



**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**INFORMATION NOTE – Please read the information below carefully**

**Movement of equines between the UK and the EU after Brexit**

This is an update to equine veterinarians on what changes may apply to the process for certifying equines for movement from the UK to the EU after Brexit on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. We wrote to you in February 2019 outlining how processes might change. This letter provides the latest guidance. We will provide you with a further update closer to 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Summary**

**If the UK leaves the EU without a deal**

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, whether owners will be able to move equines after 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 depends on whether the EU lists the UK as a third country for the export of equines.

Exactly what requirements owners will need to meet will depend on the sanitary group (health status category) the EU gives the UK as part of the listing process.

If the UK is listed, owners will need to do the following to continue to be able to export. Further guidance on the requirements follows below:

- to get equines tested for certain diseases, depending on the UK's sanitary group
- to meet isolation and residency requirements
- to apply for an export health certificate (EHC)
- to check they have the correct equine identification (ID) documents
- to check if they need an export welfare declaration

The EU provided the UK with listed status and placed us in the least onerous sanitary group, A, in anticipation of Brexit in April 2019. A further vote of the relevant EU committee is required to list the UK ahead of Brexit on 31<sup>st</sup> October, but we expect that we will continue to meet the animal health requirements for listing.

**If the EU does not list the UK as a third country, there will be no movement of equines to the EU.**

## What will change?

After Brexit on 31<sup>st</sup> October, the UK will become a third country.

Currently equines can be moved to the EU either;

- under the Tripartite Agreement (TPA). Under this arrangement, eligible equines travelling to France require a commercial document (DOCOM) and equines travelling to Ireland do not require any form of animal health certificate.  
Or
- with an Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) for all other equine movements not made under the TPA,

After Brexit, equines will require the same animal health documentation and the same level of health checks prior to travel, regardless of which EU country they are travelling to.

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal;

- The UK will lose access to the Tripartite Agreement so all movements currently made under the TPA will be subject to the same requirements as all other equines from 31<sup>st</sup> October
- All equines will need an Export Health Certificate (EHC) in order to travel for each journey made from the UK to the EU. The EHC will replace the ITAHC and DOCOM
- Most equines will need a new UK Government issued ID document in order to travel, including from the UK to Ireland. Equines registered with a national branch of an international organisation for sport or competition will be exempt. All equines will continue to require current equine passports for domestic identification purposes. Current passports will need to accompany a Government issued ID during travel for relevant equines.
- All equines entering the EU will need to do so via the correctly approved [Border Inspection Post](#) (BIP)
- All UK equines will be required to undergo relevant blood tests before export. Most will require blood testing within 30 days or less prior to travel to prove the absence of certain diseases.

## Disease testing

Before an equine can be certified for travel and be issued an EHC by an Official Veterinarian (OV), equines will need to be tested for the absence of certain diseases.

Below are the blood test requirements for sanitary group A. The EU listed the UK in sanitary group A ahead in anticipation of Brexit on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Whilst a further vote of the relevant EU committee on the UK's listed status ahead of Brexit on 31<sup>st</sup> October, we are confident that the UK will continue to meet the animal health requirements for listing in sanitary group A.

### **If the UK is put in sanitary group A, equines will need to be tested for:**

- equine infectious anaemia within 30 days or less prior to travel for permanent moves
- equine infectious anaemia within 90 days or less prior to travel for temporary moves (moves of under 90 days of equines registered with an international body for sporting and competition purposes)
- equine viral arteritis within 21 days or less prior to travel for uncastrated male equines older than 180 days, unless they meet other specific vaccine or testing requirements specified in the Model Health Certificate. These can be found in [EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2018/659](#).

**Sampling can be carried out by any qualified veterinarian. Blood samples should be sent to the APHA laboratory in Weybridge for analysis.**

### **Residency requirements**

If the UK is put in sanitary group A, owners will need to ensure that equines meet certain residency and isolation requirements, depending on the type of move they are undertaking.

To export a horse registered with a national branch of an international body for sporting or competition purposes for under 90 days, it will need to have been resident on a UK holding under veterinary supervision, in a country with a similar health status or in an EU member state for 40 days prior to export.

For permanent exports, or temporary exports of other equines, equines must be resident on a UK holding under veterinary supervision, or in a country with a similar health status:

- for 90 days
- since birth if the animal is less than 90 days old
- since entry to the UK if the animal was imported directly from the EU fewer than 90 days before export

For permanent exports, or temporary exports of other equines, equines must also meet isolation requirements. They should be kept separate from other equines not of the equivalent health status (i.e. those equines that cannot be shown to meet the disease testing requirements for export) for 30 days prior to export.

In the unlikely event that the UK is put in a sanitary group other than A different testing, residency and isolation requirements may apply. In this scenario we will issue further guidance if needed.

**An official vet (OV) with the appropriate authorisation must confirm these requirements have been met before export.**

## **EU Recognition of UK Studbooks**

The UK has applied to the EU for recognition of the UK's studbooks but we are advising owners and businesses to plan on the basis that recognition won't be granted ahead of 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Should some, or all, of the UK's studbooks be recognised by the EU prior to or after day one, horses registered in those studbooks will be able to follow the rules outlined above for horses registered with national branches of international bodies for sporting or competition purposes when moving to the EU for less than 90 days. They will not require a UK Government issued ID document to move to the EU. They will also be able to travel via border inspection posts that are specifically approved for registered equines, as opposed to BIPs for unregistered equines (classified as ungulates).

This means owners should assume they need to meet the longer residency requirements and additional isolation requirements outlined above when planning any moves of a horse registered in a UK studbook if they want to be able to move after 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Should the position on studbook recognition change we will provide a further update.

## **Veterinary supervision**

OVs will need to be assured by owners' records that equines meet the relevant residency and isolation requirements. Depending upon the UK's sanitary grouping, they may also need to see evidence that either the holding or the equine has been under veterinary supervision during the relevant time period of residence/isolation.

Owners may therefore look to contact their vets ahead of export to ensure that their equine is registered with a vet and to alert a vet to their plans to export and steps taken to isolate an equine in preparation.

Further information will be available in the notes for guidance provided with each [Export Health Certificate](#).

## **Certifying equines for movement – Export Health Certificates and Government issued ID**

Before an EHC can be issued by an OV, equines will need to have been tested and found free of certain diseases (see above).

Steps for owners to get an EHC and Government issued ID:

1. Owner will be able to find the EHC and other forms needed on the [Export Health Certificate form finder](#) on Gov.UK. If exporting from Northern Ireland, owners should contact their [local DAERA office](#). Most EHCs also have notes

for guidance explaining how to fill out the certificate. If the equine is not registered with an international body for sporting or competition purposes, the owner will also be able to apply for a Government issued ID document at this point in the process via the form finder.

2. Owner nominates an official vet to inspect the horse or other equine. There are various ways owners will be able to find an official vet:
  - a. check the [list of professionals who can certify export health certificates on GOV.UK](#)
  - b. ask at a local vet practice
  - c. email [csconehealthovteam@apha.gov.uk](mailto:csconehealthovteam@apha.gov.uk) (or if in Northern Ireland [contact DAERA](#))
3. Owner fills in the EHC and supporting forms and emails them to the APHA address on the forms.
4. APHA will send the EHC and if relevant the Government issued ID document to the nominated official vet within 7 working days, or within one working day if planning to export in the next 7 working days. They will provide copies of the EHC in the languages of the destination country and the country where the horse or other equine first enters the EU.
5. Owner arranges for the official vet to check that the horse or other equine meets the health requirements of the destination country within 24 hours of travel. The official vet will complete and sign the EHC and send a copy to APHA. If relevant, they will also complete, stamp, sign and date the Government issued ID. The official vet will then email copies of the relevant documents to APHA.
6. Owner keeps the completed EHC and other documents with the animal during travel.

There will be no fee for the Export Health Certificate or Government issued ID, however OV's will charge a fee to sign off the EHC.

If you're in Northern Ireland, [contact DAERA for specific advice.](#)

Longer term, we are improving the way Export Health Certificates are processed – including a new digital service which will improve the process for users. We will keep you updated as to when this will be available.

### **When will equine owners need to take action to prepare?**

Equine owners will be advised to consult veterinarians at least six weeks ahead of when they intend to move their equine to allow for any additional blood tests and to make appointments with a vet.

Defra has begun to issue advice to equine owners to allow time for preparations in the event of a No Deal exit.

[We advise checking gov.uk regularly for the latest information](#)

## **Imports**

In the event of a No Deal, no immediate changes will be made to the rules relating to the import of equines from the EU to the UK in principle.

For horses which currently enter the UK from France using a DOCOM, or travel from Ireland without any animal health documentation, there will be no immediate change to the current entry documentation in the event of a no deal. The UK will also continue to accept veterinary attestations for registered equines moving from the EU to the UK.

The EU has made clear that, should EU owners wish to benefit from streamlined re-entry processes for EU registered horses that have been in the UK for less than 30 days for the purposes of racing or competition, they will need animal health documentation proving when the animal left the EU. EU owners may therefore benefit from using a veterinary attestation for the purposes of import, even where the UK will not require them to do so.

Equines imported directly from the EU to the UK will not have to enter the UK via a border inspection post.

Processes for notification of imports to APHA (or DAERA) will change, however. More details are [available here](#).

## **Customs**

Importers will also need to comply with UK customs procedures. In some cases importers may want to register for [simplified import procedures](#). Information from HMRC on customs procedures in the event of a no deal exit from the EU are [available here](#).

Owners regularly moving the same equine between the UK and EU may wish to consider applying for an ATA Carnet to further streamline customs procedures. More information is available [here](#).

## **Will Official Veterinarians need any additional training?**

Official Veterinarians (OVs) who are currently certified to carry out the current checks for equine travel won't need to undertake any additional qualifications.

After 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, vets who wish to qualify as an Official Veterinarian for equine travel, would be required to undertake training modules in the same way as now. From 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, the training modules for OVs will cover information on any new processes. Qualified OVs are able to access the most up to date training material at any time if they consider they require refresher training. There is no charge for this access.

## **If a deal is agreed**

If a deal is agreed between the UK and the EU and an implementation period is confirmed, there will be no immediate changes to the process for moving equines from the UK to the EU.

If you have any questions regarding any of the information above please contact: [EquineExportsCarlisle@apha.gov.uk](mailto:EquineExportsCarlisle@apha.gov.uk)

Yours faithfully,

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