



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Guidance updates for certification of POAO exports to the EU and movements to Northern Ireland: Food Competent Certifying Officers (FCCOs)

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## Purpose

To inform Food Competent Certifying Officers (FCCOs) of information to be aware of in relation to the certification of Products of Animal Origin (POAO) for export to the EU or movement to Northern Ireland. This Technical Note will be updated as new information becomes available. Yellow highlight indicates content has been amended in the text from previous versions.

Local Authorities are also asked to note the change in contact arrangements for raising capacity issues relating to provision of EHC services from April 2021. Please see 'Further Information'.

We have also added a schedule of changes to EHC Online in the "Further Information" section of this note, for information.

**This is the final version of this Briefing Note. Future technical clarifications will be conveyed through [APHA Vet Gateway](#), routine [Briefing Notes](#) and updates to Notes for Guidance.**

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## Background

- Since 1 January 2021, exports of certain POAO from Great Britain (GB) to the European Union (EU) require an export health certificate (EHC) signed by an officially designated Certifying Officer (CO).
- This guidance document highlights common issues that have arisen from the certification of consignments dispatched from GB to the EU, since the end of the Transition Period, and provides further information to help resolve these issues.

### v11.1 Treatment of dried egg white for composites (post April '21) – 8350

- There is a typographical error in EU legislation relating to heat treatment of dried egg white for composites certified using [8350](#) (new EHC for use post 21 April 2021). Commission regulations (Annex XXVIII of 2020/692) recommend a heat treatment at “54,4 degrees for 513 hours”. This should read “54,4 degrees for 50.4 hours”, as in [model certificate](#) listed on EHC Finder (part II.3.D.2). The Commission have confirmed that this will be corrected in the ongoing amendment of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692.

### v11.2 Completing box I.27 on new POAO certificates (post 21 April '21)

- When completing box I.27 of new POAO certificates for use post 21 April 2021, the Commission have confirmed that, for “Date of collection/production”, you should enter the earliest date of final production of the items contained in the consignment.

Items from previous version (new edits highlighted in yellow)

### v10.1 Animal Health Regulations (last updated [20/05/2021](#))

- New EU Animal Health Regulation (AHR) and composite rules now apply. As of 21 April 2021, five new EHCs and one private attestation can be used for exports of specific products of animal origin to the EU. This includes two new composite product EHCs and the private attestation document for products exempt from certification. The EHCs are on [EHC online](#) and the [private attestation on form finder](#).
- If your composite product already requires an EHC, you will be able to carry on using the current EHC until August or choose to use the new documentation. If your product does not currently require an EHC, you must follow the new rules. For live animals, germinal products and other products of animal origin you will be able to continue using existing EHCs until August 2021.
- The remaining new EHCs for live animals, germinal products and products of animal origin will be phased in over the coming months.
- Further guidance can be found in [OV Briefing Note 10/21](#). Ongoing communications around the Animal Health Regulations will be provided in routine briefing notes. New or amended Notes for Guidance to new or amended certificates under AHR will be published before the AHR EHCs become available. Frequently asked questions for certifiers relating to the new certificates are available [here](#), or via email from [Traders@defra.gov.uk](mailto:Traders@defra.gov.uk)

## **v10.2 Changes to EU Legislation on High-Risk Food Not of Animal Origin (HRFNAO) (last updated 28/04/2021)**

- On Wednesday 21 April 2021, Article 11 of [Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/1793](#) on High-Risk Food Not of Animal Origin was updated.
- The updated Article 11 contains additional guidance on how to complete the [Official Certificate for products listed in Annex 2 of the 2019/1793 Regulation](#) moving from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI) or the EU. Please ensure that you refer to and comply with the guidance in Article 11 when certifying the official certificate.
- Please note that further changes will be made to the 2019/1793 Regulation in May 2021, and we will issue further communications detailing these changes in due course.

## **v10.3 Use of schedules (last updated 28/04/2021)**

- Information should only be included in a schedule if it is not possible to fit the information within the space provided into the main body of the certificate.
- The schedule must be clearly legible when printed.
- The information provided in the schedule should clearly reference the section of the certificate that it applies to and must match the information that is required in the certificate. Wherever possible this should be provided in the same format as in the certificate (i.e. a table with the same column headers in the same order).
- Only the information required in the certificate should be included in the schedule (e.g. FCCOs should not include commercial information such as prices or copies of other supporting documentation such as supporting attestations or laboratory results unless specifically instructed to include these).
- FCCOs must follow the guidance on [APHA Vet Gateway](#) and in the Notes for Guidance for the relevant certificate when using schedules.

## **v10.4 Cancel and replace (last updated 28/04/2021)**

- We are aware that, instead of applying to APHA for C&R EHCs, some certifying officers are creating new certificate and replacing the new certificate number with the old certificate number. This is not allowed.
- As established by The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), replacement certificates can only be issued by the Competent Authority, in this case the Centre for International Trade Carlisle (CITC). C&R EHCs not issued by a Veterinary Competent Authority are not considered legitimate and any consignment they accompany might be refused entry by the destination country.

- A request for a C&R to be issued must be done by submitting a completed application for the issue of a C&R EHC ([ET135](#)) to CITC. C&R EHCs are not issued automatically, and other possible solutions will be explored first. C&R certificates will only be issued where the situation requires (e.g. where there has been an error that has been detected after the consignment has left) and after consultation with an APHA Veterinarian in the CITC.
- Additional guidance for Certifiers can be found on the [Certification Procedures page](#) in the Exports guidance on the APHA Vet Gateway. Guidance for Certifiers registered to use the Export Health Certificates (EHC) Online service can be found on the EHC Online page of the APHA Vet Gateway, which includes a [Certifiers Quick Reference Guide for Cancellation and Replacement of an Export Health Certificate](#).
- Any queries relating to C&R EHCs should be sent to [export@apha.gov.uk](mailto:export@apha.gov.uk).

### **v10.5 Scallops – Sensory examination at BCPs (last updated 28/04/2021)**

- We are aware of certain BCPs rejecting consignments on the basis that the scallops can give off an unpleasant odour due to the presence of sand and mud, rather than the quality of the commodity itself.
- The Commission has confirmed that sensory examination of smell, colour, consistency or taste of goods are acceptable forms of physical checks, and that this examination is under the full competence of the official inspectors at BCPs. This might lead, on a case by case basis, to decisions of rejection of the consignment if the conclusions are not satisfactory.
- The Commission has advised that the selection of consignments for physical checks are carried out randomly based on frequencies established in Regulation (EU) 2019/2129. However, even if the consignment is not initially selected, official inspectors may decide on their own to extend official controls to physical checks in the event of suspicion of non-compliance (Art. 65.1 OCR), like a strong odour emanating from the consignment.

### **v9.1 Improvements to EHC Online – 29 March (moved to “further information”)**

#### **v8.1 Composites exempt from certification (last updated 18/03/2021)**

- We are aware of some BCPs rejecting consignments of composite products classed as cakes, breads and biscuits, exported without an Export Health Certificate, that we understand to be exempt from the need for an EHC, on the basis that these products need to be less than 20% POAO to be exempt from certification

- The Commission has confirmed that composite products are excluded from official controls at BCPs (and therefore do not require an EHC) so long as they meet *at least one* of the following conditions:
  - (a) Contains less than 50% of products of animal origin, and comply with the specific requirements laid down in Article 6(1)(a) of Commission Decision 2007/275 (EC);
  - (b) Or if they are listed in Annex II to Decision 2007/275
- As such, there is no additional requirement for cakes, breads and biscuits that come under the CN codes listed in Annex II to be less than 20% POAO to benefit from the exemption.
- Please note that, in any case, the processed products of animal origin included in composite products must comply with the rules of Regulation 853/2004 (third country of origin authorised to export the processed product of animal origin included in the composite product, approved processing establishment) and compliance with Decision 2011/163/EU on residues. These import requirements on composite products will change as from 21 April 2021.

### **v8.2 Movements from ambient storage (last updated 18/03/2021)**

- Ambient storage facilities are exempt from requiring approval and therefore do not have to be listed in TRACES. We are aware this has led to some issues for exporters of shelf-stable products from ambient storage facilities into the EU, with some BCPs requesting that Box I.11 needs to be completed with an 'Approval Number' of the establishment of dispatch.
- The Commission have confirmed that in such cases, because an approval number is not required by European Union legislation, the corresponding area can be left empty in the certificate.

### **v8.3 Qualification and title of certifying officers for fishery products EHC origin codes for shellfish (last updated 18/03/2021)**

- We are aware of certain BCPs rejecting consignments of fishery products because of the "qualification and title" of the certifying officer on the EHC. The Commission have confirmed that, in the case of fishery products, there is no specific requirement about the "qualification and title" of certifying officers, provided they are designated and authorised by the competent authorities (i.e. a Food Competent Certifying Officer or suitably qualified Official Veterinarian, as authorised by the Animal and Plant Health Agency).

- BCPs are able to check the validity of an OV or FCCO, if necessary, by sending a copy of the signed EHC to [exports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:exports@apha.gov.uk).

#### **v8.4 Region of origin codes for shellfish (last updated 28/04/2021)**

- For Live bivalve molluscs which do require Part I.8 Region of origin to be completed, the harvesting area code to be entered can be found at: [Live bivalve mollusc production areas \(seabed locations\) in Great Britain and the Crown Dependencies approved for export to the EU](#) under heading “SIN (Scotland)/RMP (England and Wales)/ Unique Identifier (Crown Dependencies)”. A GBR prefix is not required.
- We are aware of some BCPs challenging the absence of region of origin codes for live king scallops. The Commission has confirmed that *Pectinidae spp* can be harvested outside classified production areas. In this case, it is not required to enter the region of origin code in the certificate.

#### **v7.1 Either/or statements (last updated 11/03/2021)**

- Generally, “either/or” statements must be regarded as exclusive, i.e. that only one option must be retained in the statement.

#### **v6.1 Cleanliness of containers (last updated 04/03/2021)**

- We are aware of a number of consignments being rejected due to poor hygiene standards, including the improper use of packaging for movement of products of animal origin. Certifiers are reminded to be attentive to poor hygiene practice and to raise concerns with food businesses, referring them to [FSA guidance](#) if necessary. Where packaging is not compliant with hygiene standards, products should not be certified for export.

#### **v6.2 Export of composite products from registered establishments (last updated 18/03/2021)**

- We are aware of a number of exporters being challenged on the absence of an approval number in Box I.11 of the Composite Product Export Health Certificate.
- The EU Commission have confirmed that establishments manufacturing composite products do not need to be EU listed and therefore approved. This is the case where the establishment of manufacture is not undertaking any processing itself, and is simply assembling a composite product from pre-processed POAO.
- In this scenario, an approval number does not need to be included in Box I.11 or Box I.28 in Part 1 of the EHC, although you may include the registration number of the establishment of dispatch in I.11 if the BCP requests this. If not required to



include an approval or registration number, the Commission has confirmed that the box can be left empty in the certificate. The approval numbers of the establishments that have processed the POAO contributing to the composite product should be included in Part 2 of the EHC.

#### **v5.1 Temperature and transport conditions (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- The Commission has confirmed that it is not permissible to have two batches of product with the same commodity code, one of which is frozen and the other chilled, and which are both listed on the same EHC. This is because only one transport condition can be ticked in box I.18.

#### **v5.2 Transits of fish to 3rd countries via EU territory (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- We have confirmed with the Commission that transit EHCs are not required for transits of eviscerated fish (whether wild caught or aquaculture origin) through EU territory to a third country. Animal health requirements do not apply to wild caught fish or to aquaculture fish which are slaughtered and eviscerated before dispatch.
- However, regardless of their specific transit, all consignments of fish in transit through EU territory must follow the transit controls procedures set out in EU regulations, including presentation to the BCP of entry and to the BCP of exit.
- An EHC may still be required for entry into the final country of destination.

#### **v5.3 Certificate number on page 2 of EHCs (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- A number of BCPs have challenged the absence of a certificate reference number on page 2 of GB EHCs. This is a result of current certificates aligning exactly to models set out in Commission Regulations. We have agreed with the Commission that these can be amended to ensure each page of the EHC bears the unique code of the certificate.
- Until these amendments are complete, Certifying Officers should add the reference number by hand on page 2 and any additional added schedules, clearly initialling and stamping the amendments in the margin as required.

#### **v5.4 EHC languages (last updated 20/05/2021)**

- The Commission have confirmed that EHCs for export to the EU need to be drawn up in one or more of the languages of the Official languages of the EU, understood by the Certifying Officer and the Border Control Post.

- It is therefore only necessary to provide an EHC in English and the language of the member state of entry into the EU. A certificate for the member state of destination (if different from the member state of entry) is not a requirement and can be discarded.
- The EHC Online service has been updated to reflect this. New applications created in the EHC Online service from 21 May 2021 onwards will no longer create an EHC in the language of the destination EU Member State (if different from the language of the BCP of entry).

#### **v4.1 Operator responsible for the consignment in the case of non-transiting goods (last updated 11/02/2021)**

- EHC Online currently states that box I.6 (Operator responsible for the consignment of goods) should not be completed for imports into the EU and must only be populated for transit movements. Although optional in EU legislation, for imports it may be useful to complete this information. The text on EHC Online is being amended.

#### **v4.2 Region of origin for exports where goods are not from and/or processed in the UK/GB (last updated 11/02/2021)**

- Box I.7 of on EHCs for products of animal origin to the EU are pre-populated with the Country of origin name "UNITED KINGDOM" and ISO "GB". This is accurate where the goods are produced, manufactured and/or packaged in Great Britain. Where this is not correct, this should be struck through and amended with the correct country of origin and ISO code. This amendment should then be stamped and initialled.

#### **v3.1 Consignment weights (last updated 03/02/2021)**

- We are aware that certain BCPs have suggested a specific format for the inclusion of gross and net weight in Part 1 of the certificate. The European Commission have confirmed that certificates must follow the requirements outlined in the relevant EU legislation from which they originate. As such, if the model EHC does not specify a format for gross weight and net weight any format that clearly outlines this information should suffice.
- For fishery products, it is recognised that the consignment weight at the point of completing a catch certificate may differ from the weight at the point of signing the EHC. The European Commission has confirmed that there is no requirement for the two weights to match. However, the weight on the EHC should be comparable to

the weight given on any commercial documentation accompanying the load to the BCP. Otherwise, the BCP may wish to trigger investigations, on suspicion that the weight provided on the certificate is incorrect.

### **v3.2 Consignor versus point of dispatch (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- The European Commission has confirmed that the address of the 'Consignor' given in Part 1 of the certificate may be different from the address of the place of dispatch given in the same part of the certificate. The former is natural or legal person responsible for dispatching the consignment. This person/organisation may not always operate from, or be based at, the premises from which the consignment is dispatched to the EU, though they must be located in the exporting country (i.e. the UK).

### **v3.3 Means of transport (last updated 18/02/2021)**

- We are aware of some BCPs insisting that the road vehicle transporting POAO is listed as the means of transport in Part I of the certificate, where a roll-on-roll-off (RoRo) ferry or train are the means of transport for crossing the border. The European Commission has clarified that, in the case of a ferry, the EHC should specify:
  - the number plate of the road vehicle
  - the identification number of the trailer (if applicable)
  - and the name of the scheduled ferry.
- Conversely a number of exporters have been providing details just of the road vehicle and not of the scheduled ferry and consignments have not been held up at BCPs. If a particular BCP is willing to accept this you may wish to continue with this approach.
- In any scenario, you should only select a single option from the boxes indicating different 'means of transport' in I.15, however. If providing the name of the ferry, this should be the 'vessel' option. If you are not able to provide the name of the ferry, you should select 'road vehicle' or, if the BCP requires ferry details, the name of the line you will use.
- The means of transport selected in I.15 will also affect the place of loading entered into box I.13. If a ferry is indicated as the means of transport, the place of loading should be the point at which the vehicle embarks on to the ferry. If road vehicle is selected, the place of loading will be the point at which the consignment was loaded into the vehicle.

- If the transit details (e.g. scheduled ferry) change after the certificate has been issued, you do not need to request for a replacement EHC. However, the operator responsible for the consignment should advise the competent authority of the Member State of entry. They can do that via an email to the BCP official address, from the person or agent that made the CHED pre-notification declaration.

### **v3.4 Classified harvesting areas approval numbers for non-filter feeder gastropods (e.g. whelks and winkles) exported on the EHC for live bivalve molluscs fit for human consumption (last updated 03/02/2021)**

- We are aware of some BCPs insisting on an approval number being entered into Part I of the EHC for the export of all consignments using the EHC for LBMs fit for human consumption. This is to indicate the harvesting area.
- Certain animals exported using this certificate do not require this information. Specifically, non-filter feeder *Pectinidae*, marine gastropods and *Holothuroideae* are exempt from the need to be harvested from a classified harvesting area. Where these animals have been harvested from unclassified waters, there is no requirement for an approval number to be entered into Part I of the certificate. This has been confirmed by the European Commission.

### **v2.1 Description of containers (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- We are aware some consignments being rejected due to brand names being listed on the EHC in place of descriptions. Do not enter brand names on the description of containers but the physical characteristics of them (e.g. use “plastic pallet boxes” rather than “Dolaf”).

### **v2.2 Consignee details and place of destination (EHC and CHEDs) (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- The EU Commission has confirmed that it is permissible for consignee details (name, address) entered into Part I of the EHC to be different from those of the details of the operator responsible for the consignment. As per Part I of Annex II of 2019/628 the consignee is the natural or legal person for whom the consignment is intended in the Member State of destination whereas the operator responsible for the consignment is the person responsible for the consignment on arrival at the EU BCP.
- The details of the consignee in the certificate do not have to match the details on the CHED. However, the CHED must state the correct address of the consignee/consignees (if different to that in the certificate) and the place/places of

destination. This is for the person responsible for the consignment to ensure it happens rather than the Certifying Officer (CO).

- For products to be placed on the EU market (i.e. those that are not following transit procedures), the EU have confirmed that the address of the consignee entered into the EHC and CHED must include a named individual and a complete address, located in the EU. This is the case even if the headquarters of the consignee are in the UK or another third country.
- Entering details of the place of destination in part I of the EHC is optional (aside from when products in transit are being stored), however this information is required in the CHED (TRACES importer declaration). It is possible for this information to be different to the address of the consignee.
- Where consignments are split at the BCP, the initial CHED must indicate the BCP as place of destination, and the various, onward places of destination must be declared in the subsequent CHEDs. In this case, the place of destination if entered on the EHC can (and would) differ from the real place of destination that must be mentioned in the CHED.

### **v2.3 Responsible operators and presence at BCP (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- We have asked the Commission whether operators responsible for consignments (e.g. import agents) need to be physically present at the BCP. Article 15 of the OCR stipulates that operators “shall assist and cooperate with the staff of the competent authorities in the accomplishment of their tasks”. The Commission has confirmed that it is up to the local competent authorities to decide which kind of assistance they need. Where BCPs do not have their own workforce to handle the loads, they may request the operator responsible for the consignment or their representative(s) to be physically present at the BCP. Following confirmation from individual authorities, physical presence is required for:
  - Consignments sent to France
  - Unaccompanied consignments sent to the Netherlands

Exporters should confirm the requirements with the importing BCPs.

- Operators responsible for the consignment must be located in the EU territory. If they cannot be physically present at the BCP, the operator must make arrangements to provide assistance at the BCP. In the event of lack of assistance, a consignment may be rejected if this absence prevents the official controls from being properly performed.

## **v2.4 EHCs for non-EU Countries (excluding Northern Ireland) (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- COs are reminded that UK's Chief Veterinary Officer has written to the UK's non-EU trading partners outlining that they can expect to receive goods bearing a variety of health /ID (oval marks) e.g. those being used pre-January 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 and those allowed post 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. COs should consider this when certifying EHCs non-EU countries. Full guidance is available at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/guidance-on-health-and-identification-marks-that-apply-from-1-january-2021> and <https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-and-industry/safety-and-regulation/eu-exit-health-and-identification-marks>

## **v2.5 Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- COs are reminded that 30 day support attestations issued by a registered vet, Food Competent Certifying Officer, or CSO working for the certifying OV are an acceptable form of evidence for products exported under the Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme (GEFS).
- COs signing EHCs for GEFS members can place reliance on the 30 day support attestation as a form of evidence for the animal health and traceability information it contains, in relation to the products it covers.
- This has been agreed by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and is detailed in the [Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme guidance](#).

## **v1.1 Stamping, stamping and page numbering (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- When signing a certificate, a Certifying Officer (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'.
- Where the certificate contains optional or contextual statements, the statements which are not relevant shall be crossed out, individually initialled and stamped by the certifying officer, 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 Certifying Officer 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 certifier. 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 the stamping of any permitted alterations. There is no requirement to fan stamp and the Notes for Guidance may be disregarded in this respect and will be updated as soon as possible.
- The certificate reference number must be provided on each sheet, the pages must be sequentially numbered to span the languages included and any schedules, and each page must bear the signature and official stamp of the CO, i.e. if four A4 pages are printed back to back on two sheets of A4 paper, all four pages must be stamped and signed. Certifying Officers will have to make handwritten corrections to pages numbering as may be required E.g. 1/4 to 4/4 in the example given above.
- Following dialogue with the Commission, we advise that the original page numbering should be deleted when writing in the full sequential order, with corrections accompanied by the initials and the stamp of the Certifying Officer. These additions must be made so that the certificate remains readable, otherwise it might lead to rejection of the consignment.
- The colour of the official stamp and the signature must be different to the colour of the printed text of the certificate. We have had feedback that some BCPs have insisted blue ink is required when signing and stamping EHCs. This is incorrect. Defra has received confirmation from the EU Commission that stamps and signatures on the original certificate must be clearly different from the colour of the printed text in the document, but do not need to be a specific colour.

- Certifying Officers are reminded to consult the Notes for Guidance (NfG) prior to the certification of each EHC.

### **v1.2 Time of departure (last updated 20/01/2021)**

- Specific EU BCPs may request that box I.14. includes the time of departure, as well as the date. This is not a requirement for POAO, for which only the date is required. Defra has confirmation on this from the EU Commission and expects that BCP officials will be revising their requirements in this regard.

### **v1.3 Commodity Codes (HS Codes) (last updated 17/02/2021)**

- The CO should confirm with the exporter that the HS Code used correctly describes the products being consigned. Further information on HS Codes can be found online at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff/sections>  
<http://madb.europa.eu/madb/euTariffs.htm>
- There is information at the bottom of the majority of EHCs, in the notes section, with example commodity codes of 4 digits. If there is not enough space in Box I.19 to include all the commodity codes needed, please use a schedule.
- Information on how to create a schedule is available on [APHA's Vet Gateway](#).
- The Commission has confirmed that CN codes (8 digits or more) cannot be required in the official certificate (EHC), as only HS codes (max 6 digits) are required here. In any case, the best accuracy for the classification of the goods is expected in the CHED, not in the certificate.
- Various goods, with various CN codes, can be entered in the same certificate provided that they are all legally covered by the same model and that they all refer to the same information provided by the certificate. However, the various goods must be separated in Box I.25 "Description of goods" with all the specific details for each good.

### **v1.4 Description of Goods Box I.25 (last updated 20/01/2021)**

- Where the exporter requires more than 5 species or products to be listed in box I.28, the information should be added in a schedule. Please ensure you follow the requirements for adding a schedule as it becomes part of the certificate.
- Information on how to create a schedule is available on APHA's Vet Gateway



### **v1.5 Re-exporting POAO to the EU (last updated 20/01/2021)**

- Most products of animal origin from the EU will not require an EHC to be imported into GB until April 2021. During this period, products that are being re-exported to the EU will need to be certified with an EHC and the CO will require the relevant health and traceability information. Unless exempted from certification, this product will also need certification if moved to Northern Ireland. There are a number of options for obtaining this information.
- Commercial documentation or PVS attestation from the EU Member State can be accepted, if the EU supply chain is stable. The stability can be attested to based on a one-off certificate from an EU vet.
- Where supply chains are not stable (one-off or irregular) then COs may request a higher level of proof rather than just commercial documentation.
- The NfGs contain information regarding evidence needed for EU (and NI) origin product (imported before April 2021) are sufficiently flexible for OV's to accept appropriate documentation.

### **v1.6 Certified Copies of EHCs (last updated 26/01/2021)**

- A certified copy should only be made:
  - for the CO to retain themselves or to forward to the Centre for International Trade APHA if the notes for guidance require this, or
  - by prior agreement with the BCP, in the specific case of unattended consignments, when the risk of the certificate getting lost is high. In this case the original should be forwarded to the BCP by post or courier and the certified copy accompanies the consignment.
- A certified copy should not be made to forward to the importer for completion of CHED Part 1 or as an electronic copy to the BCP for advance checks as the BCP will expect the EHC that travels with the Consignment is an exact match copy, i.e. not annotated as 'certified copy'. A standard colour or black and white copy of the original EHC is the better format for advancing to the importer and to the BCP for advance checks prior to arrival of the goods with the EHC attached.

### **v1.7 Composite products (last updated 20/01/2021)**

- BCPs and BCP officials are under instruction to check products and determine whether products are composite products or not as this has legal context for

importation checks and requires specific certification and checks accordingly. In order for BCP officials to make this assessment, they will or may need information on both the ingredients of and the processes that are involved in producing the product. This is usually only the case with new products and when a BCP is familiar with the product and source does not require this on an ongoing basis.

## Further Information

For further information, please visit the '[Information for Food Competent Certifying Officers \(FCCO\)](#)' heading on the 'Preparing local government for 1 January 2021' GOV.UK page.

In previous versions of this briefing note, Local Authorities were advised to contact [CertificationCapacity@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CertificationCapacity@apha.gov.uk) if you identified significant gaps between demand for certification and your capacity as a provider.

From 31 March 2021, this mailbox will close, and APHA will no longer be offering surge capacity support for certification of EHCs.

However we are still keen to hear if there are wider FCCO capacity issues developing in the market. If you would like to raise an issue after that date, please contact the export enquiries team:

Email: [exports@APHA.gov.uk](mailto:exports@APHA.gov.uk)

Tel: 03000 200 301 (between 08:30 and 17:00, Monday to Friday)

From 31 March 2021 please direct questions relating to the certification or attestation of fishery products to the export enquiries team using the details above (rather than emailing the certification capacity mailbox).

## Schedule of EHC Online Changes (last updated 20/05/2021)

In response to feedback, we are introducing a series of improvements to the EHC Online system. Please note, these changes will only be applied to new applications. Work is underway to design and implement further changes, which aim to reduce errors and the time taken to complete export certification. These will be listed below.

### May – Third language requirements

- As detailed in section v5.4 above, the EHC Online service has been updated to reflect the EU's language requirements for certificates. New applications created in EHC Online from 21 May onwards will no longer create an EHC in the language of the destination EU Member State (if different from the language of the BCP of entry).

### March – Usability fixes for fish certificates:

- The following improvements will initially cover certificates 8249, 8250, 8270 and 8349 for fish. The key improvements are:
  - **Page numbering.** Once Certifiers have accessed the EHC via the 'editable' certificate link, they are now able to insert the total number of pages, including any additional schedule pages directly into the EHC. The number entered will replicate on every page of the certificate pack. If Certifiers do not know the total number of pages in the certificate pack, including additional schedule pages, they will have to add the page numbers manually at time of certification.
  - **Blank pages.** Blank pages have been removed from the EHCs, removing the need for Certifiers to score through and number these pages manually.
  - **Serial numbers.** The font size of the EHC serial number has been increased. The EHC serial number field has also been added to page two of the fish/fishery product EHCs, listed below. This will automatically populate and will not need to be manually inserted by Certifiers.
  - **Country of origin.** 'United Kingdom' and 'GB' that was pre-populated into field I.7 has been removed. Applicants will now be asked a question during the application process in the EHC Online service to populate this data entry field. Certifiers will be able to update or amend field I.7 digitally or manually as required.