

ANNEX C

GUIDANCE NOTES TO APPLICANTS **FOR APPROVAL OF SHEEP & GOAT EARTAGS**

Introduction

BCMS ETAS Support is part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) & is responsible for approving all official sheep & goat eartags on behalf of the Agriculture Departments in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Approved eartags must conform to the specifications as set out in Commission Regulation (EC) No 911/2004.

When an eartag is approved for official sheep & goat identification purposes, the tag may be sold and supplied to keepers for official use and orders for the tag must be entered onto the official government computers. In GB this system is called ETAS. This system allocates the unique identification code for the tag. More information about ETAS can be found in the Sheep & goat Eartag Manufacturers/Suppliers Code of Practice. 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 sheep & goats – Specification" PAS 66 2014 provides the standard by which all eartags are to be approved for official sheep & goat identification purposes & must be met before they may be approved for sale and supply to keepers. The tests required under PAS 66 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 sheep and goat eartags for official identification, or for allowing you access to sheep and goat ETAS. We do not charge for registering you as an official ear tag supplier either. You will 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 testing.

General Advice

1. Applications for approval of sheep & goat eartags, or modifications to an existing approved eartag must be accompanied by a report from an independent laboratory which conforms to ISO 17025 (see Note 1) confirming that the eartag complies fully with PAS 66 2014.

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

Making an application

3. Manufacturers/suppliers of sheep & goat eartags must submit tags for consideration to be used for the official identification of sheep or goats. In the first instance, **and before any tags are submitted for laboratory testing**, manufacturers/suppliers must send an initial written request to the ETAS Section, BCMS, Curwen Road, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2DD. Further advice can be obtained by calling 0345 050 1234, ext 32120.

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

- a minimum of 6 samples of the tag printed with the Crown or DARD logo and the UK numeric format number “**UK 654321 123456**” or in the case of tags for use in NI “UK 9 581234 2643 7”.
- An eartag applicator to fit the tags.
- The proposed quality control procedures.
- Instructions for insertion of tags, including pictorial details of the positions in the animal’s ear in which the tag will be placed.
- 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 66 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 66 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 ETAS Support 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 66 as required by clause 6.1.1 a) & b).

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 sheep & goats ear tags on GOV.UK relevant to the ETM.

8. Where a tag is said not to conform to PAS 66: 2009, it will not be approved. ETAS 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.

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

10. Under the United Kingdom's system for approving sheep & goat eartags for official use under Council Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, sheep & goat eartags which are marketed in another Member State may be given reciprocal approval provided the supplier can demonstrate that the eartag meets equivalent standards to those applied in the UK. In these cases the applicant must provide documentary evidence that the eartags have been tested to the equivalent of PAS 66 2014.

Note 1: ISO 17025 is an international standard for the general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. Details of

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laboratories accredited to ISO 17025 will be found on the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) Website at www.ukas.com.

BCMS ETAS Support

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