Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notes for Guidance: Export Health Certificate for the entry into the European Union and Northern Ireland of animals of the family *Hippopotamidae* 8455

July 2024

Contents

No: 8455 NFG

EHC for entry into the EU or NI of animals of the family *Hippopotamidae*

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE (NFG) FOR THE CERTIFYING OFFICERS (CO) AND EXPORTERS

1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

Commission Implementing Regulations (EU) 2021/404

Commission Implementing Regulations 2021/634

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2035

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/351 - Model EHC amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403

Any EU legislation referenced in the EHC must be complied with and EU legislation can be accessed on the following link. You should ensure that you are using the latest version. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html

Consolidated legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of EU legislation with their amendments and corrections in a single, non-official document, are available. Each consolidated text contains a list of all legal documents taken into account for its construction.

You can search for consolidated texts by using the 'find results by document number' option on the European Commission website. Once you have selected the relevant legislation, click 'document information', and then scroll down to 'all consolidated versions' and select the most recent version.

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html

Please note that the consolidated text may not contain the latest amendment to the legislation, as it takes several weeks for this to be updated.

Texts provided in this section are intended for information only. Please note that these texts have no legal value. For legal purposes please refer to the texts published in the 'Official Journal of the EU'.

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to COs and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with the relevant export certificate applicable for dispatch to the EU or NI of animals of the order Artiodactyla (*Hippopotamidae* only). The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with the veterinary certificate.

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.

[Please note, policies are being reviewed. NFG will be further amended to provide specific guidance. Traders should look at NFGs regularly for any updates]

A declaration by the master of the ship, as set out in Annex III of Commission Regulation (EC) No 403/2021, shall be attached to veterinary certificates for imports into the EU of terrestrial animals where the transport of those commodities includes transport by ship, even for part of the journey. You can find the Master of the ship declaration here: www.gov.uk/export-health-certificates/master-of-the-vessel-declaration-8466

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

This certificate is for movements into the EU or NI of animals of the family of *Hippopotamidae*.

The certificate must be completed in accordance with the explanatory notes set out in Chapter 4 of Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation 2020/2235.

3. CERTIFICATION BY AN OV

In **England, Scotland and Wales**, this certificate must be signed by a Government Veterinary Officer (e.g. APHA, FSA or FSS employed veterinary officers) or by an OV appointed by APHA on behalf of Ministers in Defra, the Scottish Government or the Welsh Government and who hold the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ (V)) authorisation.

OVs must sign and stamp, with the OV stamp, the health certificate in ink of a different colour to that of the printing of the EHC. There is no requirement to sign and stamp in a specific colour.

The OV should keep a copy of the signed certificate and any supporting documents for at least two years after signature or receipt/dispatch of the consignment, whichever is later. These can be electronic copies.

EHC in foreign language/s of the EU Member States (MSs).

EHC should be in English and the foreign language of the Border Control Post (BCP) of entry in the EU. The original copy of the required EHC must accompany the consignment to the BCP of entry.

Listing of the EU MS BCPs can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/vet-border-control/bip-contacts_en

The foreign language certificate as received from the APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle or via the Export Heath Certificates Online system (EHCO) and bearing the same unique reference number as the English certificate, should be considered an official and accurate translations of the English, as published in EU legislation.

The (sub-) paragraphs / options and how they are numbered and formatted is identical in the English and foreign language editions and to the legislation published by the European Commission. Therefore, the same phrases/sentences in the foreign language versions as in the English version should be struck through and these deletions should be stamped and initialled in both versions. Both versions must also be signed (as opposed to being initialled) and stamped by the OV, the foreign language certificate is deemed to be a genuine and properly authorised translation of the English version.

This also applies to any instructions in the guidance notes to strike out certain paragraphs or to certify statements that the country is free of certain notifiable diseases etc.

Additional information can be found in the APHA Vet Gateway:
http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/index.htm

SIGNING AND STAMPING

When signing a certificate, the CO should ensure that the certificate contains no deletions or alterations, other than those which are indicated on the certificate to be permissible and any corrections to permitted entries, subject to such changes being initialled and stamped (in the margin) by the CO. Permissible deletions are normally indicated in the 'Notes' section at the end of the certificate, with the instruction 'Keep as appropriate' or 'delete if not applicable'.

- Where the certificate contains optional or contextual statements, the statements which are not relevant shall be crossed out, individually initialled, and stamped by the CO, or completely removed from the certificate.

- Permitted paragraphs and sections may be crossed out by applying a 'Z' across the section or paragraph rather than crossing out line by line.

- There is no requirement for a date and time to accompany each stamp. The date is only entered at the required entry field in Part I of the certificate, and at the end where the CO signs, stamps and dates that action.

- We are aware of some BCPs demanding that all handwritten information in Part 1 of the EHC is initialled and stamped, including handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes. There is no legal requirement in EU legislation that all the hand-written information entered in the certificate must be signed and stamped. It is only in the case of correction, in any part of the certificate, or in the case of statements to be crossed out, that the certifier must add signature (or initials) and stamp. This has been confirmed by the European Commission. The Commission noted however, in the case of a hand-written certificate, it is expected that the same one person completes the document. If not, the BCP might suspect that empty boxes were completed by another person after the certificate has been signed by the official

You should consider checking with the specific BCP regarding their preference when it comes to the stamping and initialling of handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes in Part I of the EHC.

- **Clarification from the European Commission means that all pages (as opposed to sheets of paper) are signed and stamped once individually in place of fan stamping and in addition to any permitted alterations. There is no requirement to fan stamp.**

- COs are reminded to consult the NFG prior to the certification of each EHC. NFG will be updated with this new information in due course.

Further Information COs should make sure they are familiar with all relevant guidance and other documents relating to EHCs and that they discuss requirements with exporters in advance.

See http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/exports/ehc-online.htm

You can also contact APHA's Centre for International Trade (CIT) on 03000 200 301.

PART I: DETAILS OF THE CONSIGNMENT

All boxes in Part I of the certificate must be completed. When a box is not applicable/optional, and not filled, please score it through.

Please use schedule to be attached to the certificate if there is not enough space to fill the information. See Section 'Addition of Schedules' below.

Please complete all the boxes in Part I of the certificate in accordance with Chapter 4 of Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235, Amended by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2744.

The Harmonised System (HS) Code is a commodity classification system used as a basis for customs tariffs and for international trade statistics.

It is the exporter's responsibility to ensure that the HS code is entered correctly and accurately reflects the product(s) being consigned.

Further information on HS Codes can be found online at:
https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff/sections

PART II: CERTIFICATION

II.1.1. - The codes to use (e.g. GB – 0) are in Column 2 of Part I of Annex III to Implementing Regulations (EU) 2021/404. This regulation has been amended by Implementing Regulations 2021/634 which added Great Britain and the Crown Dependencies to the relevant lists.

II.1.2. - This attestation requires a standstill for 6 months in the zone referred to II.1.1. and at least 40 days in the establishment. The 6-month standstill will provide assurance that the animals have not come in contact with other animals imported from another country (including from the EU) or from UK born animals.

Both points I and II may be signed on the basis of a written confirmation from the owner/ exporter. If necessary, supporting certification from the veterinarian responsible for the holding should be obtained, for example animal records for animals introduced in the establishment.

II.1.3. - This can be certified based on a written declaration from the owner/exporter confirming the animals have not been in contact with animals of a lower health status since birth or for at least the last 6 months prior to the date of dispatch to the EU.

II.1.4. - This can be certified based on Notifiable Disease Clearance, please check Section 4 on Notifiable Diseases for more information. List of diseases include all the diseases as stated in Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882.

II.1.5. and II.1.6. - The OV signing the certificate must ensure the animals will not stop or pass through any other establishment on export to the EU. Declaration from the owner must be sought to confirm to their best of their knowledge that the animals will not be in contact with animals of lower health status and pass through another establishment. For example, the journey log can be provided as evidence.

II.1.7. - The certifying OV must ensure that the transport was cleaned and disinfected with an authorised disinfectant before loading in accordance with the relevant provisions of Assimilated EU Regulation 1/2005. The OV must ensure the animals cannot escape from the means of transport they are kept in and that the escape of

excrements/litter/feed is prevented or at least minimised as much as possible. See section 7 on Animal Transport Attestation and gov.uk for further information on approved disinfectants. Every animal should be fit for the journey that is planned.

II.1.8. - The OV must perform a clinical examination of the animals within 24-hour period prior to loading in the means of transport. The OV should ensure they check for clinical symptoms of diseases relevant to *Suidae* and *Tayassuidae* animals as listed in Annex XII of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692, which includes: Foot and Mouth Disease, Infection with Rift Valley fever virus, Infection with *Brucella abortus*, *B. Melitensis* and *B. suis*, Infection with Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex(*M.bovis, M. caprae, M. tuberculosis*), Rabies and Anthrax.

II.1.9. - This can be certified based on prohibition of vaccination against these diseases in UK. If the animal has not been resident in the UK for its entire life a written declaration will be needed from the owner/exporter to state, no vaccination has been carried out.

II.1.10.1. - [First option] This can be certified based on Notifiable Disease Clearance, as referred to in Section 4 of this guidance.

[Second option] This can be deleted based on prohibition of vaccination for this disease in UK.

II.1.10.2. - This can be certified on the basis of Notifiable Disease Clearance, as referred to in Section 4 of this guidance. Rinderpest virus infection and Rift Valley fever disease are officially notifiable from 21 April 2021, via the existing notifiable disease reporting routes. Last recorded case of Rinderpest was in 1877. The certifying OV must ensure that the disease has not been reported as a formal diagnosis or under clinical suspicion in the last 12 months prior to the date of dispatch. A declaration from the owner and veterinary responsible for the holding may be required, as Rinderpest and Rift Valley diseases were not officially notifiable before 21 April 2021.

Also, vaccination for these diseases is prohibited in UK. A written declaration by the owner/exporter may be required to confirm the movement records of the establishment and confirm no vaccinated animals were introduced.

II.1.11.1. - This should be certified on the basis that the establishment is registered and under the control of APHA in accordance with the Article 30 of Commission delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692. A written declaration from APHA may be provided to confirm the 3-year records about the establishment including records for species, categories, number and identification of the animals and movements of the animals.

II.1.11.2. - This may be certified based on a declaration by the veterinarian of the establishment to confirm regular animal health visits for detection and information on signs indicative of the relevant listed diseases referred to in Annex I to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692. at a frequency that is proportional to the risk posed by the establishment.

II.1.11.3. - This may be certified on the basis of Notifiable Disease Clearance, as referred to in Section 4 of this guidance. The diseases of relevance are listed in Annex

I to Regulation 2020/692. The OV should check disease freedom for relevant diseases in the Annex to Regulation 2018/1882

II.1.11.4, II.1.11.5, II.1.11.6. and II.1.11.7 - These can be certified based on Notifiable Disease Clearance, as referred to in Section 4 of this guidance.

II.1.11.8. - The first option can be certified on the basis of Notifiable Disease Clearance, as referred to in Section 4 of this guidance. See notifiable disease clearance section 4 for further advice. Surra is officially notifiable from 21 April 2021, via the existing notifiable disease reporting routes. Last recorded case was in 1928. The certifying OV must ensure that the disease has not been reported as a formal diagnosis or under clinical suspicion in the last 30 days prior to the date of dispatch. A declaration from the owner and veterinary responsible for the holding may be required, as Surra was not officially notifiable before 21 April 2021.

Further information on the new reporting requirements can be found here:
http://apha.defra.gov.uk/documents/news/New-disease-reporting-requirements.pdf

4. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

For guidance on certifying paragraphs relating to Avian Influenza (AI) see APHA guidance for "COs Obtaining Clearance for AI" available here:
http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/exports/ehc-online.htm

COs (OVs and Environmental Health Officers (EHO)) can certify certain disease clearances paragraphs within this EHC, on behalf of the Department, provided written authority to do so has been provided/obtained on form 618NDC from APHA's Centre for International Trade – Carlisle (CITC).

The clearance will be provided by CITC on form 618NDC. It will specify the statements on the certificate that it covers and is only in relation to the official GB disease status specified in the relevant paragraphs. All other matters such as residency, vaccination status, status of premises in respect of other diseases not covered by the 618NDC and disease status of countries, areas, premises outside the UK, are for the CO to check and verify, obtaining support certification where necessary including support certification for products of animal origin that have originated in NI.

5. COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

In GB, the Certification Support Officer (CSO) role has been developed by APHA. CSOs can collect evidence, directed by an OV, which may be used to support OV certification of matters which do not require a clinical assessment or judgement e.g. for POAO and ABPs.

In England, Scotland, and Wales, CSOs can be utilised by OVs for gathering evidence relating to this certificate. The CSOs must be authorised by APHA and they must hold

the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Animal Health Professional) (OCQ (AHP)-CSO) qualification.

The OV must direct the CSO as to how and where any necessary evidence relevant to the requirements of the EHC should be obtained. CSOs may not carry out any functions that require the exercise of veterinary judgement and are restricted to the execution of administrative checks.

They may only carry out such inspections, factual verification and evidence collection as specified by the directing OV, who remains responsible for the certification of the product. CSOs are not authorised to sign an EHC in their own right or on behalf of an OV.

Any documentary evidence collected by the CSO must be stamped, signed and dated by the CSO, before being submitted by them as supporting evidence to the OV. It is required that the OV is familiar with the product process and evidence required to start with, before directing the CSO to provide future evidence on an ongoing basis.

Additional guidance and principles of implementation are provided in the OV Instructions Exports section of the APHA Vet Gateway.

6. CONSIGNMENTS OR PARTS OF THE CONSIGNMENT ORIGINATING FROM NI, EU MEMBER STATES OR FROM A THIRD COUNTRY [WHEN APPLICABLE]

NI origin:

Consignments could potentially contain animals which have originated in NI. The certificate/documentation which the animal arrives into GB with may not contain sufficient information for the GB CO to sign the EU EHC.

Disease clearance for animals originating in NI can be completed using auto-clearance NDC found here:
https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/notifiable-diseases-northern-ireland

Where regional or local level disease clearance is required, this can be certified upon request on the basis of information from NI in the form of a declaration or a supporting health attestation.

Animal health statements which refer to the prohibition of certain vaccination programmes e.g. against FMD or CSF or ASF can be certified at a national level by the CO on the basis that NI also enforces a ban on such vaccinations in accordance with EU regulations.

Statements relating to implementation of a national system for identification and registration of livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry) can be certified on the basis of the requirement to register all livestock animal births, moves and deaths on the DAERA database.

EU origin:

It is possible that some consignments may contain animals that are of EU origin and were imported into GB on a GB EHC. The GB EHC may not contain enough information to allow the CO to sign an EU EHC.

In such cases, the CO will need further information from the EU member state regarding particular attestations on the EHC that cannot be signed by the CO without support documentation. Thus, the GB exporter must request from the EU exporter an attestation or written declaration from an EU registered vet. The GB exporter may wish to obtain these directly from the EU vet who has inspected the animals before export from the EU.

This supporting information must be in writing and kept by the GB CO. The GB CO is not required to attach it as a supporting document to the EHC, unless requested by the EU BCP or told otherwise.

Third country origin:

It is also possible that some consignments may contain animals that have been imported to GB from non-EU countries and fulfilled a residency period in GB, and GB exporters intend to export then to the EU. In these cases, COs may obtain a copy of the EHC for the import of such animals from the Third Country to GB.

GB COs are not required to attach a copy of the Third Country EHC as a supporting document to the EHC, unless requested by the EU BCP or specifically instructed in the NFG.

It is the GB exporter's ultimate responsibility to obtain any necessary support documents (from the EU member state exporter/Third Country exporter), to enable GB COs to be able to certify the live animals in good time before the export to the EU.

7. ANIMAL TRANSPORT ATTESTATION

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 and parallel legislation in Scotland and Wales implement Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. If transported by air, animals should be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Every animal should be fit for the journey that is planned. Animals should be in good health, free of illness, free of significant wounds and able to walk without pain on all legs. Animals that are in sufficiently good health, should be able to withstand the stress of a journey without experiencing any unnecessary pain or distress, and should arrive at their destination in good health. Animals that are injured or that present physiological weaknesses or pathological processes shall not be considered fit for transport and in particular if:

- they are unable to move independently without pain or to walk unassisted.
- they present a severe open wound or prolapse.

- they are pregnant females for whom 90% or more of the expected gestation period has already passed, or females who have given birth in the previous week.
- they are new-born mammals in which the navel has not completely healed.
- they are pigs of less than 3 weeks, unless they are transported less than 100km.

If the place of loading and holding of origin is different, then the OV must obtain a written declaration from the owner/transporter/exporter that the animals were transported from the holding in vehicles previously cleansed and disinfected with a Defra approved disinfectant and "in such a way as to provide effective protection of the animals' health status". This means transport without coming into contact with cloven hoofed animals other than those of a similarly certified level of health status. In this case, where a consignment is grouped in an assembly centre and comprises animals that were loaded on different dates, the date at which the journey commenced for the whole consignment is considered to be the earliest date when any part of the consignment left the holding of origin. OVs should also receive a declaration from the exporter/transporter that the animals will be transported to the place of destination in vehicles which have first been cleaned and disinfected with a Defra approved disinfectant and without coming into contact with cloven hoofed animals other than those of a similarly certified level of health status.

Except animals that are accompanied by their mother, long journeys should only be permitted for domestic equidae and domestic animals of bovine and porcine species if:

- **calves** are older than fourteen days.
- **pigs** are heavier than 10 kgs.

8. CLINICAL EXAMINATION

The inspection must be carried out prior to 24 hours of loading. The pre-export inspection should consist of a visual appraisal and, if deemed appropriate, physical examination of the animals for export. Each animal subject to an inspection must be assessed as an individual.

OVs must use their professional judgement to determine the level of inspection required in order to ensure that no animal is exported which shows signs of infectious disease and that animals are fit to travel to their intended destination.

9. ADDITION OF SCHEDULES

When the space in Part I or Part II of the certificate is insufficient to accommodate full details of the consignment a schedule may be used. In the relevant section of the certificate the CO should annotate the certificate 'see attached schedule'. A new schedule should be created (typed or clearly written) containing the same information as that required in the certificate. The schedule must include the certificate reference number on each page and must be signed, dated, and stamped by the CO in a colour other than the printed text on each page and under the last entry. The schedule forms part of the certificate. All pages of the certificate, including the schedule, must be sequentially numbered. Any blank spaces in the schedule or the certificate should be struck through with diagonal lines.

Further guidance is available here: http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/index.htm

10. UK APPROVED ESTABLISHMENTS ELIGIBLE TO EXPORT TO THE EU

The exporting establishment must be listed as a 'UK approved establishment' and a list of UK approved establishments for import of POAO to the EU, can be found on the European Commission's list of approved establishments' link below: https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/international_affairs/trade/non-eu-countries_en

Please note that the list is updated regularly and ONLY establishments on the list are approved to export to the EU, and this does not include establishments with pending applications for approval.

If the final product contains POAO from other establishments, or products were previously processed in different establishments in the production chain, then these establishments should also be listed as UK and/or EU approved establishments.

There are lists of approved establishments for other commodities, e.g. germinal products on the link above.

11. CERTIFIED COPIES OF EHCs

When completing export certification, the CO and, if applicable, FCCO must make photocopies of, or scan and save all documents they certify. OVs must retain copies of certification documents in accordance with RCVS Certification principles.

https://www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/code-of-professional-conduct-for-veterinary-surgeons/supporting-guidance/certification/

COs must retain copies of all export documentation for a period of two years. A certified copy of this EHC does not need to be returned to the APHA CITC. For the purposes of completing routine Quality Assurance checks on export certification, CITC may request certified copies of certification from COs.

Further details on Post Certifying Procedures, 'certified copies' of certification and the types of documents that should be retained by COs can be found on the APHA Vet Gateway.

12. LEGAL STATEMENT

The existing EU legislation that the UK complied with prior to the end of the Transition Period has been incorporated into our domestic law as "assimilated EU law" under the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018. References in our guidance and certification to such EU instruments should be taken to be references to this "assimilated EU law". The EU standards that this legislation includes continue to remain in force, without substantive amendment, as part of UK domestic law (apart from corrections to make the EU legislation fully operable.

13. DISCLAIMER

This certificate and NFG are 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 APHA in Carlisle.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at livestockexports@apha.gov.uk

PB 8455 NFG

Version History:

EHC

Notes - Box Reference I.27: Further information added

NFG

Version 4 Published 31 July 2024:

Applicable Legislation: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/351 added