



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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[www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** RFI 6056  
**Date:** 24/12/2013

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: China & Farmed Salmon/Salmon Farming

Thank you for your request for information on China and salmon farming/farmed salmon since January 2010 and meetings relating to the above "discussions" and "negotiations", which we received on 27 November 2013. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I enclose a copy of the information you requested:

### *Request under Freedom of Information (FOI) Act*

**Subject:** Information on China and Salmon Farming/ Farmed Salmon since 2010

**Reference Number:** **RFI 6056**

**Sent:** 27 November 2013 07:35  
**To:** Transparency; Helpline, Defra (CCU)

#### **SCOPE:**

Please provide information :

- On China and salmon farming/farmed salmon since January 2010.
- relating to the above "discussions" and "negotiations".



Please include:

- **copies of "export health certificates"**
- **all correspondence with**
  - **the Chinese Government,**
  - Chinese lobbyists or
  - agents with Chinese interests**on the salmon farming/farmed salmon issue.**
- **data**
- **and information**  
on exports of farmed salmon to China since January 2010.
- **Please provide this information electronically via email.**

**Background Info:**

- Original FOI request sent in October to Scottish Government
- Response provided regarded as *wholly inadequate*
- Excerpt:

*Thank you for your request dated 29 October 2013 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) for information on China and salmon farming/farmed salmon since January 2010. Addressing your request for all correspondence with the Chinese Government, Chinese lobbyists or agents with Chinese interests. Defra is the central competent authority in the UK for international trade in animal products and leads on these negotiations for all parts of the UK. Discussion between Defra and China have centered around agreement on the details of the export health certificates for the export of fishery products for human consumption from the UK to China. The Scottish Government therefore does not hold records of these negotiations.*

**Timeline  
of Defra involvement in negotiation  
of an  
Export Health Certificate for Fish (including salmon, both farmed and wild)  
to China**

- **12 August 2010 –**
  - Defra's Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) was approached by the CVO, Scottish Government (SG), to initiate an SG-led collaboration in establishing and getting agreed, an export health certificate (EHC) for fish from the UK to China.

- Defra's perceived remit within this collaboration was defined as forwarding, in a timely manner, any CVO letters and specimen certificates etc as drafted by SG. Responsibility for translation of documents was unresolved.

- **24 September 2010 -**

- An email was sent from Scottish Government to Defra/Animal Health Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) an Executive Agency of Defra.
- Subject was *Draft EHC Fishery Prods to China*
- About a draft EHC that had been prepared by SG for the export of fishery products to the People's Republic of China.

- **15 November 2010 –**

Sent a draft certificate (7208EHC) to Animal and Plant Quarantine General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and

- Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ) for consideration.

- **16 December 2010 –**

- Email response to Defra's draft certificate was received from an employee of AQSIQ, China (The name of employee has been redacted. We have decided that the information should be withheld under section 40(2) (third party personal data) of the FOIA or regulations 12(3), as the information constitutes personal data relating to a third party/third parties. Section 40(2) of the FOIA and Regulations 12(3) provide that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).
- It suggested 5 amendments to the draft EHC

- **Late December 2010 –**

- An amended certificate incorporating the suggested amendments, was sent to AQSIQ in late December 2010.

- **19 January 2011 –**

- Written confirmation was received from China that the amended draft certificate was acceptable.
- Confirmation came from AQSIQ, via British Embassy Beijing
- SG was tasked with producing a first draft of the Notes for Guidance (NFG) to accompany the newly agreed certificate.
- Defra Policy agreed to organise a teleconference to discuss how best to proceed with identifying and reflecting China's requirements regarding hygiene, health, labelling and laboratory standards.

- **Late January 2011 –**

Letter dated 17 January 2011 received from AQSIQ, China, requesting ‘...50 specimen certificates prepared in accordance with the final certificate content as bilaterally agreed (see attachment) and at the same time provide a list of names and stamp impressions of the British certifying agencies, together with a list of names of the signing veterinary officers and their specimen signatures, for use in port inspections in China.’

- **Friday, 4 February 2011 –**

Teleconference between officials of involved government agencies - aim: To gain a common understanding amongst all parties involved, of the way forward regarding AQSIQ’s (China’s veterinary competent authority) requirement that UK fish establishments be pre-approved/pre-listed in order to export to China,

Specifically, clarification around issues of China’s applicable hygiene, health, labelling and laboratory standards.

- **8 February 2011 –**

- AQSIQ Notice No. 9 2011 was received, declaring that China intended to strengthen inspection and quarantine on imported salmon

[http://jckspaaj.aqsiq.gov.cn/dwyxspjy/jblggjglbf/200903/t20090312\\_108517.htm](http://jckspaaj.aqsiq.gov.cn/dwyxspjy/jblggjglbf/200903/t20090312_108517.htm)

- **Wednesday 16 March 2011 –**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> teleconference arranged between Defra Policy, AHVLA Carlisle, Scottish Government, Welsh Government, DARD and FSA.
- Main objective was to ensure we have a UK-wide approach to certification of fish exports to China.

- **Friday, 1 April 2011 –**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Industry Stakeholders meeting in SG buildings, Perth.

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- **Monday, 11 April 2011 –**

- **SG** circulated minutes of the Stakeholder meeting held on 1 April 2011 to all attendees (various stakeholders as well as government agencies).

- **20 May 2011 –**

- Received confirmation that a deadline of 1 June 2011 had been set by AQSIQ for use of the ‘Agreed’ certificate 7208EHC alone (all LA-issued certificates would cease to be acceptable).

- This was published on the AQSIQ website,

[http://www.aqsiq.gov.cn/zwgk/jlgg/zjl/2011/201101/t20110120\\_176230.htm](http://www.aqsiq.gov.cn/zwgk/jlgg/zjl/2011/201101/t20110120_176230.htm)

- **Late May 2011 –**

- A number of urgent concerns were identified and discussed within government and with industry, relating to the deadline of 1 June 2011 for sole use of 7208EHC and unresolved issues that might hinder this.

- **25 May 2011 –**

- It was communicated to industry, via email by SG, that confirmation had been received that Local Authority certificates could still be used, same as they had been up to that point. Also, clarification was provided on future procedure.
- **31 May 2011 –**
  - The Notes for Guidance (7208NFG) were finalised by SG and sent to AHVLA Carlisle for loading on to the certification database.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> list of establishments that had applied to be authorised to export fishery products to China and another list of signatures of certifying EHOs of various Local Authorities was sent to China for submission to the Chinese competent authorities.
- **2 June 2011 –**
  - Email sent to AQSIQ, China, by SG on behalf of Defra, to inform them that:
    - We would make arrangements to ensure that all fishery products (except live animals and their propagation materials) exported from the UK and destined for the People's Republic of China would be accompanied by the new Export Health Certificate EHC7208.
    - We undertook to provide China with samples of all signatures and stamps of the Officials involved in certification.
    - Also, to inform them of the date after which Export Health Certificate EHC7208 would be the only one in use; until when Official Inspectors would continue to issue the previous versions of the Certificate.

It was also stated that to facilitate the transition, exporters who have already been authorised under the new system will start using the New Certificate EHC7208 with immediate effect. Those are the sixteen establishments included in the list of Establishments in the United Kingdom Authorised to Export Fish and Fishery Products to the People's Republic of China handed to you by the AHVLA Veterinary Adviser (VA) this morning- The VA name has been redacted. We have decided that the information should be withheld under section 40(2) (third party personal data) of the FOIA or regulations 12(3), as the information constitutes personal data relating to a third party/third parties. Section 40(2) of the FOIA and Regulations 12(3) provide that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

- **13 July 2011 –**

A Customer Information Note (CIN) was issued on to update exporters of non-live fish to China on procedures and requirements.  
The CIN may be accessed via this link:  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-trade/2011/cin-2011-63/>
- **17 April 2012 –**

A request was received from AQSIQ for further information to be included on 7208EHC.

- The main change was to add a “*production mode*” section, which specifies whether the product is *aquacultured* or *wild caught*.
- In the letter the transition time was revised to span April 2012 to 31 December 2012.
- However, AQSIQ hoped that Defra would be able to make changes to the 7208EHC ASAP and use the amended version from 1 June 2012.
- **29 October 2012 –**
  - A Customer Information Note (CIN) was issued to update stakeholders within the fish industry about ongoing issues. The CIN can be found at:  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-trade/2012/cin-2012-60/>
- **12 November 2012 –**

The currently available version of 7208EHC was put on the certification database and remains available to exporters

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA , and in keeping with the government’s Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

## Annex A

### Copyright

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## Annex B

### Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk)) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF