

A description of the UK system of controls on import of live animals and animal products and evaluation of its performance to protect public and animal health (April 2016 – March 2017)

September 2018



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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and Rural Affairs**
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**The Scottish
Government**



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

A description of the UK system of controls on import of live animals and animal products and evaluation of its performance to protect public and animal health (April 2016 – March 2017)

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 10A of the Animal Health Act (as amended by the Animal Health Act 2002)

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Executive summary

We are pleased to present our thirteenth Annual Report in accordance with section 10A of the Animal Health Act 1981 (as amended by the Animal Health Act 2002) which describes the steps being taken by government and others to prevent the introduction of animal disease into the UK. The regulatory landscape for import controls is complex and it continually needs to adjust to reflect changing global disease risks and an ever expanding pattern of international trade.

This report explains the specific outcomes and policy and operational developments between April 2016 and March 2017. In May 2016 the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland (DARDNI) changed to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland (DAERA), however the import structures remain the same as do the structures of the other key agencies across central and local government that are involved in this work and the legal basis for the controls remain unchanged so to reduce the length of this report they have not been listed separately but can be accessed in the review covering 2012-2014 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-controls-on-imports-of-animals-and-animal-products-april-2012-to-march-2014>

Scope of the report

This report covers the year April 2016 – March 2017.

This review has been prepared by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with contributions from the Food Standard Agency (FSA), the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Departments in the Devolved Governments, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Border Force.

The report gives details of:

- Risk Assessment/Global disease surveillance (Section 1)
- Protect and Respond: UK Border Controls (Section 2)
- Assurance: UK Border Controls (Section 3)
- Working Together: Cooperation between agencies (Section 4)

Whilst care has been taken to ensure that the web links contained in this report are correct at the time of publication, changes may occur.

For further information on the imports annual review reports please contact:

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Achievements/updates

Imports of dogs and cats

APHA initiated a new procedure whereby non-compliances found in trade between Member States were notified direct to individual contacts, in the Member State, via email. This streamlined the process and enabled quicker resolution of issues than by the previous Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) letter route. This has resulted in a particularly good response from colleagues in Poland who have been very helpful in the investigation on non-compliances and provided useful guidance on identifying fraudulent pet passports.

Bluetongue post import surveillance

Bluetongue post import testing is undertaken on susceptible species that have originated from high risk areas such as France, Italy, and Spain. In addition APHA also test susceptible species that have transited through Bluetongue restricted areas, but have not been certified as having had the required protection against potential insect transmission. During 2016-17, 207 post import Bluetongue tests were undertaken.

Risk assessment – understanding the risk

Defra continues to monitor the international disease situation and produces Preliminary Outbreak Assessments on a range of global outbreaks. Defra communicated the new outbreaks to the Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) and Border Force to enable regulatory and anti-smuggling controls at the border to be responsive to new or changing animal health risks.

Biosecurity (England)

Ministerial Monthly Biosecurity Meetings were held during the reporting period to enable timely escalation of potential biosecurity risks and provide strategic oversight and direction. This has enabled animal and plant health risks to be assessed together, in terms of likelihood and impacts.

Defra and Border Force

Defra and Border Force have continued to cooperate in ensuring effective enforcement of the legislative framework governing the import of plants and animals, and also products of plant and animal origin. Including:

- Commercial and personal imports of Products of Animal Origin (POAO).
- Live (including aquatic) animals commercial and personal imports and the EU Pet Travel Scheme.
- Plant health - commercial and personal imports of Plant and Plant products, including wood, wood products and bark.
- Protection of biodiversity and endangered species with the Management of trade in endangered species (CITES) and the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) regulations.
- Veterinary Medicines - commercial and personal import of illegal veterinary medicines.
- POAO, CITES and Plant Health are included within the current Border Force Control Strategy.

Changes in organisation and structure of competent authorities and other enforcement bodies

During the period of this report in May 2016 DARD (Department of Agriculture & Rural Development), became the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) who maintain import controls for Northern Ireland.

Overall effectiveness of import controls

Commercial trade

There is free movement between EU Member States, however a random proportion of consignments undergo checks based on an assessment of disease risk. Physical checks were carried out on most consignments of live animals and a prescribed percentage of products from third countries. The amount of formal enforcement action necessitated at BIPs has remained at a consistently low level concerning both products of animal origin and live animals. Informal enforcement action to improve certification standards has resulted in an improvement in most areas.

For third country imports of animals and animal products compliance remained very high. For 2016/17 only 1% of all consignments of animal products were rejected, compared with 1.3% in 2015/2016. For consignments of live animals 0.6% were rejected in 2016/17 compared with 0.4% in 2015/16.

If an animal product presented a public or animal health risk, destruction of the consignment remained the most common enforcement action. For live animals most consignments were quarantined until they presented negligible disease risk.

Personal imports

Defra and Border Force have continued to work closely to ensure effective and risk based interventions.

Most illegal imports detected by Border Force continue to be for small amounts and typically represent gifts by travellers visiting family or seizures from tourists, business people and students travelling to the UK for the first time. Most did not involve deliberately smuggled goods but were from passengers who, in spite of publicity campaigns, were not aware of current EU prohibitions in place.

Border Force and Defra share responsibility for communicating clearly to the public what the current EU importation rules are and why the controls are needed. Broadly Border Force have responsibility for entries at the border, and Defra imported products where they are inland. Opportunities to collaborate to improve communication are also continually explored e.g. when visas are issued, and via the travel industry.

In Northern Ireland, DAERA retains responsibility for controls on personal imports. At points of entry, there is close co-operation with Border Force on an operational basis so that items of significance to each other are brought to attention. In addition, there are joint operations at postal depots to detect illegal POAO.

DAERA undertakes risk analysis of global prevailing animal disease situations, and prioritises relevant flights on which to undertake enhanced inspections and controls.

Section 1 - Risk assessment/global disease surveillance

Between April 2016 and March 2017 Defra conducted and published 41 Preliminary Outbreak Assessments on outbreaks of diseases such as African Swine Fever (ASF), Bluetongue (BTV), Foot and Mouth disease (FMD), Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) as well as other notifiable diseases of animals. Further information can be found at: gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring. We have also published Qualitative Risk Assessments on HPAI, CWD and BTV to inform specific policy questions about the increased risk following disease outbreaks occurring in Europe. The large H5N8 HPAI epizootic in Europe, beginning in October 2016 and continuing into mid-2017, was a major focus of our work, particularly once the disease arrived in the UK. Updates on the disease situation in the UK can also be found at the same website.

Changes to European Union legislation and impacts on our control system arrangements

Several new products became subject to veterinary checks at BIPs on 1 January 2017 due to amendments to Commission Decision 2007/275/EC which lays down the lists of animals and products subject to veterinary checks.

These changes affected a number of products including meat extracts and concentrates, empty gelatine capsules and certain food supplements which had previously been exempt from veterinary checks at the border.

Defra, the FSA, APHA and local Authorities worked together to determine the import conditions for products that are not subject to EU harmonised import conditions. The changes required a lot of additional support to stakeholders during the transitional period. Work is ongoing to finalise import conditions for all commodities without harmonised import conditions.

Changes in organisation and structure of competent authorities and other enforcement bodies

Although outside the period of this report, it is worth noting that in June 2017 APHA centralised all administrative Imports functions to the Centre for International Trade Carlisle. This provides consistency of instructions to the regional field teams and a central view of imports and EU trade into the UK.

Section 2 - Protect and respond: UK border controls

Protect: commercial trade

Animals and animal products imported from other countries may present a risk as they can transmit serious human and animal diseases. A key factor in mitigating this risk is to ensure that live animals and animal products entering the UK from EU Member States and third countries are safe and meet the specific animal and public health import conditions laid down in the EU legislation.

EU trade

Animal and genetic material imported from other EU countries have to be accompanied by EU animal health certification. There are no controls at the border but post import checks may be carried out inland.

Animal products (products of animal origin for human consumption and animal by-products not intended for human consumption) do not generally need to be accompanied by a health certificate. However, they must be produced in accordance with EU animal and public health requirements and should be accompanied during transportation by a commercial document for traceability purposes.

Imports of animals and animal product from third countries

Animals and animal products imported from third countries must:

- Come from an approved establishment in an approved country;
- Be accompanied by agreed animal and public health certification as appropriate; and
- Enter the EU at an approved BIP¹ where checks are carried out to ensure that the consignment meets import conditions.

Consignments of animals and animal products can only enter the UK once they have undergone veterinary checks with satisfactory results and a Common Veterinary Entry Document (CVED) has been issued clearing the consignment as acceptable for import. The checks are carried out by Veterinary Officers, Official Veterinary Surgeons (OVS) (animal products) or Official Fish Inspectors (OFI) (fishery products).

There are three types of veterinary check:

- Documentary checks to verify that the consignment is accompanied by the correct documentation;
- Identity checks to verify that accompanying documentation matches with the consignment; and
- Physical checks which means a check on the consignment itself which may include laboratory sampling, additional checks during quarantine (animals) or checks on packaging (products).

Physical checks (100% of all consignments are subject to documentary and identity checks. All consignments of animals and a proportion of animal products (between 1% and 50% of consignments) are subjected to physical checks.

¹ Ports and airports in the UK which have a BIP have specialist facilities and train staff that deal with high-risk food imports such as meat, dairy and fishery products

For animal products OVSs and OFIs² have powers to carry out any checks they deem to be appropriate in cases where they suspect that veterinary legislation has not been complied with or where there is some other doubt about the consignment or its destination. There may be occasions where it will be necessary to request, for a limited period, a higher level of checks on consignments from certain third countries (e.g. as a result of an outbreak of disease). In these circumstances, BIPs will be notified in writing by Defra or the FSA of any temporary increase on the level of checks required.

Physical checks are undertaken on packages taken throughout the consignment this may require a full or partial turnout of containers. Sampling procedures are laid down in Annex II to Commission Regulation (EC) No 136/2004³. BIPs submit samples to: public analysts appointed by the local authority for food analysis, Public Health England, Water and Environmental Microbiology laboratories for food examination where appropriate, other laboratories accredited for specific analytical techniques.

EU legislation⁴ requires that advance notification⁵ is provided to BIPs for consignments of animal products before their physical arrival on EU territory. Advance notification of the arrival of live animals must be provided to BIP at least one working day before the expected arrival.

Due to operational reasons, it is recommended that notification of the arrival of consignments should be done well in advance of the expected arrival date, especially in BIPs which are not permanently staffed.

EU legislation requires Member States to have in place a National Monitoring Plan for residues and other contaminants. Its intention is to develop a flexible risk based plan that links closely with individual BIP sampling plans and will not create any unnecessary additional costs for the industry. The Plan is risk based and targeted using the intelligence and knowledge of BIPs, the EU Commission's TRACES web based data collection system and FSA's data collection systems. The Plan requires a random element of samples to be determined by BIPs but which reflects current levels of sampling of throughput of products of animal origin. This is designed to ensure that no predictive element can be made as to what products may or may not be sampled at any BIP.

All imported animal products must be accompanied by animal and public health certification unless they are personal consignments. EU legislation allows taking appropriate safeguard action, which may include a ban on imports of products of animal origin of susceptible species from all or parts of a country, if there is an outbreak of disease likely to present a risk to human or animal health.

Safeguard measures on certain imported foods may apply to all or part of a third country, suspend imports of all or particular products or set special conditions and requirements for particular products. These measures, whether national or EU, are implemented in England by Emergency Declarations made under Regulation 29 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 and the equivalent provisions in Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland legislation. Failure to comply with the provisions of a declaration is an offence.

Information regarding non-compliant products and the onward movement of third country products from BIPs is passed to control authorities in other Member States using the TRACES computer system. When a serious or repeated infringement of EU harmonised veterinary legislation is identified and confirmed by the European Commission a programme of reinforced checks will apply to consignments of the same establishment of origin in the third country for which the notification is made.

² Employed by the relevant Port Health Authority

³ eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:021:0011:0023:en:PDF

⁴ Article 3(3) of Directive 97/78/EC and Article 2(1) of Regulation 136/2004

⁵ requested in the first part of the CVED

During March 2017 press reports indicated alleged significant fraud in the meat sector of Brazil, which implicates the Official Control Services of Brazil, particularly of beef. Following a European Commission communication with the Brazilian government it was agreed to suspend the four establishments approved to export meat to the EU. This has led to the introduction of reinforced checks at EU Border Inspection Posts consisting of 100% physical checks and 20% microbiological checks of all meat imports from Brazil.

Respond: summary of imported consignments of live animals, products of animal origin & animal by-products

There were no significant changes in the level of controls concerning imports of products of animal origin. The number of consignments of animal products imported fell slightly from 58,498 in 2015-16 to 42,501 in 2016-17. In the case of live animal imports from 3rd countries the number of consignments fell from 9,708 in 2015-16 to 9,261 in 2016-17.

Products of animal origin compliance for imports of animals from third countries remained very high. For animal products imported in 2016-17 only 1% of consignments were rejected. The major non-compliances were documentary errors, in particular absence of a health certificate or an invalid health certificate. This is likely to be because of a lack of understanding or knowledge of the EU rules in the third country of origin or by the importer. For live animals 59 consignments were rejected in 2016-17.

Consignments of animal products presenting a public or animal health risk, were destroyed. Otherwise the decision to re-export or destroy rejected consignments was made by the importer. For live animals most consignments were quarantined until they posed negligible animal health risk or complied with the import conditions.

Tables below show details of consignments checked and non-compliances found.

Table 1 - Products of Animal Origin & Animal By-Products

Year (update)	Certificates			Rejects		Reject conclusion		
	Total No.	Number controlled	% controlled	No.	% of total	Re-exported	Transformed	Destroyed
2016-17	42,501	42,501	100%	421	1%	111	1	311

Data source: APHA

Table 2 - Live animals

Year (update)	Certificates			Rejects		Reject conclusion		
	Total No.	Number controlled	% controlled	No.	% of total	Re-exported	Slaughter	Euthanasia
2016-17	9,261	9,260	100%	59	0.6	1	0	1

Data source: APHA

Respond: Summary of germplasm imported consignments

Year (update)	Rejects			Reject conclusion				
	Total No.	No. controlled	% controlled	No.	% of total	Re-exported	Transformed	Destroyed
2016-17	518	518	100%	3	0.6%	0	0	3

Data source: APHA

Non-compliant consignments are either re-exported or destroyed. Issues arising with paperwork checks from other EU Member States are raised with the Competent Authority responsible for providing the health certification.

Associated work – Authorisation and licencing of Animal By-Products not intended for human consumption

Authorisations and licences issued for the import of ABPs not intended for human consumption (April 2016 – March 2017) update (includes Research and Diagnostic ABPs)

England	Wales	Scotland	NI
277 (Of which 222 were Research and Diagnostic)	6	31 (All for Research and Diagnostic)	

Data source: APHA and DAERA

The rules for trade and import of animal by-products not for human consumption (ABP) are mainly laid down in harmonised EU legislation which sets out model commercial documentation, health certificates and declarations as appropriate, especially with regards ABP which is intended for feed use.

The Regulations⁶ also provide for certain commodities to be authorised by the Competent Authority of destination prior to importation from a non EU country or movement from another Member State.

However, due to the vast array of ABPs and amount of uses it has throughout industry and around the world, rules for trade in some animal by-products are not covered by harmonised EU legislation. To facilitate trade the Regulations permit Competent Authorities to lay down their own National Rules where harmonised conditions are not in place.

From April 2016 to March 2017, 13 authorisation templates and 7 licence templates were created to permit certain ABP and their derived products to be imported to the UK under EU and National Rules. One General licence was created to permit imports without the need for a specific licence/ authorisation to be issued.

Protect: personal imports⁷

Border Force undertakes control work on imports of animals and products of animal origin, and enforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Prioritisation of animal/animal product import controls is bounded by Border Force's control strategy, and is intelligence-led. High risk routings and passenger/freight/postal profiles are targeted, and an array of detection tools is employed including x-ray and canine detection. Particular risk areas include Chinese traditional medicine and the African bush meat trade.

⁶ Commission Regulation (EC) 1069/2009 and Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011

⁷ www.gov.uk/personal-food-plant-and-animal-product-imports

Respond: summary of illegal imported products of animal origin

Border Force has continued to make focused, intelligence-led seizures of POAO at the border in 2016-17. Among these have been individual seizures of 600+kg of POAO, including milk and milk products, from the UAE on private flights into Farnborough; 60+kg of concealed POAO carried by a Chinese chef into Norwich airport; 100+kg of dried Mbahal fish referred to Border Force by Port Health at Felixstowe; 29kg of concealed POAO in a consignment from Nigeria detected at Manchester Air Freight; 30+kg of POAO seized at Gatwick from a passenger travelling from Albania; 60+kg of POAO from Cameroon seized from a passenger at Heathrow; and 2.6 tonnes of POAO in a container at Southampton.

These seizures give an indication of the level of detection activity, work with partners, and scope of POAO threats being countered, across all Border Force ports and in all modes. The number of seizures of illegally imported products of animal origin made by Border Force is set out in Annex A. Between the reporting period 2016-2017 at airports and sea ports the number of seizures of illegally imported product decreased by 36% compared with the previous year 2015-16 – 9,810).

The greatest number of seizures was from passengers returning from Unknown countries, Southern and South East Asia, The EU, Near and Middle East, Eastern Europe and Southern Asia. Cultural and sporting events (including celebrations) represent times when the level of seizures might be expected to increase. These have varied in size and product type, from unpackaged raw meat and fresh cheese to milk drinks and stock cubes. Most seizures continued to be less than 20 kgs and follow the typical pattern of small family groups, business people and students travelling to the UK.

Note that in Northern Ireland over the course of the reporting period, personal imports seizures increased by 40% (by number) when compared to the preceding twelve months. Significant numbers of seizures of birds nest from China, ghee from India and biltong from southern Africa were made, in addition to horse meat from Russia and donkey meat from China.

Section 3 – Assurance: UK post-border controls

Inland import controls: monitoring and surveillance

FSA - Enforcement and intelligence

Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, the UK issued 510 ‘alert’ and ‘information’ notifications through the EU RASFF system. This includes cases where food products from non-EU countries breach public and animal health safety requirements and were rejected. The European Commission has a standard operating procedure in place to alert non-EU countries of problems affecting food. RASFF automatically alerts Port Health Authorities and Local Authorities at ports and airports to assist them in targeting their checks on incoming consignments of imported food.

The level, focus and frequency of the FSA inland import controls are risk based and informed by specific factors. These include:

- EU safeguard measures;
- Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications; and
- Local intelligence or priorities.

This may include historical port health sampling results from the National Coordinated Food and Feed Risk Based Sampling programme.

The FSA Incidents Branch is the UK contact point for RASFF notifications – a key tool to ensure the cross-border flow of information to swiftly react when risks to public health are detected in the food chain. The EU RASFF system is used by the FSA to inform and prompt for action to be taken by the European Commission or other Member States.

Food Alerts provide the FSA with information to communicate to Local Authorities and consumers about problems associated with feed and food and, in some cases, provide details of specific action to be taken. The different categories of alerts and information notices issued are as follows:

- **Food Alerts for Action** – are issued when an incident requires enforcement action from Local Authorities;
- **Product Recall Information Notices** – bring an incident to the attention of Local Authorities; and
- **Allergy Alerts** – are issued when foods have to be withdrawn or recalled and there is a risk to consumers, because the label is missing or incorrect or there is a risk of severe allergic response.

Local Authorities implications

All importers and relevant food brokers must be identified and registered as Food and Feed Business Operators. They should be included in the food and feed intervention programme for the relevant Local Authority. Establishments that are the first destination after import should be identified and recorded. These may include establishments used for storage, processing, and/or handling, buying or selling products of animal origin.

Procedures relating to import control work should be developed in line with The Framework Agreement on Local Authority Enforcement, the Food Law Code of Practice (and Practice Guidance) and the associated Defra guidance documents. Authorised officers should consider imported food that is offered for sale by food businesses as a routine component of food hygiene and standards inspections. They should also investigate and take

appropriate actions relating to (suspect) illegal imports, imports that may pose a risk to public or animal health and imports that fail to meet food safety requirements.

There are intelligence sharing protocols in place, for Border Force to pass on seizure details destined for commercial establishments to FSA, who analyse the information. This intelligence is passed on to the relevant local authority where appropriate. The results of the local authority investigations are passed back to Border Force and FSA to inform future targeting and Defra for statistical purposes.

In Northern Ireland during the reporting period, there has been enhanced liaison between Port Health authorities and inland councils in order to raise the profile and significance of imported POAO, and the sharing of information to ensure compliance. A new database of commercial firms involved in importing POAO and FNAO has been developed. Training for Inland Authorities is planned for 2018/19.

APHA – Enforcement

For animal health purposes there is a distinct difference in how EU movements (commonly referred to as intra EU trade) and imports from third countries are treated.

There are a wide range of harmonised animal and public health requirements which each Member State must adhere to. For live animals there is normally a requirement that each consignment is accompanied with a health certificate validated by an Official Veterinarian in the originating country.

Free trade movement means that consignments from other Member States travel straight to their destination address without veterinary checks. In most cases (other than equine health attestations) a health certificate is entered onto EU's Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) 24 hours prior to dispatch.

Part of the APHA role is to check a proportion of online documentation and where appropriate animals at destination. This involves carrying out routine post import surveillance and sampling on animals and animal products as part of international disease monitoring to prevent the risk of import and spread of disease into and throughout the UK.

APHA have continued to operate the "Puppy Pilot" at Dover and in Coquelles – the aim of this work is to identify and measure non-compliance with the Pet Travel Scheme regulations. It has been identified that dogs and puppies are being moved non-compliantly via the Pet Travel Scheme where the intention of the movement is commercial and the dogs and puppies are destined for sale and a change of ownership. The majority of these movements are young puppies which are then sold in the UK. This initiative has been conducted with the support of Dog's Trust who finance the quarantine of any puppies seized. Non-compliances have also been identified in relation to Welfare in Transport and over the course of the pilot the major non-compliance is that puppies are subsequently aged as being younger than that stated in their passport meaning that they were under age at point of vaccination. As a consequence of the pilot since December 2015 until July 2017 296 vehicles have been stopped with 985 dogs and puppies being seized and 637 of those being quarantined. Currently this work is undertaken in association with Border Force colleagues and the carriers at Dover or during targeted operations at Coquelles.

In Northern Ireland specific operations were held at the ports of Belfast and Larne in December 2016 to prevent illegal movements. Over 600 cars and 150 commercial vehicles were checked, and more than 30 pups were prevented from onward travel.

Trade impacts of outbreaks within EU

Between March 2016 and April 2017 there were 10 outbreaks of H5N8 HPAI in poultry in England and Wales. For the first time, outbreaks were reported from backyard flocks in Carmarthen, North Yorkshire and Northumberland, also three outbreaks in fattening turkeys in Lincolnshire, three in gamebirds in Lancashire and one in laying hens in Suffolk. This was against a background of unprecedented disease reporting of the same virus across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and West Africa during the same time period. This was the largest epizootic seen for 12 years in Europe and the UK was one of the least affected Member States (MSs) which was testament to the good biosecurity of our poultry industry and our swift disease control measures. Across the EU several thousand dead wild waterfowl also tested positive as well as many other species of wild bird, and the whole of the UK reported a handful of findings in wild birds, from Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England. In Europe, several thousand outbreaks in poultry were detected, and almost every MS was affected. In the UK cases, initial incursions of disease onto farms were most likely due to contact with wild birds. Secondary spread was prevented once disease control measures were put in place.

Due to the nature of the epizootic and the continual risk from wild birds, the outbreaks continued (albeit at a very low rate) for several more months and after the report period the United Kingdom will be applying for disease free status at the earliest opportunity but most likely in September 2017. Suspension of EU trade was limited to the time period specified in EU legislation (21 days after the final cleansing and disinfection, when zones are lifted) and third country trade to three months after secondary C&D for the region (county) where the outbreak occurred.

The epizootic of Bluetongue disease (both BTV-8 in France and BTV-4 in Southeast Europe) which occurred in 2015-2016 re-emerged in 2016-2017 over the summer but the UK reported no outbreaks. The disease only has limited impact on trade, primarily on germinal products and live animals only, if vaccine is not used. Vaccine was available to the UK farmers, but as the risk to the UK did not substantially increase, there was only limited take-up.

Lumpy Skin Disease continued to spread across SE Europe in the summer of 2016 and emergency vaccination was used both reactively and pre-emptively in affected or high risk countries. The UK is updating the disease contingency plan and preparedness plans to take into account the change in risk for this disease.

African Swine Fever has continued to spread in wild boar around the Eastern EU (Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) in 2016-2017 and is putting pressure on the pig industry in these regions, with occasional spill-over into backyard and even domestic pig farms. The ban on export of EU origin pig meat to Russia is still in place despite the ongoing World Trade Organisation (WTO) case.

Section 4 - Working together: Co-ordination and co-operation

Procedures

Defra and Border Force worked together to move from a service level agreement to a new “Enforcement Strategy”. This defines shared objectives to reduce the risk posed by illegally imported products of animal origin to the lowest possible level. The objective of the strategy is to continually improve the ability to carry out effective analysis and reporting. This is to ensure a better reporting-mechanism for intelligence and for management information. The Enforcement Strategy is supported by a Delivery Agreement.

Defra is reviewing the BIP Manual⁸ to take account of changes to EU legislation and incorporate instructions from the OVS notes issued in the previous year. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-on-importing-and-exporting-live-animals-or-animal-products>. This ensures that the Official Veterinarians responsible for carrying out inspections at the border have all the necessary information and guidance to allow them to carry out this work. Including supplementary notes:

<http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/bip/ovs-notes.htm>

Regular liaison meetings are taking place between all the major Border Inspection Post (BIP) staff, Defra and the FSA. The meetings serve as a forum for sharing best practice, discussion of new legislation and where updates are provided to BIP staff.

APHA recruited two Intelligence Officers within the Regulatory Hub team in 2016. These are active across the agency but in an imports capacity information is provided from sources including the Centre for International Trade and portal field staff in relation to Border Controls as well as local authorities. The analysts have been visiting various stakeholders including local authorities, Non-Government Organisation (NGO)s and operational partners and they are collating information into a knowledge bank and developing systems to share this information with appropriate bodies at the border to assist in addressing issues with non-compliance. Regular meetings are held between APHA Centre for International Trade and the Intel Officers to share information and develop working relationships.

Training programmes

BIPs courses – 36 UK Official Veterinary Surgeons and Official Fish Inspectors responsible for carrying out import checks at BIPs attended BIP workshops organised by APHA. Some training requirements were identified during BIPs audits e.g. new and changed legislation, areas of controls where issues were arising because of inconsistent application of the veterinary checks rules. Pre-training questionnaires were sent out prior to the training day and these provided valuable information on the level of knowledge of attendees and future training events were then planned to address any deficiencies noted. Representatives from each BIP are required to attend once every two years and cascade the information to colleagues.

During the reporting period, the FSA coordinated and delivered six courses to 111 authorised officers in the UK. The courses were aimed at port health officials, including those with smaller point of entry responsibilities and inland local authorities. The courses covered a range of topics including:

⁸ The BIP Manual provides guidance on implementation of legislation concerning checks on animal products imported from third countries. It covers both EU legislation and national rules applicable at BIPs and sets out the division of responsibilities and the procedures for the enforcement authorities carrying out veterinary checks.

- Effective Imported Food Control for Inland Officers,
- Effective Imported Food Update,
- Imported Food Control at Small Ports,
- Effective Imported Food Control for Inland Authorities,
- Imported Food Update for Port Officers.

The courses aimed at inland officers were designed to ensure that authorised officers understand the enforcement required and the hazards associated with imported foods.

The FSA continues to support and coordinate applications from authorised officers to attend courses run by the Better Training for Safer Food Team. This ensures authorised officers understand official controls at a deeper level and build relationships internationally to harmonise controls with other Member States.

European Commission's Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) - 35 UK representatives attended BIPs training courses organised through the BTSF programme. Topics covered include TRACES, import controls, composite products and POAO. These workshops aim to improve knowledge on the legislative requirements and spread best control practices amongst Member States' border control personnel. The BIPs BTSF learning materials were cascaded to staff involved in official controls through in-house courses.

Safety, quality and information campaigns

Border Force continue to lead on publicity to the public on current products of animal origin import rules within ports and airports and work closely with Defra on coordinated communications and marketing strategies:

During reporting period the FSA:

- Issued a total of 88 notices to authorised officers in England to provide guidance on enforcement issues involving public and animal health. The central register of enforcement-related correspondence is available at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforcework/centralref/enf-england,
- Maintained a dedicated homepage for imported food www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforcework/enforce_authorities. This is a comprehensive source of information on imported food controls that is continuously updated.

BIP audit programme

APHA carry out audits to check for compliance with the EU and domestic legislation with regards to procedural and facilities.

During the reporting period the audits carried out included:

- Full assessment of the procedures followed by BIP staff in delivery of the official import controls,
- Assessment of the suitability of the facilities for carrying out the required controls,
- Assessment of the effectiveness of the verification checks by the local enforcement authority. The verification checks are essential as a first step in ensuring that the facilities are in compliance with the legislation and that veterinary checks are carried out in accordance with the instructions in the BIP Manual, EU and domestic legislation.

Risk based audits and liaison visits (informal visits to BIPs between formal audits) at product BIPs were carried out by the APHA as follows:

- Product BIPs – most high and medium throughput BIPs received one audit for procedures and one for facilities during the year. Low throughput BIPs received one audit visit a year and both facilities and procedures were audited at this visit,

- Live animal BIPs – Independent internal assurance inspections are completed once a year by the Operations Quality Assurance (OQA) Team assisted by technical and veterinary experts from the Centre for International Trade – Carlisle (CITC).

The aim of the annual inspection is to provide assurance that the BIPs are being operated to the national agreed standards in the Operations Manual, and that the facilities and staffing levels are sufficient for the effective operation of the BIP. The Inspection Team will verify that checks are completed appropriately and correctly, in line with APHAs Operations Manual instructions and the relevant legislation.

The annual inspection will consist of two parts:

- **part 1** - checking of the CVEDs using the questions on the 'CVED checks' tab Summary Report of Live Animal BIP Self-Assurance Checks (BI04).
- **part 2** - checks on the:
 - structure
 - facilities
 - training and
 - sampling.

Border Force/Defra co-operation

Defra's biosecurity interests cover animal, plant, and aquatic animal health and invasive non-native species, including products of animal origin. The Department has assessed our approaches to the risks and issues related to biosecurity across the continuum of activities on biosecurity – pre-border, at the border and within the UK.

Ministerial Monthly Biosecurity Meetings (MBMs) were held during the reporting period to enable timely escalation of potential biosecurity risks and provide strategic oversight and direction. A new risk assessment methodology enabled animal and plant health risks to be assessed together, in terms of likelihood and impacts.

As part of wider work on biosecurity, Defra aims to continue to enhance awareness of, and compliance with, UK biosecurity rules relating to plant and animal imports, backed by effective enforcement to tackle non-compliance. During 2014-15, a strategic relationship with Border Force was deepened to improve joint working. This was achieved through an agreement to co-ordinate future tasking activity in line with operational priorities and information sharing. This agreement was formalised and a National Cooperation Agreement was signed in May 2016. Defra and Border Force also worked together to make Plant Health a distinct priority within Border Force's control strategy, raising the profile of the issue and enabling co-ordinated multi-agency activity against threats to Plant Health to be planned and delivered at the border.

Section 5 - Forward look 2017-18

Border Force and Defra

Border Force's national tasking and co-ordination structures enable a strategic approach to be taken in the planning and execution of national operations, and intensification exercises are carried out periodically against specific risk profiles. A multi-agency focus, with DEFRA and other agencies providing both the strategic objective and the intelligence basis for operations, drives enforcement activity at the border. In 2016/17 Border Force made over 5000 seizures of illegal imports of products of animal origin, and over a tonne of such material is seized at UK ports every month.

Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (England) (TARP)

The [Trade in Animals and Animal Products Regulations 2011 SI 1197 \(TARP\)](#) implement EU law on veterinary border controls to ensure that the live animals and products of animal origin entering England from other Member States and third countries are safe and meet specified EU import conditions. Defra has a statutory obligation to review the regulations every five years to confirm that it is achieving its objective. The first review is currently in progress.

Animal Health Regulations

The key dates for Regulation (EU) 2016/429 on Transmissible Animal Diseases and Amending and Repealing Certain Acts in the Area of Animal Health:

- Date of publication 31 March 2016
- Entered into force – 21 April 2016
- Date of application – 21 April 2021

In the coming months/years, the European Commission will be presenting draft legislation introducing the detailed rules that will apply to trade and imports of animals and animal products. Defra and APHA will work together to assess and negotiate these detailed rules.

Official Controls Review

New Official Controls Regulations which lay down the performance of official controls and other activities by Competent Authorities will be introduced in the next few years. The key dates are:

- Date of publication: 7 April 2017
- Entered into force – 27 April 2017
- Application date – 14 December 2019

As with the Animal Health Regulation, the European Commission will be presenting draft legislation introducing the detailed rules that will apply to trade and imports of animals and animal products. Defra, APHA and the FSA will work together to assess and negotiate these detailed rules.

EU Exit

On 23 June 2016, the EU referendum took place and the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation. The outcome of these negotiations will determine what arrangements will be put in place in relation to EU legislation in future once the UK has left the EU.

Several work streams have begun to consider the impacts of the potential scenarios related to EU Exit and APHA are heavily involved in this work in relation to imports of live animals and animal products.

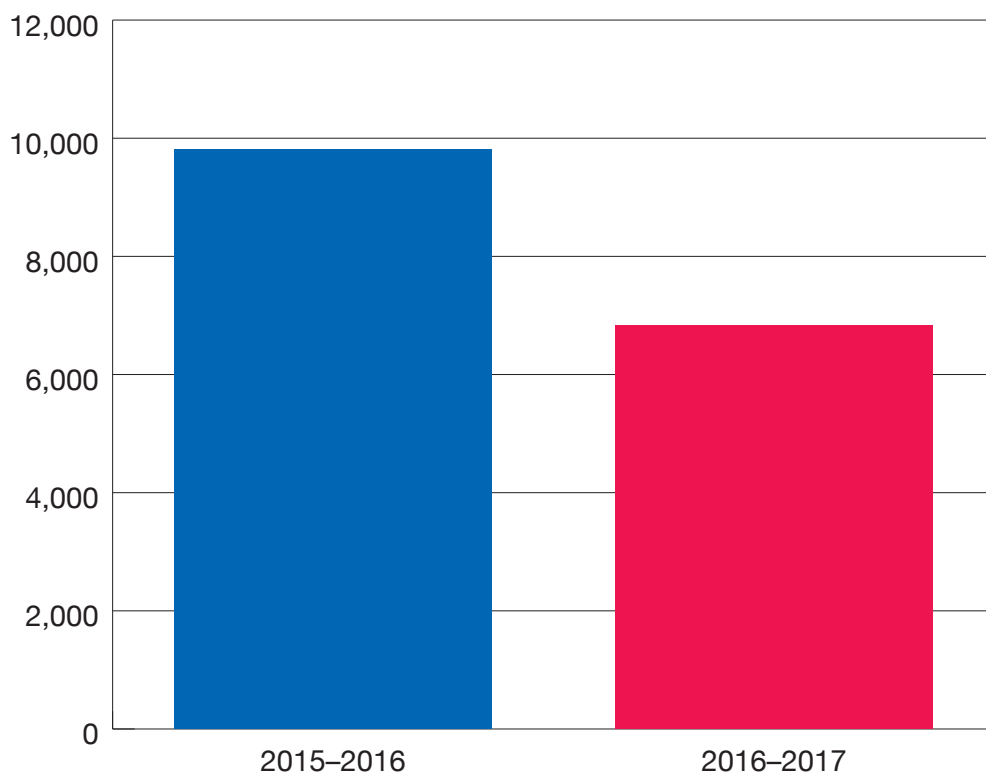
Annex A: Statistics on imports of illegal products

For the purposes of these statistics 'illegal' refers to products of animal origin seized as items from individuals being in contravention of the personal concessions permitted or commercial consignments that have sought to evade correct entry procedures by not being declared at a Border Inspection Post. These statistics also include items voluntarily surrendered by passengers at ports and airports.

Figures show the number and weight of seizures by Border Force, DAERA and those made by inland Local authorities and Port Health Authorities at relevant points of entry.

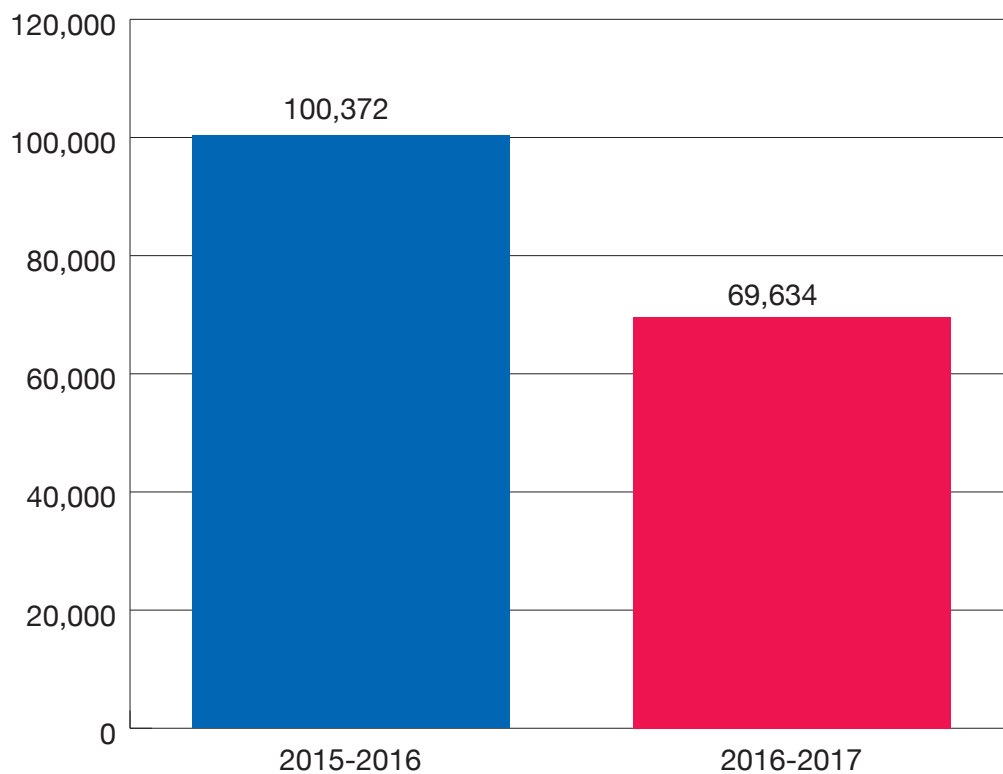
Graphs illustrating total number of seizures including weight (2016-2017)

Number of seizures



Freight seizures

Weight (kgs) of seizures

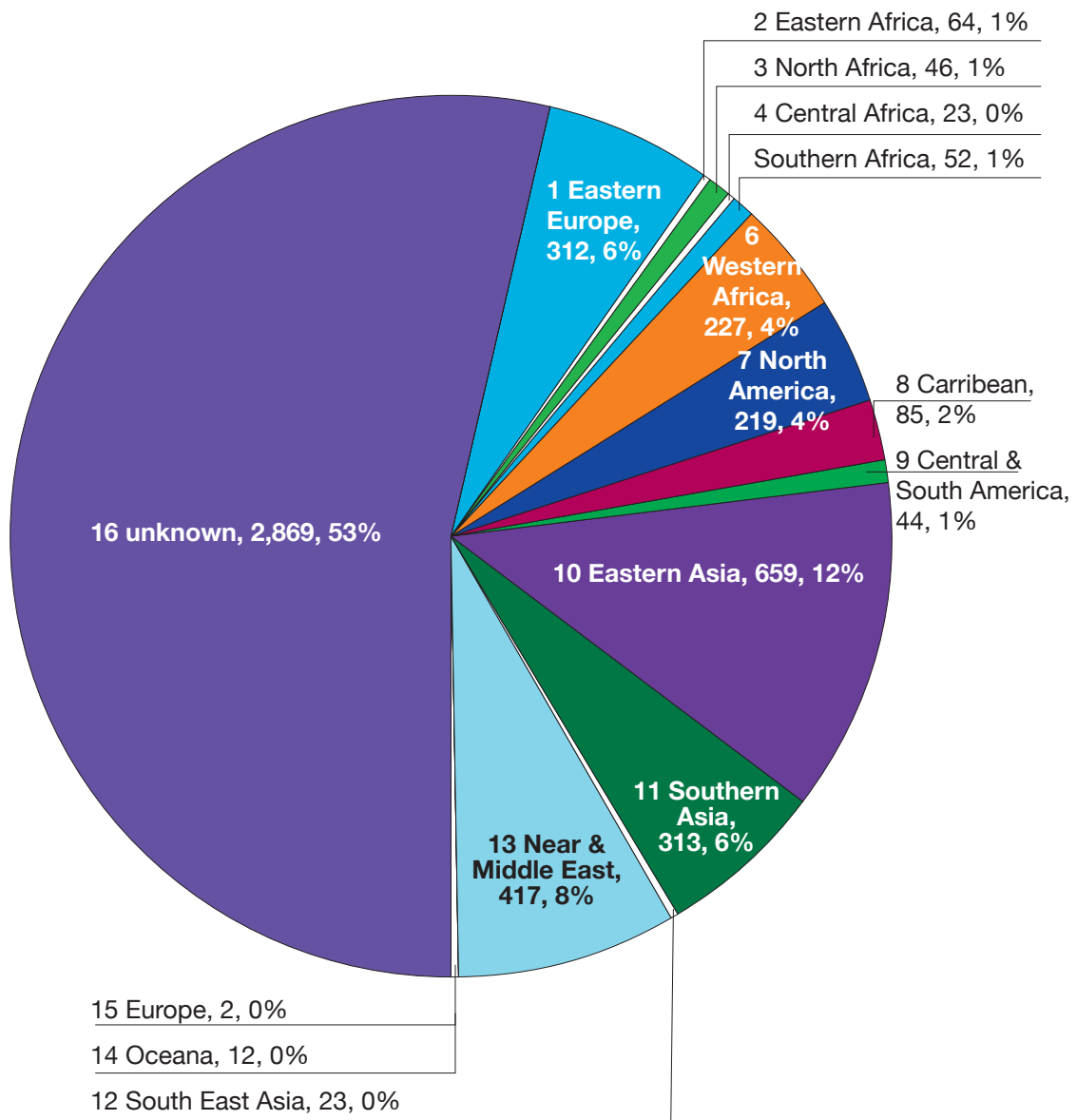


Number of seizures including weight by region during 2016-2017

Region ID/Name	Table x: Number of Seizures (including weight) by region 2016–17	
	No. of Seizures	Weight (kg)
Eastern Europe	367	1,775
Eastern Africa	80	561
North Africa	51	197
Central Africa	28	374
Southern Africa	71	102
Western Africa	255	5,747
North America	305	5,207
Caribbean	86	379
Central & South America	55	213
Eastern Asia	999	29,004
Southern Asia	428	1,473
South East Asia	185	324
Near and Middle East	463	4,918
Oceania	14	2,038
European	2	5
Unknown	2870	17,311
EU	566	7
Total	6825	69,634

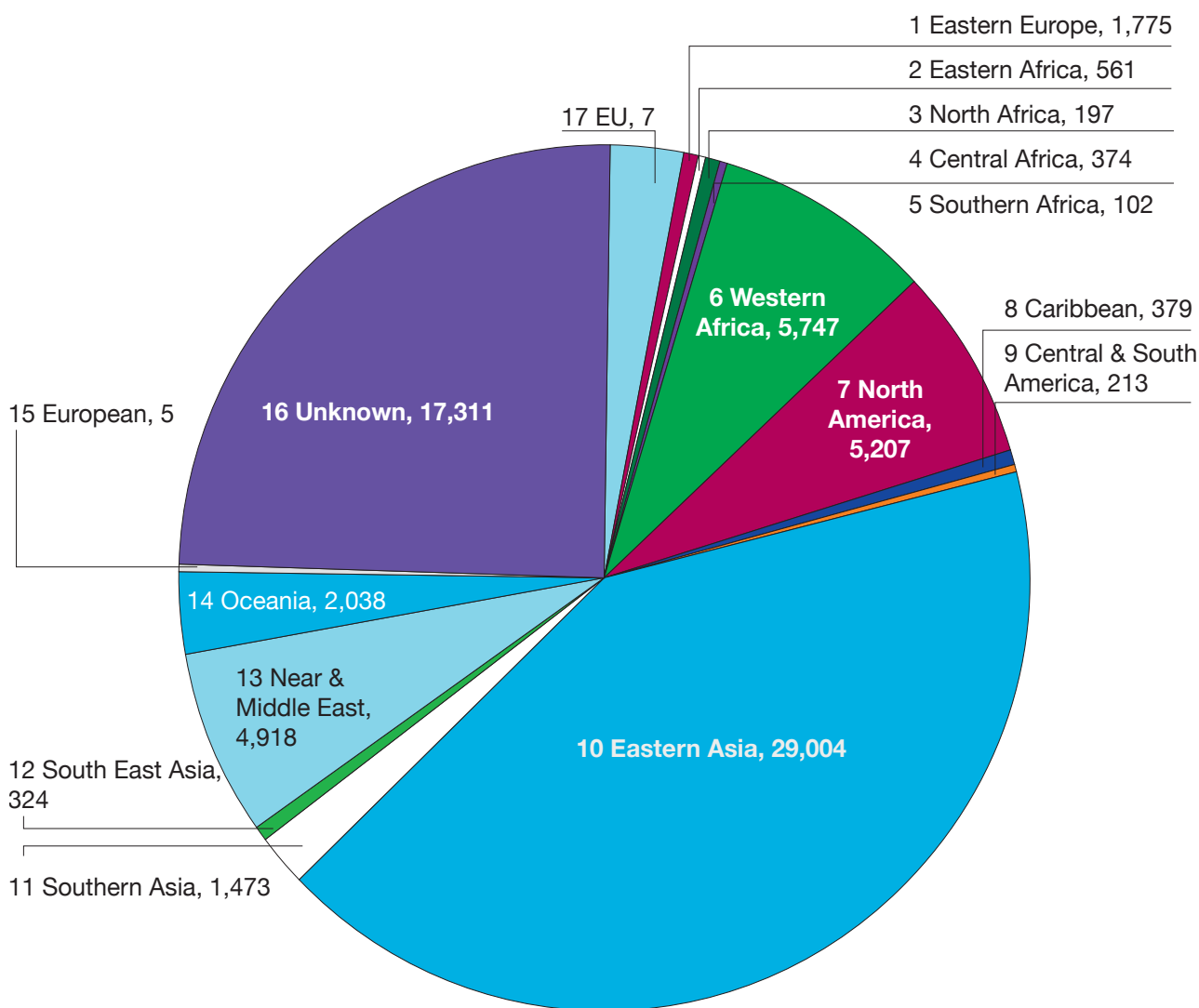
Pie Chart 1 for Table 1: number of products of animal origin seized by region during 2016-2017

Number of seizures by region during 2016-17



Pie Chart 2 for Table 1: Weight of products of animal origin seized by region during 2016-2017

Weight (kg) of seizures by region during 2016-17



Annex B:

Glossary of commonly used abbreviations and acronyms

ABPs	Animal by-products
ASF	African Swine Fever
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
BIP(s)	Border Inspection Post(s)
CA	Competent Authority
CVED	Common Veterinary Entry Document
CVO	CVO – Chief veterinary Officer
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland outside the period of this report DARD NI as of May 2016 has become DAERA
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FVO	Food Veterinary Office
GB	Great Britain
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
ID checks	Identity checks
LAs	Local Authorities
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NI	Northern Ireland
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
OVS(s)	Official Veterinary Surgeon(s)
PAFF	Committee Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed – formerly known as SCoFCAH (Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health)
PHA	Port Health Authorities
POAO	Products of Animal Origin
RASFF	EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
SG	Scottish Government
TARP	Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations
TRACES	EU Trade Control and Expert System
UK	United Kingdom
WG	Welsh Government
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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