

Strategy for Achieving “Officially Bovine Tuberculosis Free” Status for England: the ‘edge area’ strategy and removing CTS links

Bovine TB Information Note 05/13

August 2013

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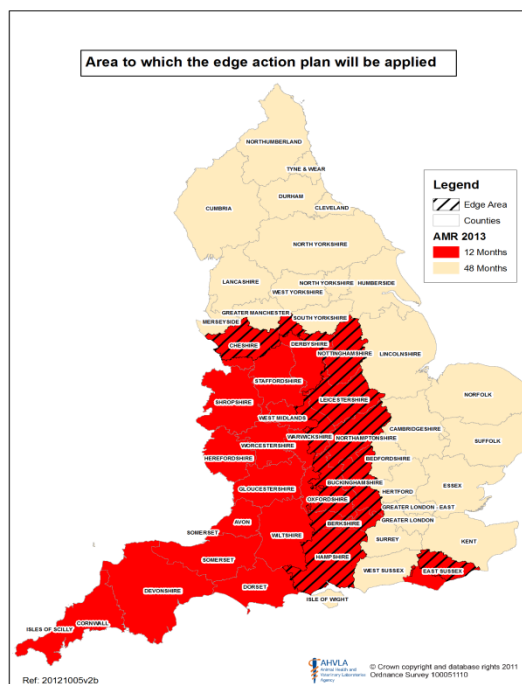
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Introduction

1. On 4th July Defra launched a public consultation on a new draft strategy for achieving Officially TB Free status for the whole of England within 25 years. The draft strategy states that we will be introducing new policies designed to stop and reverse the spread of bovine TB (bTB) at the frontier of the disease, known as the 'edge area', ahead of the outcome of the consultation exercise on the wider strategy.

What is the 'edge area'?

2. The 'edge area' is one of three types of bTB risk area identified in the strategy ('high risk area' (HRA), 'edge' and 'low risk area' (LRA)). The 'edge' is a geographical area at the edge of the current annual testing area where we do not have evidence that is endemic but where infection is either currently spreading or which is at risk of disease spread in the short to medium term.
3. It consists of some entire counties (Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Hampshire) and some part-counties (Cheshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and East Sussex).



What is changing?

4. We will introduce the following changes to extend the current policy of CTS link removal between different bTB risk areas:

- From the 12th August 2013, requests for CTS links between a holding in the 'edge' area and a holding in a different TB risk area will be refused. Cattle keepers will instead be offered one of the options described in paragraph 9 below. Movements between the holdings must therefore be reported.
- From the start of October 2013 the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) will proactively start to remove existing links between holdings where one of the holdings is in the edge area and the other is in a different TB risk area. This will mean that:
 - existing links will not be renewed when they expire, if they include holdings in the HRA and the edge area.
 - Links between holdings in the HRA and the edge area that do not currently have an expiry date will also be removed on a phased basis (over the course of a year).
 - The same will also apply for existing links between the edge area and the LRA (ie those areas on 4-yearly testing), although all existing links should have been removed as part of the previous exercise.
- 5. Affected cattle keepers will be contacted by BCMS to discuss next steps including alternative options. This change will not prevent the movement of animals between holdings, but such movements will now have to be reported to BCMS. The holdings will need to continue to meet the requirements of the standstill regime and pre-movement testing, as is already the case.
- 6. Details of other changes for the edge area can be found in TBIN 04/13.

What will cattle keepers need to do and when?

- 7. All cattle keepers should familiarise themselves with these changes. Affected cattle keepers should prepare for these changes so that they can make adjustments to their business organisation or register temporary CPHs if appropriate.
- 8. Cattle keepers thinking of setting up new CTS links will need to consider the implications of these changes. Cattle keepers can check whether the holdings are located in the edge area by entering the CPH numbers on the AHVLA website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/disease-control/bovine-tb/tb-testing-intervals-2013/>.

What are the options available to me?

9. The options made available following the changes in July 2012 are still in place. TB information note 03/12 provided information on these options. These are:

Option 1: Keepership changes when cattle are on rented grazing or land being grazed under a licence

This applies when the landlord/licensor agrees to become the keeper of the resident cattle when they are on the rented/licensed grazing. The landlord's/licensor's holding will need to be registered with BCMS (if not already) and the landlord/licensor registered as the keeper of the resident cattle. Movements between the two holdings must be reported to BCMS and recorded in the farm records as for any routine movement of cattle between farms. In addition, the landlord/licensor must observe all other relevant provisions, including those relating to standstill and pre-movement TB testing. **IMPORTANT: If the landlord/licensor claims under the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) any failure to comply with the relevant regulatory provisions would likely result in a reduction in their SPS payment under the Cross Compliance rules.**

Option 2: where keepers cannot, or choose not to, take Option 1 they should secure a temporary CPH for the land they wish to use

RPA already provides guidance for cattle keepers on how to secure temporary CPHs. Keepers should contact the RPA Helpline for further advice on this option.

IMPORTANT: Keepers should allow sufficient time for the temporary CPH to be set up: this can take up to 10 working days.

Why make changes?

10. The edge area strategy aims to focus effort on containing and then reversing the spread of bTB to achieve OTF status for the edge area counties by:
- identifying where disease is emerging and publicise this information locally so that cattle keepers are better equipped to reduce their bTB risks;
 - taking effective measures to stamp out the disease when found; and
 - preventing the disease from re-emerging by addressing the causes of breakdowns.
11. In July 2012 we introduced a new policy of removing CTS links between different TB risk areas to stop unreported and untested movements taking place between

these different risk areas. We are updating this policy to reflect the new 'edge' area measures.

Q&A

I have CTS linked holdings in areas subject to the same routine bTB testing frequencies – am I affected?

You need to check with BCMS. If the linked holdings are entirely within one type of risk area (eg high risk or edge) then you won't be affected by these changes.

I have linked holdings spanning different bTB risk areas, and the CTS link is open-ended. Will I be affected by this change immediately?

Not immediately. The removal of links will take place on a phased basis (over the course of a year). BCMS will contact you when these links are being reviewed to discuss next steps. CTS links that span the edge and high risk areas will not be approved from 12th August.

I have a herd in the HRA or LRA and have a CTS link with a holding in the edge area. Do I need to contact BCMS straight away to remove this link?

No. BCMS will contact cattle keepers a month before the CTS link expires or is planned to be removed and will discuss the options. If the linked holdings are entirely within one type of risk area (eg high risk, low risk or 'edge') then cattle keepers won't be affected by these changes.

Where can I find out further information about whether my herd is in the 'edge' area or not?

Cattle keepers should look at the AHVLA website in the first instance. There will also be a spreadsheet that will show whether a holding is in the edge area or not.

What happens to my existing Sole Occupancy Authority (SOA)?

Under the current policy you can retain your existing SOA but are not allowed to add new holdings to it. Where you have a SOA that spans the annual and four-yearly testing area, the current policy is that you must pre-movement test for any movements between different parts of the SOA. We are considering how best to address pre-movement testing requirements between different parts of SOAs that are completely within the annually tested area (including those that span the edge and HRA).

Contacts

If you have any further questions on how these changes will affect you, please contact your local AHVLA office. Contact details are available at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/about-us/contact-us/>

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This document/publication is also available on our website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/series/bovine-tb-information-notes>

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Version	What's changed
V1.1 – 22 August 2013	Amendment to point 9 – Option 2