

EXPORT OF HORSES TO INDIA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND EXPORTER

**IMPORTANT**

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OVs) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 6351EHC. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 6351EHC. We strongly suggest that exporters obtain full details of the importing country's requirements from the veterinary authorities in the country concerned, or their representatives in the UK, in advance of each consignment.

1. **Scope**

Export health certificate 6351EHC should be used for the export of horses from the United Kingdom to India. India has since published in the Gazette revised requirements for the import of horses, and the certificate has been updated to reflect these as far as possible, but formal approval / acceptance from DAHD, India is awaited. The revised requirements concern mainly CEM, which now enable non-pregnant females to be certified, provided that cervical swabs taken during oestrus are cultured with negative results; how many such swabs are required is open to interpretation, so it is strongly advised to check the position with the importer.

If a 'pre-export certificate' - containing the information in 6351EHC - is required in order to facilitate issuance of a 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)', a copy of the 6351EHC (as issued by APHA Centre for International Trade in Carlisle, with a unique reference number entered in the top right hand corner) may be made once all the information required (eg sampling dates) - except paragraph IV (a) and the stamp/date/signature block - has been entered/completed. Paragraph IV (a) on this copy can then be crossed out and the copy signed, and stamped and dated by the OV. This copy certificate should be annotated at the top of Page 1 as follows: "Pre-export certificate to obtain NOC only: cannot be used to export/accompany horses".

2. **Certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV)**

This certificate may be signed by an OV appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Government, Welsh Government or the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Northern Ireland, who is on the appropriate panel for export purposes or who holds the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ(V)) authorisation.

OVs must sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV stamp in any ink colour **OTHER THAN BLACK**.

**Certified Copy Requirements - England, Wales and Scotland**

Guidance concerning return of certified copies of EHCs has changed and only specific certified copies are required to be returned to the APHA. Certifying OVs must return a certified copy of EHCs only for the following EHC types:

- if the exported commodity is cattle, pigs, sheep, goats or camelids;
- if the certificate was applied for manually and the application documents have been emailed to APHA and not applied for via the Exports Health Certificates Online (EHCO) system.

Certified copies should be emailed on the day of signature to the Centre for International Trade Carlisle (CITC) at the following address: [certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk](mailto:certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk).

For certificates that have been issued to the Certifying OV via the EHCO system, the Certifying OV must complete the certifier portal with the status of the certificate and the date of signature.

A copy of all EHCs and supporting documentation certified must be retained for two years.

Certifying OVs are not required to return certified copies of other EHCs 6351NFG (20/09/2010) (Revised 30/10/2023)

issued, however CITC may request certified copies of EHCs and supporting documentation in order to complete Quality Assurance checks or if an issue arises with the consignment after certification.

### **DAERA Export Health Certificates: Provision of certified copies**

aPVPs certifying DECOL produced Export Health Certificates must return a legible, scanned copy of the final EHC to the relevant DAERA Processing Office within 1 working day of signing.

Good quality photographic copies will be accepted by the department, where obtaining a scanned copy is not feasible - for example, where 'on site' certification is undertaken and scanning facilities are not available.

For record purposes, a copy of the final Export Health Certificate and associated Support documents should be retained by the aPVP for a period of 2 years from the date of certification.

The Department will carry out periodic audits of all aspects of export certification to ensure that a high standard of certification is being maintained.

### **3. Eligibility**

Equines must undergo pre-export quarantine for necessary

testing. Mares that are more than 300 days pregnant cannot be exported.

### **4. Identification of horses**

Paragraph I refers. Paragraph I should be fully completed. The silhouette on page 4 of the certificate must also be fully completed and the passport number inserted. The OV must verify the identity of all registered equidae by reference to the passport and the silhouette on page 4 of the certificate. Any discrepancies should be discussed with APHA. The OV must ensure that during any examination of the horse or any collection of samples required by this certificate, the horse has been positively identified by reference to the passport / silhouette. The OV is advised to identify the horse on all laboratory submission forms by its name and passport number.

### **5. Clinical examination**

Paragraph IV (a) refers. The final pre-export examination must be carried out within 24 hours of export.

### **6. Disease clearances**

Country: Paragraphs IV (c), (d) and (e)(i) refer.

The certification contained in paragraphs IV (c) and (d) relating to the disease status of the UK only, with the exception of the statement that the horse has not been vaccinated against African Horse Sickness (AHS) in the 40 days prior to export, can be signed on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained from APHA, Carlisle on form 618NDC. For horses which have only been in the UK in the 2 years prior to export, the OV can certify AHS freedom for the UK within paragraph IV (b) provided he/she has a 618NDC covering paragraph IV(c).

If the horse has travelled to any other country during the past 2 years (paragraph IV (b) of the EHC and 7 of this NFG refer), the OV must check the AHS disease status of those countries in order to determine whether or not paragraph IV(b) can be certified. The OV must check the OIE list of countries officially recognised as free from AHS at:

<http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/official-disease-status/african-horse-sickness/list-ahs-free-members/>. If a country is not listed, then the paragraph can be certified on the basis of support certification (essentially the import certificate required under EU legislation which requires the country/territory of origin of the horse not to have been infected by AHS). Some countries which are free of AHS and actually eligible to export horses to the EU, might not appear on the OIE list of free countries because they have not applied to the OIE yet for their status to be officially recognised.

All matters in these paragraphs other than the disease status of the UK, e.g. travel history of the horse, disease status of non UK countries, protection from Culicoides, non-vaccination for AHS in the 40 days prior to export, are NOT covered by the 618NDC and must be verified by the OV independently.

CEM

In relation to CEM, paragraph IV(e) (i) may be certified if you have a 618NDC covering this paragraph, but as CEM occurs fairly frequently, there are likely to be periods of time when a 618NDC cannot be issued for this.

The OV must check which paragraphs are specified on the 618NDC. In view of this, even if the current disease situation allows the clearance to be issued, exporters may prefer to follow the testing option in paragraph IV e(iii) so that export could proceed in the event of CEM being confirmed before export takes place (unless the horse can comply with the other option at paragraph IV(e) (ii)). In relation to CEM, paragraph IV(e) (i) may be certified if you have a 618NDC covering this paragraph, but as CEM occurs fairly frequently, there are likely to be periods of time when a 618NDC cannot be issued for this. The OV must check which paragraphs are specified on the 618NDC. In view of this, even if the current disease situation allows the clearance to be issued, exporters may prefer to follow the testing option in paragraph IV e(iii) so that export could proceed in the event of CEM being confirmed before export takes place (unless the horse can comply with the other option at paragraph IV(e) (ii)). For both: IV e (ii) and (iii) the OV should establish (e.g., based on an exporter's declaration) the full list of the establishments the animal stayed in for the past two months (the OIE recommendation for how long an establishment can be classified as infected) and if the establishment(s) has/have been/were free from CEM for the three years prior to their departure from the establishment/s in question. For residences in the UK, the CEM status of the establishment(s) can be provided by APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle. For residencies outside the UK, supporting evidence from the country of origin must be provided for the OV to certify these options.

In addition, we have been advised that all horses, including geldings, will be subjected to post import testing for CEM. Courtesy testing of all horses for CEM should therefore be undertaken prior to export even if the country freedom from CEM is certified. The test results should be attached to the EHC and, in the case when option IV e) (i) has been certified, the lab results may be annotated to the effect that country freedom has been certified, however testing has been undertaken for extra reassurance.

Premises: Paragraph IV (f) refers. The OV should obtain a written declaration from the owner/representative of the owner stating all the premises where the horse has been kept during the 3 months prior to export. Where the OV has no direct knowledge of the status of any premises where the horse has been resident during the previous 3 months *and the adjoining premises*, a written support document should be obtained from the veterinary surgeon responsible for that premises *and the adjoining premises*. The status of the adjoining premises in relation to non-notifiable diseases (see footnote) may be difficult to establish, but every effort must be made to verify this so that this can be certified in accordance with the proviso "as far as can be ascertained" contained in paragraph IV(f), the explanatory information at footnote 1 and taking into account the risk any horses in the adjoining premises might pose to the horse while it was resident there. Although the wording of the disease clearance in this paragraph is in the form of "*no infectious or contagious disease including .....*" the clearance can be considered to refer only to the specific diseases listed in the paragraph.

**7. Owner's declarations**

Paragraphs IV (b), (e) (ii) and first part of (e) (iii). The OV should carry out any enquiry considered necessary into establishing this and obtain / check the validity of the owner declarations. If the OV has any reason to doubt the validity of any declaration APHA should be consulted. The OV should retain copies of the declarations for audit purposes.

In respect of Paragraph IV (b) and horses which have been outside the UK during the previous 2 years, OVs should be aware that under European Union rules, horses legally moved between Member States or imported from third countries must not originate from countries or territories considered infected by AHS.

**8. Isolation**

Paragraph IV (j) refers. The OV may approve pre-export isolation premises on behalf of the Department, provided that the following criteria can be met:

**8.1 Construction and location**

- a) The isolation premises must be a clearly demarcated area surrounded by a stock proof wall or fence and containing suitable facilities for the accommodation and exercise of the animals during the isolation period.

- b) The use of exercise facilities outside the premises may be permitted under the direction of the OV, after consultation with the DVM. The OV must ensure that the isolation status of the consignment is maintained at all times. If the exercise facilities are used by non-export horses, the isolated horses must use the facilities first each day and must be cleared from the area before non-export status horses are allowed access to the facilities.
- c) The premises should have facilities for veterinary examination and collection of samples and facilities for the segregation of sick or suspect horses.
- d) The access to the premises should be controlled and secure.
- e) The location should be as remote as possible from other premises containing equidae. In making a decision as to the suitability of the location of the isolation premises, the OV should take into consideration the epidemiology of the diseases for which certification is being provided, in particular with respect to the distance and presence of physical barriers between the isolation premises and other premises.
- f) All drainage must be away from the isolation premises.
- g) Isolation buildings should be capable of being effectively cleaned and disinfected.
- h) An adequate supply of water must be available at all times for the isolated horses and for cleaning purposes.
- i) Adequate supplies of food and bedding material for the whole of the isolation period must be stored either within the isolation premises or in a nearby secure and separate store.
- j) Equipment and utensils used for feeding, grooming and cleaning must be used only in the isolation premises during the isolation period.
- k) Protective clothing and footwear to be used exclusively in the isolation premises must be available at the entrance to the isolation premises.
- l) There should be adequate facilities for the cleansing and disinfection of vehicles, either on or near to the isolation premises.

## **8.2 Procedures**

- a) Immediately before the commencement of the isolation period, the isolation buildings, all fixed and moveable equipment and utensils used for feeding, grooming and cleaning must be disinfected, unless new, using a disinfectant approved by Defra, to the satisfaction of the supervising OV. Exercise areas/paddocks should be cleaned to the satisfaction of the OV.
- b) No person may enter the isolation premises unless specifically authorised by the supervising OV.
- c) No staff supervising the horses may come into contact with any other horses during the period of supervision.
- d) Any authorised visitor to the isolation premises must wear the protective clothing provided throughout the visit.
- e) When no staff are on duty, the premises must be securely locked to prevent the entry of unauthorised persons.
- f) The isolation period for all isolated horses shall be deemed to start from the time of entry of the last horse. Horses must not leave the premises during the isolation period except with the permission of the OV and DVM.
- g) Isolated horses must have no contact with any horses of lower health status during the isolation period.
- h) The supervising OV should visit the premises when the horses enter at the start of the isolation period and at the end of the isolation period. At

least one unannounced visit should be carried out during the isolation period.

- i) A health record should be kept of each isolated horse during the isolation period. This record should be available for inspection by the OV or a Veterinary Officer.
- j) The operator should report any illnesses or other problems to the supervising OV. Where there is any cause for concern about the export certification of the consignment, the DVM should be consulted.
- k) If the OV is not satisfied that the conditions of approval are being met, AH should be immediately notified.

**9. Vaccination against equine influenza**

Paragraph IV (g) refers. All horses must have been completed a primary vaccination course or have had a booster vaccination in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations, not more than 30 days and not less than 14 days prior to export.

**10. Laboratory testing**

Paragraph IV (j) refers. Blood samples for these laboratory tests should be sent to the APHA, Weybridge, allowing sufficient time for the tests to be completed and for results to be received before the proposed export date.

**CEM testing**

Paragraph IV (e) (iii) refers. The tests for contagious equine metritis mentioned here must be carried out during isolation prior to export. The 3 sets of swabs must be taken at an interval of not less than 7 days and submitted to a Defra approved laboratory - **currently APHA Penrith**. A separate swab must be used for each of the sites mentioned. For non-pregnant females, a cervical swab is required during estrus, but **how many such swabs (reference to three consecutive estruses) are required is open to interpretation, so is strongly advised to check the position with the importer**. Swabs must be set up for culture within 48 hours of sampling.

**NB: The sample from the clitoral sinuses must be taken from both sinuses. The word clitoral sinuses (and not sinus) must be written on the VLA submission form.**

All swabs from an individual animal must be submitted to the same laboratory and must arrive at the laboratory within 48 hours of sampling. If more than 10 swabs are to be submitted, prior notice should be given to the laboratory.

**11. Welfare**

Exporters and transporters must comply with all the legislation for the welfare of live animals during transport. The welfare conditions required during transport, are set out in Council Regulation EC No 1/2005 (as retained), implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, with parallel legislation in Scotland and Wales.

If transported by air, animals should also be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Information about welfare during transport in Great Britain and the necessary requirements can be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency: Welfare in Transport Team

Centre for International Trade

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Phone: +44 (0) 3000 200 301

E-mail: [WIT@apha.gov.uk](mailto:WIT@apha.gov.uk)

Or, in the case of Northern Ireland, DAERA at Dundonald House, Belfast.

**12. Disclaimer**

This certificate is provided on the basis of information available at the time, and may not necessarily comply fully with the requirements of the importing country. It is the exporter's responsibility to check the certificate against any relevant import permit or any advice provided by the competent authority in the importing country. If these do not match, the

exporter should contact the APHA Centre for International Trade, Carlisle or DAERA, via the link or e-mail address below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-apha>

DAERA - Email: [vs.implementation@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:vs.implementation@daera-ni.gov.uk)