

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Veterinary certificate for the dispatch of pet birds accompanying their owners to the European Union or Northern Ireland

September 2026

Contents

1. Applicable Legislation
2. Scope of the Certificate
3. Certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV)
Part I: Details of the Consignment
Part II: Certification
II.I Health information
4. Collection of evidence
5. Declaration by the owner or the representative of the owner of the pet birds
6. Animal welfare
7. Clinical Examination
8. Addition of schedules
9. Certified copies of the Export Health Certificate (EHC)
10. C.I.T.E.S
11. Legal Statement
12. Disclaimer

No: 8217 NFG

Veterinary certificate for the Dispatch of pet birds accompanying their owners to the EU

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

1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

[Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#)

[Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2035](#)

[Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2026/705](#)

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/131

[Control of Trade in Endangered Species \(COTES\) Regulations 2018](#)

Any EU legislation referenced in the certificate must be complied with and EU legislation can be accessed on the following link. You should ensure you use the latest version:

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

Please note that Official Control Regulations 2017/625 have repealed Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, 882/2004 and Directive No 96/23/EC. Please see link:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017R0625&from=EN>

Consolidated legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of Union 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.

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 European Union'.

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 of pet birds accompanying their owners to the EU or NI. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with the health 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]

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

This model EHC may be used for dispatch of pet birds accompanying their owners to the EU or NI, where the consignment consists of not more than five birds.

The pet birds are 'pet animals' as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429.

"Pet birds" are considered to be all species of birds (**except poultry** as detailed below) which are accompanying their owners, or a natural person responsible for such animals on behalf of the owner, and are not intended to be sold or transferred to another owner. The birds must be moving as a result of the owner moving.

"Poultry" is defined in Article 2 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 as birds that are reared or kept in captivity for:

- production of meat;
- production of eggs for human consumption;
- production of other products;
- restocking supplies of game birds; or
- breeding birds for any of the above purposes

Any EU legislation referenced in the EHC must be complied with and EU legislation can be accessed on the following link: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>

3. CERTIFICATION BY AN OV

In **England, Scotland and Wales**, this certificate must be signed by an OV appointed by the Animal and Plant Health Agency 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 (MS).

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 Health 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.

UK approved establishments will be uploaded to [Europa](#) website in due course, until the establishments are in Europa website you can find the list of UK approved establishments in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/businesses-approved-to-export-to-the-eu>

Please check the guidance on completion of Part I of the EHC at the bottom of the EHC and in the links provided in the NFG. For completion of Box I.8 - Region of Origin Code, if applicable; the territory code should be as listed in the relevant legislation that is provided under the notes at the bottom of the EHC. This is only for species or products affected by regionalisation measures or by the setting up of approved zones in accordance with a European Community Decision. The approved regions or zones must be indicated as described in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Additional information can be found in APHA Official Veterinarian Training:

<https://improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php>

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 I 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 the Animal and Plant Health Agency'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 a 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 the guidance laid down on [Commission Decision 2007/240/EC](#). Although this legislation has been replaced

by Regulation 2020/2235, the box numbering does not match with the guidance in the latest legislation.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32020R2235>

Please also check the guidance on completion of Part I of the EHC at the bottom of the EHC and in the links provided in the NFG.

Box I.8 - Region of Origin Code

This commodity is not subject to regionalisation measures. Please score it through.

PART II: CERTIFICATION

II. Health information

The OV signing the export veterinary certificate must ensure that the animal health attestation set out in Part II of the veterinary certificate have been complied with.

II.1- The birds being moved must be a number of five or less, as specified in box I.28.

II.2 - Please insert Europe if the bird is from GB origin.

[Regional Commissions – OIE – World Organisation for Animal Health](#)

II.3- This can be certified based in the clinical inspection carried out within the 48 hours of dispatch.

II.4- There are two main options:

First main option:

- Either: 30 days PMI (Pre-Movement Isolation),
- Or: 14 days PMI plus testing every bird for AI H5 and H7 (Antigen or genome detection test) not earlier than 7 days into isolation.

Under the first main option, the second sub-option of vaccination cannot be chosen as vaccination is prohibited against Avian Influenza (AI).

Second main option:

- Post-introduction quarantine of the bird(s) for a period of at least 30 days immediately after their arrival in the EU, in a quarantine establishment approved in accordance with Article 14 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2035. The declaration shall be attached to the veterinary certificate. The owner/authorised person must declare and provided evidence to the OV that he/she has made arrangements for the post-introduction quarantine.

A list of approved quarantine establishments in EU countries can be found [here](#). Not all EU Member States have approved facilities or for approved specifically for birds, meaning this option will not be viable for all movements.

II.5 – This section can be certified based on the owner/authorised person declaration and relevant evidence:

II.5.1 – The birds must be pet animals intended for a non-commercial movement.

II.5.2 – State the location where the birds are being isolated.

II.5.3 – Select from the ‘either’/‘or’ options.

If the birds will be isolated for at least 30 days at the place of destination indicated in box I.12, select the ‘either’ option. Sub-option of vaccination against AI cannot be chosen as it is not applicable in the GB. Alternatively, if the birds will be isolated for at least 30 days in a separate quarantine establishment, select the ‘or’ option, and include the establishment name in box I.12.

The certificate is valid for 10 days from the date of OV signature and stamp. In the case of transport by ship, the validity is prolonged by the time of the sea voyage.

Isolation and ‘Official Supervision’

The bird(s) must be isolated (confined) at the same premises of origin specified in Box I.11.

“Official supervision” means that the OV must be confident that the isolation requirements have been sufficient to “effectively protect from contact with any other birds”. The OV should discuss with the owner how this will be achieved.

If the OV is not already familiar with the owner’s home/facilities a visit is recommended before isolation begins in order to examine the home/facilities and agree how the birds will be managed during isolation. The OV may wish to visit and/or request photographic/video evidence to demonstrate that isolation requirements are being kept.

At the end of the isolation period, the owner should sign a written declaration that the birds have been kept isolated from any other birds for at least 30 days. This declaration does not need to be attached to the EHC but a copy should be kept by the OV as supporting evidence.

The birds should be kept permanently housed during the isolation period and not allowed to exercise outside, unless an outside enclosed area can effectively prevent any contact with other birds (including contact with wild birds or their droppings). The number of people having contact with the birds in isolation should be minimised. If the owner has any other birds on the premises which are not part of the export consignment:

- These birds must be kept physically separate for the duration of isolation and should not share the same airspace. Alternatively, these birds can be isolated (co-terminus) with the birds to be exported.
- Steps should be taken to minimise the risk of indirect contact by not moving items (e.g. feed/water bowls, bedding etc.) between non-isolating and isolating birds and through the use of personal protective equipment and disinfectant as appropriate.
- If required, a [Defra approved disinfectant](#) used at an appropriate dilution rate for the control of AI virus should be used.

4. COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

Certification Support Officers may not be utilised for gathering evidence relating to this certificate.

5. DECLARATION BY THE OWNER OR THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OWNER OF THE PET BIRDS

The owner/person responsible for the bird(s) must sign/date/place the declaration laid down in Part 3 of Annex V to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/705, which has been included at the bottom of the certificate. Keep option as appropriate.

The declaration must be attached to the animal health certificate.

The owner or authorised person must make and sign the declaration. The OV must not sign it on their behalf.

The declaration must be signed either by the owner or by the authorised person who has the authorisation in writing from the owner to carry out the movement of the pet bird(s) on the owner's behalf (e.g. family member, friend, etc.) **The transporter/carrier cannot sign the declaration.**

The owner must also declare that during the period between the clinical inspection and the departure, the pet birds have not been in contact with any other birds of a different health status.

The move must follow the '5 days rule' and the owner or the authorised person must be travelling within 5 days either side of the pet's movement, for the movement to be considered non-commercial.

6. ANIMAL WELFARE

Welfare conditions during transport are laid down by Council Regulation EC 1/2005, implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, and parallel legislation in Scotland, Wales, and NI. Exporters must comply with welfare laws in GB relating to the export of animals

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

Information about the necessary requirements may be obtained from the Animal Welfare Team at any of the offices mentioned below:

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND WALES

Animal and Plant Health Agency – Centre for International Trade

Eden Bridge House

Lowther Street

Carlisle

CA3 8DX

Tel: 03000 200 301

E-mail: wit@apha.gov.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs – Animal Welfare Section
Ballykelly House
111 Ballykelly Road
Ballykelly
Limavady
BT49 9HP
Tel: 0300 2007840
E-mail: WITPolicy@daera-ni.gov.uk

7. CLINICAL EXAMINATION

The clinical inspection must be carried out within 48 hours of loading. The pre-export inspection should consist of a visual appraisal and, if deemed appropriate, physical examination of the birds 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.

8. 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 black 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.

9. CERTIFIED COPIES OF EHCs

When completing export certification, the CO 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](#).

10. C.I.T.E.S

This certificate does not provide exemption from other legislation laid down for the protection or conservation of certain wild species, e.g. the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (C.I.T.E.S.). Information about the necessary requirements may be obtained from the Department at the address given below:

Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service (WLRS)
Zone 1/17, Temple Quay House,
2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

Tel: 0117 372 8774 Fax: 0117 372 8206

11. LEGAL STATEMENT

The existing EU legislation that the UK already complies with will be incorporated into our domestic law as "retained EU law" under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. References in our guidance and certification to such EU instruments should be taken to be references to this "retained EU law". Under the Withdrawal Act we will ensure that current EU standards remain in force, without amendment, in the immediate months after our EU exit as part of UK domestic law (apart from corrections to make the EU legislation fully operable).

12. 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 the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in Carlisle, via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency>

© Crown copyright 2022

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.3. To view this licence visit:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/ or email:

PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

liveanimalexports.carlisle@apha.gov.uk

PB 8217 NFG

Version History

EHC

Published September 2026

II.1 added

II.5 amended

Footnote 8 added

Declaration amended

NFG

Version 10: Published September 2026

2. Scope of the certificate – Definition of poultry has been amended.

Part II:

II.1 – Guidance added regarding number of birds permitted for movement.

II.5.2 and II.5.3 – Guidance added regarding isolation of birds.

5. Declaration by the owner of the representative of the owner of the pet birds - Guidance added on how to sign the declaration.

Version 9: Published March 2025

Part I: - Section 5: Guidance added on the '5 day rule'.

Version 8: Published 6 July 2023

Part I: Information is amended for I.8 as this does not need to be filled.