

## **ANNEX C**

### **GUIDANCE NOTES TO APPLICANTS FOR APPROVAL OF CATTLE EARTAGS**

#### **Introduction**

BCMS ETAS Support Team is part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) & is responsible for approving all official cattle ear tags under the Cattle Identification Regulations 1998, on behalf of the Agriculture Departments in England, Scotland and Wales. Approved eartags must conform to the specifications as set out in Commission Regulation (EC) No 911/2004.

In Northern Ireland the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is responsible for the approval of official cattle ear tags. To be approved, ear tags must have been tested & given PAS 44 : 2014 approval. The manufacturer must demonstrate that tags supplied to herd keepers in Northern Ireland comply with the requirements of the Cattle Identification (No2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998.

When an ear tag is approved for official cattle identification purposes, the tag may be sold and supplied to cattle keepers for official use and orders for the tag must be entered onto the official government computers. In GB this system is called ETAS, and in NI it is called APHIS. These systems allocate the unique identification code for the cattle tag. (More information about ETAS and APHIS can be found in the Cattle Eartag Manufacturers/Suppliers Code of Practice a copy of which is available on request from either of the addresses shown below). The Code of Practice has been drawn up to ensure that all suppliers of official cattle eartags conform to the same standards.

Publicly Available Specification "Official identification eartags for cattle – Specification" PAS 44 : 2014 provides the standard by which all ear tags are to be approved for official cattle identification purposes & must be measured before they may be approved for sale and supply to keepers of cattle. PAS 44 : 2014 was notified to the European Commission in accordance with the Technical Standards Directive 98/34/EC, as amended by Directive 98/48/EC. The tests required under PAS 44 : 2014 must be carried out in a Laboratory accredited by UKAS to ISO 17025 (see Note 1).

Please note that Defra do not charge for approving cattle ear tags for official identification, or for allowing access to cattle ETAS. We do not charge for registering you as an official ear tag supplier either. You will however probably be charged for welfare tests and PAS testing. Please speak with your vet and chosen accredited ISO 17025 laboratory for details of costs for these tests.

## **General Advice**

1. Applications for approval of cattle ear tags, or for approval of modifications to an existing approved cattle ear tag must be accompanied by a report from an independent laboratory which conforms to ISO 17025 (see Note 1) confirming that the ear tag complies fully with PAS 44 : 2014
2. Copies of the PAS document are available from:

ETAS Support  
BCMS  
Curwen Road  
Workington  
Cumbria  
CA14 2DD  
0345 050 9876  
Fax: 01900 702070  
Email: ETAS.sectionBCMS@RPA.gsi.gov.uk

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)  
Animal Welfare and Trade Branch,  
Room 922,  
Dundonald House  
Upper Newtownards Road,  
Belfast BT4 3SB  
Tel: 028 9052 4580

## **Making an application**

3. Manufacturers/suppliers of cattle ear tags must submit tags for consideration that are to be used for the official identification of cattle. Firstly **and before any tags are submitted for laboratory testing** the tag supplier must send an initial written request with samples etc to the ETAS Section, BCMS, Curwen Road, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2DD. Further advice can be obtained by calling 0345 050 1234.

### **For each type and size of tag the application must contain:**

For each type and size of tag the application must contain:

- a minimum of 6 samples of the tag.
- An ear tag applicator to fit the tags.
- Proposed marketing literature.

## **Arranging the welfare assessment**

4. If the initial assessment by ETAS is satisfactory, you will be informed that the Welfare Assessment can go ahead. Where a range of tags with the same

fixing mechanism are submitted for approval, ETAS will give a view on whether it is necessary for each tag to undergo the welfare assessment. The applicant will be responsible for all costs relating to the production of the report. After the welfare test report has been submitted to ETAS section for review, ETAS will then decide if the tags can be submitted for PAS 44 : 2014 testing. ETAS will inform you in writing of their decision.

### **Arranging the laboratory test**

5. Once approval is given to start PAS testing, sample tags with applicators must be submitted to a laboratory which conforms to ISO 17025 to be tested for compliance with PAS 44 : 2014. Arrangements must be made directly with the laboratory and all costs paid to them.

After PAS testing is complete, a full report will be sent to the applicant who must send a copy to the ETAS Support Team at BCMS for review (see above for address). The report must be authenticated with the signature of the tester.

6. ETAS Support will notify the applicant within one month of receipt of the test report if full approval is to be granted. Approval will not be granted until:

- Product literature takes account of any comments made by Defra/DARD.
- Access to ETAS has been granted
- The supplier of the eartag has read and confirmed in writing that they will comply with the Code of Practice.
- In the case of plastic tags a sample of the tag which is to be marketed containing the words PAS 44 : 2014 as required by clause 6.1.2 of PAS 44 : 2014

7. When all the above requirements are met, ETAS Support will formally notify the supplier in writing that full approval has been granted. The letter will detail all relevant access codes required for inputting tag orders onto the Eartag Allocation System (ETAS). ETAS Support will update the list of approved cattle ear tags GOV.UK relevant to the ETM.

ETAS section will notify DARD of any approvals granted.

8. Where a tag is said not to conform to PAS 44 : 2014 it will not be approved. ETAS section will write within one month of receipt of the laboratory report to the tag manufacturer/supplier to explain why approval has been refused, and to request any further information or testing that may be required. All appeals against non-approval must be made within one month of the written notification. Defra will notify DARD of any application refused.

9. Defra reserves the right on behalf of the Agriculture Departments to withhold or withdraw approval after sending written confirmation of its reasons to the tag manufacturer/supplier.

10. Under the United Kingdom's system for approving cattle ear tags for official use under Council Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, cattle ear tags which are marketed in another Member State may be given reciprocal approval provided the supplier can demonstrate that the ear tag meets equivalent standards to those applied in the UK. In these cases the applicant must provide documentary evidence that the ear tags have been tested to the equivalent of PAS 44 : 2014

Note 1: ISO 17025 is an international standard for the general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. Details of laboratories accredited to ISO 17025 will be found on the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) Website at [www.ukas.com](http://www.ukas.com).

**BCMS ETAS Support**  
13<sup>th</sup> April 2016