Certificates (EHCs) and Animal Health Certificates (AHCs) used for exports to the EU or movements to Northern Ireland. Yellow highlight indicates content that has been amended in the text from previous versions.

This is the final version of this Briefing Note. Future technical clarifications will be conveyed through [APHA Vet Gateway](#), routine [Briefing Notes](#) and updates to Notes for Guidance.

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v10.1 Temporary admission of Registered Horses into the EU and Transit of Equidae through the EU and NI

- Section II.2 of equine certificates [8336](#) (temporarily export a registered horse for a period of less than 90 days to the European Union or move it to Northern Ireland) and [8337](#) (equines destined for another third country which will transit the European Union or Northern Ireland) contain a clustering of ‘either’ and ‘and/or’ statements relating to 40 day holding requirements prior to dispatch. In cases where the animal has only been resident in the country of dispatch, you are advised that it is sufficient to attest to the first “either” only. The subsequent “either” and “and/or” statements in paragraph II.2.1 could then be struck through.

v10.2 EHC Online changes – usability fixes for live animal certificates

- In response to feedback, we are introducing a series of improvements to the EHC Online system. The following fixes will be implemented for the following equine, poultry and hatching eggs EHCs as of Tuesday 18 May 2021. Changes will only affect new applications created in the EHC Online service and will not be applied retrospectively to any existing applications in the service:
 - **Page numbering.** Once Certifiers have accessed the EHC via the ‘editable’ certificate link, they are now able to insert the total number of pages, including any additional schedule pages directly into the EHC. The number entered will replicate on every page of the certificate pack. If Certifiers do not know the total number of pages in the certificate pack, including additional schedule pages, they will have to add the page numbers manually at time of certification.
 - **Blank pages.** Blank pages have been removed from the EHCs, removing the need for Certifiers to score through and number these pages manually.
 - **Serial numbers.** The font size of the EHC serial number has been increased.
 - **Country of origin.** ‘United Kingdom’ and ‘GB’ that was pre-populated into field I.7 has been removed. Applicants will now be asked a question during the application process in the EHC Online service to populate this data entry field. Certifiers will be able to update or amend field I.7 digitally or manually as required.
- Changes will also be made to reflect the EU’s language requirements for EHCs (see section v4.3 below).

Items from previous version (new edits highlighted in yellow)

v9.1 Blood testing requirements for equines (last updated 29/04/2021)

- Equines returning to the EU or NI from GB and requiring blood test results for EVA and/or EIA to support their Export Health Certificate, can make use of the results of tests undertaken prior to their original departure from the EU, providing these are still valid.
- The GB OV’s approving the ‘return’ EHCs, will though need to be provided with robust documentary evidence, that the tests were carried out within the previous 21 days (EVA) or 30 days (EIA) by an approved laboratory in a Member State (ie a laboratory approved by the Competent Authority in a Member state to test samples for official export certification purposes). Where this evidence is not forthcoming or any of the tests are no longer valid, further testing will be required.

- For those equines that do not require blood testing to enter GB, it will be possible for them to have any tests required to return, undertaken before leaving the EU or NI (to avoid delays in GB) in an approved laboratory, providing their validity is sufficient (and the GB OV is provided with robust documentary evidence of this). If they are no longer valid or the evidence is not forthcoming, further sampling and testing will be required in GB by APHA Weybridge (EVA and EIA) or AFBI Northern Ireland (EIA only).

v9.2 Animal Health Regulations (last updated 20/05/2021)

- New EU Animal Health Regulation (AHR) rules now apply. As of 21 April 2021, five new EHCs and one private attestation can be used for exports of specific products of animal origin to the EU. This includes two new composite product EHCs and the private attestation document for products exempt from certification. The EHCs are on [EHC online](#) and the [private attestation on form finder](#).
- For live animals, germinal products and other products of animal origin you will be able to continue using existing EHCs until August 2021. The remaining new EHCs, including for live animals and germinal products, will be phased in over the coming months.
- Further guidance can be found in [OV Briefing Note 10/21](#). Ongoing communications around the Animal Health Regulations will be provided in routine briefing notes. New or amended Notes for Guidance to new or amended certificates under AHR will be published before the AHR EHCs become available. Frequently asked questions for certifiers relating to the new certificates are available [here](#), or via email from Traders@defra.gov.uk

v9.3 Use of schedules (last updated 29/04/2021)

- Information should only be included in a schedule if it is not possible to fit the information within the space provided into the main body of the certificate.
- The schedule must be clearly legible when printed.
- The information provided in the schedule should clearly reference the section of the certificate that it applies to and must match the information that is required in the certificate. Wherever possible this should be provided in the same format as in the certificate (i.e. a table with the same column headers in the same order).
- Only the information required in the certificate should be included in the schedule (e.g. OVs should not include commercial information such as prices or copies of other supporting documentation such as supporting attestations or laboratory results unless specifically instructed to include these).
- OVs must follow the guidance on [APHA Vet Gateway](#) and in the Notes for Guidance for the relevant certificate when using schedules.

v8.1 Movement of unregistered geldings (last updated 25/03/2021)

- Exports of unregistered geldings to the EU can be certified using [EHC 8335](#) (Equine animal for breeding or production). Council Directive 2009/156/EC defines 'equidae for breeding and production' as Equidae other than 'registered equidae' or 'equidae for slaughter'. Therefore, an unregistered gelding can be considered as an equidae for production by exclusion of definitions and moved under this certificate if all relevant requirements are complied with. Box 'breeding and production' in section 1.25 of Part I should be ticked.
- The NFG have been amended to reflect this.

v7.1 Latin names for animals (last updated 18/03/2021)

- Section 1.28 of the EHC requires the species to be specified according to the scientific name in Latin. This requirement has been enforced by BCPs. Details of the scientific name in Latin can be found by selecting the "name" the entering common name at <https://eunis.eea.europa.eu/species.jsp>

v7.2 Health status requirements for equines – certificate 8335 (last updated 18/03/2021)

- Certificate 8335 (Individual registered horse, registered equine animal or equine animal for breeding or production to the European Union and Northern Ireland), part II.2. – attestation of residence and pre-export isolation – Notes for Guidance are being updated, with regard to pre-export isolation, to read as follows: 'During the 30 days prior to dispatch, the animal must be kept apart from other equidae not of the same health status. This means that equines must not come into direct contact with other equidae that are either diseased or in the case of GB, an equidae that comes from a country outside Sanitary Group A.'
- The equivalent paragraph in existing Notes for Guidance should be disregarded.

v7.3 Use of microchip number to identify horses when conducting Export Health Certification (last updated 18/03/2021)

- When submitting samples taken from horses to provide evidence for export certification, the microchip number should always be read and included on the submission form. This will ensure that it also appears on the results report from the laboratory. OV's who are presented with laboratory results from samples they did not take personally should exercise great caution if the microchip number is not present on the result or if they have any doubts that the identity of the animal was not positively verified at the time of sampling.

v7.4 TB Testing of domestic bovine animals intended for breeding and/or production (last updated 18/03/2021)

- Although Scotland is a country recognised as having an official tuberculosis-free status for the purposes of exports of domestic bovine animals for breeding and production to the European Union and Northern Ireland; it is a policy requirement to carry out an intradermal tuberculin test as per exiting guidance, this is to mitigate the potential for bovine animals having moved previously to Scotland from a non-OTF region of GB. 8223NFG will be amended to reflect this policy.

v6.1 Either/or statements (last updated 10/03/2021)

- Generally, “either/or” statements must be regarded as exclusive, i.e. that only one option must be retained in the statement.

v5.1 Germinal product exports – bovine semen (last updated 04/03/2021)

- We are aware that some exporters have faced challenges when exporting bovine semen from storage centres. Specifically, certain BCPs have required that Box I.17 on the [relevant EHC](#) contain the reference number for the individual official document(s) or certificate(s) that accompanied the semen from the collection centre to the storage centre.
- These official documents accompanying the semen from the collection centre to the storage centre officially link both premises and provide the evidence that the supplying collection centre was/is approved in accordance with 88/407/EEC and not a nationally approved collection centre.
- The Commission have confirmed that this box is mandatory, even where the storage centre and collection centre at which the semen was collected are both in Great Britain.
- Exporters should make arrangements to enable this information to be provided. These individual official document(s) or certificate(s) or officially endorsed copies thereof must be attached to the EHC
- Where the semen was collected and dispatched to the storage centre prior to January 1st 2021, the certificates referenced in Box I.17 of the EHC should follow the format outlined in Annexe D1 and D2 of [Council Directive 88/407/EEC](#).

v5.2 Day old chick and hatching egg exports (last updated 04/03/2021)

- We are aware that some BCPs are demanding that consignments of day old chicks and hatching eggs with more than one flock of origin are presented as separate consignments, with an EHC per flock of origin. The Commission has confirmed that several flocks can be covered by the same official certificate for day old chicks and hatching eggs, as set out in European regulations, provided that they can all be covered by the same information and guarantees mentioned in the certificate.

v4.1 Inspection requirements for day-old checks at BCPs (last updated 17/02/2021)

- We have been made aware of different approaches taken by BCPs in the physical inspection of consignments of day-old chicks, including in some cases the unloading of all trolleys and opening of multiple boxes within a consignment, causing a delay of up to three hours.
- The Commission has confirmed that day-old chicks are not subject to individual clinical examination. However, clinical examination must consist of observation of the state of health and behaviour of the entire group or of a representative number of animals. It is the responsibility of the competent authorities of the BCP to apply these rules while avoiding the injury or unnecessary suffering of the animals.

v4.2 Certificate number on page 2 of EHCs (last updated 17/02/2021)

- A number of BCPs have challenged the absence of a certificate reference number on page 2 of GB EHCs. This is a result of current certificates aligning exactly to models set out in Commission Regulations. We have agreed with the Commission that these can be amended to ensure each page of the EHC bears the unique code of the certificate.
- Until these amendments are complete, Certifying Officers should add the reference number by hand on page 2 and any additional added schedules, clearly initialling and stamping the amendments in the margin as required.

v4.3 EHC languages (last updated 20/05/2021)

- The Commission have confirmed that EHCs for export to the EU need to be drawn up in one or more of the languages of the Official languages of the EU, understood by the Certifying Officer and the Border Control Post.
- It is therefore only necessary to provide an EHC in English and the language of the member state of entry into the EU. A certificate for the member state of destination (if different from the member state of entry) is not a requirement and can be discarded.
- The EHC Online service has been updated to reflect this. New applications created in the EHC Online service from 21 May 2021 onwards will no longer create an EHC in the language of the destination EU Member State (if different from the language of the BCP of entry).

v3.1 Consignor versus point of dispatch (last updated 17/02/2021)

- The European Commission has confirmed that the address of the 'Consignor' given in Part 1 of the certificate may be different from the address of the place of dispatch given in the same part of the certificate. The former is a natural or legal person responsible for dispatching the consignment. It is not a requirement that this person/organisation always operate from, or be based at, the premises from which

the consignment is dispatched to the EU, though they must be located in the exporting country (i.e. the UK).

v2.1 Colour of stamps and signatures (last updated 26/01/2021)

- We have had feedback that some BCPs have insisted blue ink is required when signing and stamping EHCs. This is incorrect. Defra has received confirmation from the EU Commission that stamps and signatures on the original certificate must be clearly different from the colour of the printed text in the document, but do not need to be a specific colour.

v2.2 Consignee details and place of destination (EHC and CHEDs) (last updated 26/01/2021)

- The EU Commission has confirmed that it is permissible for consignee details (name, address) entered into Part I of the EHC to be different from those of the details of the operator responsible for the consignment. As per Part I of Annex II of 2019/628 the consignee is the natural or legal person for whom the consignment is intended in the Member State of destination whereas the operator responsible for the consignment is the person responsible for the consignment on arrival at the EU BCP
- The details of the consignee in the certificate do not have to match the details on the CHED. However, the CHED must state the correct address of the consignee/consignees (if different to that in the certificate) and the place/places of destination. This is for the person responsible for the consignment to ensure it happens rather than the Certifying Officer (CO).
- For products to be placed on the EU market (i.e. those that are not following transit procedures), the EU have confirmed that the address of the consignee entered into the EHC and CHED must include a named individual and a complete address, located in the EU. This is the case even if the headquarters of the consignee are in the UK or another third country.
- Entering details of the place of destination in part I of the EHC is optional (aside from when products in transit are being stored), however this information is required in the CHED (TRACES importer declaration). It is possible for this information to be different to the address of the consignee.
- Where consignments are split at the BCP, the initial CHED must indicate the BCP as place of destination, and the various, onward places of destinations must be declared in the subsequent CHEDs. In this case, the place of destination if entered on the EHC can (and would) differ from the real place of destination that must be mentioned in the CHED.

v2.3 Responsible operators and presence at BCP (last updated 26/01/2021)

- We have asked the Commission whether operators responsible for consignments (e.g. import agents) need to be physically present at the BCP. Article 15 of the OCR stipulates that operators “shall assist and cooperate with the staff of the competent authorities in the accomplishment of their tasks”. The Commission has confirmed that it is up to the local competent authorities to decide which kind of assistance they need. Where BCPs do not have their own workforce to handle the loads, they may request the operator responsible for the consignment or their representative(s) to be physically present at the BCP. Following confirmation from individual authorities, physical presence is required for:
 - Consignments sent to France
 - Unaccompanied consignments sent to the Netherlands

Exporters should confirm the requirements with the importing BCPs.

- Operators responsible for the consignment must be located in the EU territory. If they cannot be physically present at the BCP, the operator must make arrangements to provide assistance at the BCP. In the event of lack of assistance at the BCP a consignment may be rejected if this prevents the official controls from being properly performed.

v2.4 Certification of live pigs: Public Health Attestation for *Trichinella* (last updated 29/04/2021)

- Defra applied to the EU Commission for listing of GB as a third country to allow us to certify live pigs or pig meat for export as coming from controlled housing without the need for *Trichinella* testing.
- GB has been granted use of a derogation from testing un-weaned piglets under the age of 5 weeks. EU Member States have also voted in favour of our application regarding the ability to certify other pigs or fresh meat from them as coming from controlled housing without the need for trichinella testing. The relevant EU legislation was published on 25 March 2021 and came into effect on 21 April 2021.
- This means the situation for export for live pigs exported to the EU is:
 - *for slaughter* - can be tested for trichinella at the abattoir of destination in the EU
 - *for breeding/production* - can be introduced into EU controlled housing or non-controlled housing holdings if from GB controlled housing.
- The position for Northern Ireland (NI) is unchanged from previous guidance:
 - NI does not need to be listed as a third country for the purposes of exporting to the EU and is identified alongside Member States as a country using controlled housing.

- Consignments of live pigs and pig meat can therefore be certified as coming from controlled housing for export to all Member States.
- NI is also able to apply the derogation from testing un-weaned piglets under five weeks old.
- In all cases, we advise that exporters contact the importer before preparing the consignment to confirm that they will accept it.

v1.1 Certified Copies of Certificates (last updated 26/01/2021)

- A certified copy should only be made:
 - for the Certifying Officer (CO) to retain themselves or forward to Centre for International Trade APHA, if the Notes for Guidance require this, or
 - by prior agreement with the BCP, in the specific case of unattended consignments, when the risk of the certificate getting lost is high. In this case the original should be forwarded to the BCP by post or courier and the certified copy accompanies the consignment.
- A certified copy should not be made to forward to the importer for completion of CHED Part 1 or as an electronic copy to the BCP for advance checks as the BCP will expect the certificate that travels with the Consignment is an exact match copy, i.e. not annotated as 'certified copy'. A standard colour or black and white copy of the original certificate is the better format for advancing to the importer and to the BCP for advance checks prior to arrival of the goods with the certificate attached.

v1.2 Page numbering (last updated 17/02/2021)

- The certificate reference number must be provided on each sheet, the pages and any schedules must be sequentially numbered to span the languages included and each page must bear the signature and official stamp of the CO, i.e. if four A4 pages are printed back to back on two sheets of A4 paper, all four pages must be stamped and signed. COs will have to make handwritten corrections to page numbering as may be required. E.g. 1/4 to 4/4 in the example given above.
- Following dialogue with the Commission, we advise that the original page numbering should be deleted when writing in the full sequential order, with corrections accompanied by the initials and the stamp of the Certifying Officer. These additions must be made so that the certificate remains readable, otherwise it might lead to rejection of the consignment.

v1.3 Stamping (last updated 17/02/2021)

- When signing either an EHC or AHC, an Official Veterinarian or other Certifying Officer (CO) should ensure that the certificate contains no deletions or alterations, other than those which are indicated on the certificate to be permissible Any

corrections applied to permitted entries must be initialled and stamped (in the margin) by the certifying veterinarian. Permissible deletions are normally indicated in the 'Notes' section at the end of the certificate, with the instruction 'Keep as appropriate'.

- Where the certificate contains optional or contextual statements, the statements which are not relevant shall be crossed out, individually initialled and stamped by the certifying officer, or completely removed from the certificate.
- Permitted paragraphs and sections may be crossed out by applying a 'Z' across the section or paragraph rather than crossing out line by line.
- There is no requirement for a date and time to accompany each stamp. The date is only entered at the required entry field in part I of the certificate, and at the end where the Certifying Officer signs, stamps and dates that action.
- We are aware of some BCPs demanding that all handwritten information in Part 1 of the EHC is initialled and stamped, including handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes. There is no legal requirement in EU legislation that all the hand-written information entered in the certificate must be signed and stamped. It is only in the case of correction, in any part of the certificate, or in the case of statements to be crossed out, that the certifier must add signature (or initials) and stamp. This has been confirmed by the European Commission. The Commission noted however, in the case of a hand-written certificate, it is expected that the same one person completes the document. If not, the BCP might suspect that empty boxes were completed by another person after the certificate has been signed by the official certifier. You should consider checking with the specific BCP regarding their preference when it comes to the stamping and initialling of handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes in Part I of the EHC.
- Clarification from the EU Commission means that all pages (as opposed to sheets of paper) are signed and stamped once individually, in place of fan stamping and in addition to any permitted alterations. There is no requirement to fan stamp. The Notes for Guidance may be disregarded in respect to the instruction to fan stamp; they will be updated as soon as possible.
- OV's are reminded to consult the Notes for Guidance prior to the completion of each certificate. NfG will be updated with this new information in due course.

Further Information

OVs should make sure they are familiar with all relevant guidance and other documents relating to EHCs and that they discuss requirements with exporters in advance. See <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/exports/ehc-online.htm>.

For further information about AHCs see

http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Proce

[dures/Small_Animal_Exports/Animal_Health_Certificates.html](https://apha.gov.uk/dures/Small_Animal_Exports/Animal_Health_Certificates.html).

You can also contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency's Centre for International Trade (CIT) on 03000 200 301